

finishing

Perfect Finish for Komfort

A new, extra wide (1700mm) UV lacquer finishing line has been installed by finishing specialists GMD-Giardina at the Crawley factory of Komfort Office Environments - manufacturers of specialised office environment and other quality joinery products.

The £300,000 line replaces an existing Giardina line which GMD installed nearly 20 years ago and which has given stalwart service. In planning the new line GMD-Giardina worked closely with Komfort management to anticipate the future needs of the company. Indeed Komfort managing director Philip Duckworth says that the new line has been designed to be "future-proofed". Central to this concept is the unusual width of the line which GMD were able to achieve by working with their main principals - Giardina for the finishing and UV-curing applications and Tagliabue for the in-line wide belt Eurosander Range - type TAG T22.



The Giardina coating and UV curing section of the line followed by the Tagliabue denibbing sander

The Komfort factory near Gatwick airport - one of three Komfort facilities in the UK - manufactures high quality hollow core and fire rated doors, partitioning panel systems and wall storage systems. Philip Duckworth explains that the extra width of the line was essential to their future planning: "The industry is moving more towards the acceptance of a 1500mm wide standard for products like partitioning and wall storage panels. Indeed in Germany and other European markets this size is well established. It has a number of advantages for both construction methods and the final aesthetic value of completed projects. For Komfort, being able to finish 1500mm board panels will be extremely beneficial as this brings this particular product into line with the powder coated MDF, glazed and steel modules produced at our other factories."



Superb quality - storage wall doors and panels produced by Komfort

The new flexibility in terms of production sizes that the line brings to Komfort will also afford them additional opportunities in export markets further afield like the Middle East where they have already completed a number of successful contracts.

Philip Duckworth says that the line also "insures" them against future legislative implications like the Disabled Discrimination Act (DDA) where it will become mandatory for wide access doors to be installed.

The other important design aspect of the line is the extreme quality of finish that has been specified for it to achieve. Komfort's Roger Hare who was directly involved in the specification and is Komfort's technical sales advisor says that the market is more discerning than ever and demands an exceptional final product quality and finish.

GMD-Giardina's managing director Gerry Doran says that



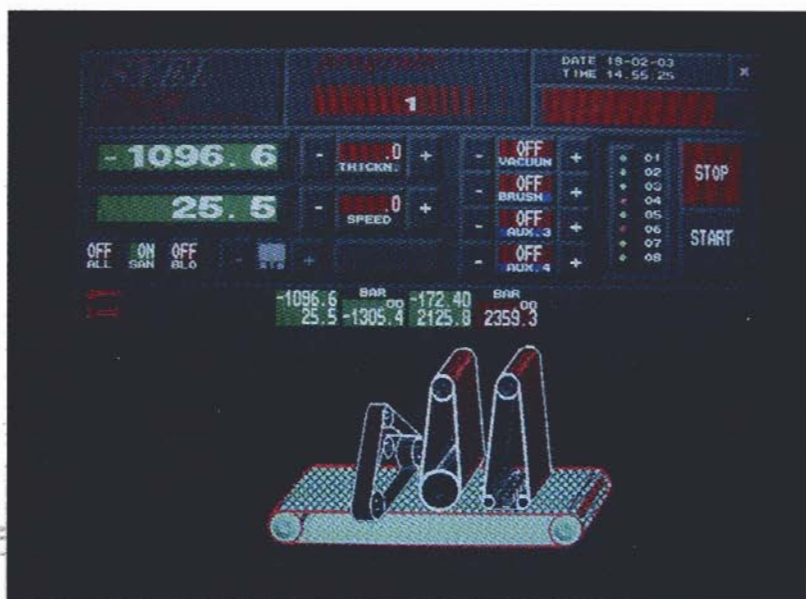
The GMD-Giardina UV line at Komfort

he had to design the roller-coating application line to achieve a finish comparable with the very best Spray/Curtain Coating finished surface. "Komfort are finishing a variety of surfaces on this line and with some open grain products we had to ensure a perfect, closed grain finish.

To do this every stage of the line has been designed to progress the product to the subsequent station in the optimum condition. The three-head Tagliabue sander at the start of the line is a state-of-the-art machine with a cross belt and two sanding pads. Tagliabue's European technical sales manager Michael Schadt says that even minimal tolerance variations on pre-calibrated products entering the line are eliminated by the cross belt head. It is also used to remove tape on details, features and inlays on some products. The two subsequent

heads then present a perfect surface for the following two Giardina roller coating heads.

"This is a crucial stage of the finishing process" explains Gerry Doran, "on the first roller we apply a heavy coat of UV lacquer via a standard smooth roller. The product then moves into the second roller coater for a wet-on-wet process. This roller is a specialised laser-cut roller which effectively picks up a greater quantity of lacquer and then applies this with high pressure onto the workpiece. The effect of this is to literally squeeze the lacquer onto the surface and ensure full distribution into grain troughs so that we achieve a heavy, flat base coat. The base coat is then fully cured under patented Giardina



The state-of-the-art touch screen control technology on the Tagliabue sanders

GST UV lamps."

The product then moves into the second Tagliabue Eurosander type TAG-12 for a denibbing process. "On this machine" explains Michael Schadt, "we have specified a roller head in front of the sanding pad as we are presented with a very heavy and hard base coat and have the necessity to remove a significant weight to present a perfect denibbed surface to the final Giardina roller coating station and UV curing lamps for the application and curing of the top coat."

The result, as required by Komfort and achieved by GMD-Giardina's design, is a highly superior final finish on all products.

Philip Duckworth says that the technical professionalism of everyone connected with the project has achieved all of Komfort's exacting requirements. "We had a very short timescale on this project and GMD were extremely helpful in ensuring we lost no production time." For instance, GMD actually moved the old line over by 5m during the Christmas break to make way for the installation of the new line but also keep the existing line operational during installation.

Komfort's new GMD-Giardina finishing line is operating optimally and ensuring that Komfort are well placed for the future to offer customers greater design flexibility with wider products finished to 'spray quality' perfection.



Loading doors into the Tagliabue sander at the entry to the GMD-Giardina line at Komfort

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