

March 12th, 2019

## **Put to the vote: Wemhöner Surface Technologies**



### **Technical and digital innovation to become world market leader**

**Wemhöner Surface Technologies, the world's leading family-owned company in its sector, is a prime example of what German SMEs have to achieve in order to remain competitive in the future. The technical developments of the machine and plant manufacturer for refining wood-based materials for the furniture and laminate flooring industry have set new standards in recent years.**

Companies need to produce faster, more efficiently and more flexibly today if they want to continue serving their customers' needs in the future. Digital transformation, robotics, IoT, 3D printing technology - these, among other things, are the steps on the way to the fourth industrial revolution. The example of Wemhöner Surface Technologies shows that this will lead to the success of German companies.

**"We want to push the boundaries of what is technically feasible".**

The technical developments at Wemhöner have made it possible for the family-owned company - managed by third-generation family member Heiner Wemhöner - to achieve a market-leading position: Machines and plants from Wemhöner Surface Technologies press, laminate and print every surface finish on wood-based materials. These machines set standards in over 80 countries worldwide. This is why Wemhöner patents are obtained continuously, for optimisation of production processes and industrial application procedures.



Responsible for the success and worldwide expansion of a hidden champion is Heiner Wemhöner, grandson of the founder, and managing partner since 1987

"Our experience in developing, manufacturing and installing a large number of Wemhöner systems worldwide serves only one purpose: We want to push the limits of what is technically feasible in order to build the best systems for our customers." This is how entrepreneur Heiner Wemhöner describes the objective of the Herford-based company.



Short-Cycle Press Line made by Wemhöner

## Highest competence in direct lamination

Rarely have basic materials had such a lasting influence on interior and living space design as the surface refinement of carrier boards with melamine resin-impregnated papers. Distinctive designs, whether in wood or stone appearance, can be created in this way, without having to use the original materials. Wemhöner Surface Technologies and its customers have established a firm position worldwide in the furniture and laminate flooring industry. Wemhöner short-cycle presses for direct melamine lamination have been a permanent fixture for over 40 years and Wemhöner is now the world market leader in this area. The innovative use of robots for laying melamine films in the systems should also be mentioned.

## Finishing in the third dimension

Whether kitchen furniture from the early days, or high-tech kitchens according to today's standards, striking three-dimensional furniture fronts always give individual character and are at the same time a measure of value. Originally associated with a high level of craftsmanship, and thus cost-intensive, today the three-dimensional processing of wood-based material surfaces - and the subsequent pressing of thermoplastic surfaces or veneers - offers the ideal basis for a previously unknown freedom of design for 3D furniture fronts and other applications.

With decades of experience in a wide variety of pressing processes, Wemhöner developed the VARIOPRESS series of systems for this technology. More than 900 of these production lines worldwide laminate three-dimensional components every day with thermoplastic foils, veneers and other deformable materials. This results in furniture fronts with high-gloss surfaces, deeply structured designs and radiused fronts. Wemhöner 3D VARIOPRESS systems stand for an innovative understanding of finishing in the third dimension.



Wemhöner 3D VARIOPRESS Press Line

Wemhöner is also very active in another business segment: industrial digital printing. This technology will continue to gain importance in the future, as it opens

up decisive market advantages through smallest batch sizes; flexible just-in-time production; savings in decor storage and much more. Wemhöner has also found an innovative answer in this segment with its MasterLine digital printing systems.

The strong focus on consistent technological innovation ensures Wemhöner's market leadership worldwide in the future as well. The flexibility and speed with which new technologies and innovations are applied is one of the strengths of family-owned companies such as Wemhöner. And the Herford-based company- is well aware of this competence: "We want to remain a reliable and solidly-positioned, independent, family-owned company in the future, which continues to consistently invest in new business fields and future technologies," says Heiner Wemhöner.

**Wemhöner Surface Technologies sets worldwide standards with its machine and plant solutions for the wood-based panel and furniture industries and their suppliers. As an innovative technology leader, Wemhöner Surface Technologies has been nominated "Innovator of the Year".**

**Wemhöner Surface Technologies: From a small craft business to a German world market leader**

Wemhöner Surface Technologies was founded in 1925 in East Westphalia as a craft enterprise and today employs more than 500 people worldwide. Wemhöner plants refine wood-based materials all over the world - they are produced at two ultra-modern locations: In Germany, where more than 330 employees develop and produce the entire product portfolio at the parent plant in Herford, on an area of approx. 20,000 m<sup>2</sup>. In 2005, the subsidiary Wemhoener (Changzhou) Machinery Manufacturing Co. Ltd. was founded in China, followed by the opening of a production facility in Changzhou in 2007. Just three years later, capacity at the plant was doubled. The production site in Changzhou is indicative of the constant ongoing development of the company's success in Southeast Asia, and a milestone for continuous progress in the international orientation of the company.

Today, 170 employees mainly produce Wemhöner membrane presses and short-cycle presses principally for the Asian market, on a production area of 10,000 m<sup>2</sup>. A second plant is to be built in Changzhou in 2019. In addition to the production site in China, the company has agencies in more than 30 countries. Consolidated Group sales for Wemhöner rose to almost € 140 million for the first time in 2018. While the Herford-based company has achieved an export quota of over 90 percent, the Chinese company now exports 30 percent of its production.

Learn more about the business award Innovator of the Year 2019:

<https://die-deutsche-wirtschaft.de/die-nominierten-2019/>