



A tech centre for all

Biesse has pretty much everything necessary to simulate and prove performance of the exact machine that interests you in Daventry.

Can a showroom provide everything you need when space will inevitably restrict the number of machines on show? Can it cater just as well for the smaller user who is new to automation as it can for large-scale manufacturers who want to upscale their production?

As far as Biesse UK is concerned, their facility in Daventry covers most bases – but then, Biesse hasn't equipped it as a showroom and demonstration area. They've equipped it as a Tech Centre and although the exact machine you need may not be present, more often than not, among the demonstration models there will be machines that have the features you need. Biesse UK's brand sales managers and technical application engineers, working in partnership with Tech Centre Manager Nigel Elmes, have pretty much everything they need to simulate and prove

performance of the exact machine, or line that interests you in Daventry.

Michael Clack heads up the CNC side of Biesse UK. "What we've tried to do in the Tech Centre is be flexible enough to showcase a range of features," he confirms. "For example, we have three CNCs, one with a five-axis head, one with a four-axis head and one with a three-axis head. With these three we are able to showcase every feature available, even though we may need to do a five-axis demo on a pod and rail machine instead of the flat table machine a customer might be most interested in. We usually have the feature available on one of the machines..

"We've tried to have as many features as we can on the range of machines available in the Tech Centre. We feel our Tech Centre is good enough to showcase most of what we need. If a manufacturer has



Michael Clack



Rover K FT with offloading table and label printer



Rover A FT

a very specific requirement, or needs to see a big automated line, we will take them to a reference customer or to Italy, where the demonstration facilities are much larger, to give them the full experience and explain in detail. We like to bring them here first because we believe we have a world class facility."

That's quite a bold claim but to illustrate the point, Michael heads over to a Rover A FT. Opening the door of the gantry cabin, he points to a recent innovation, the Tracker Jet: "Biesse is very innovative and we have a number of patents," he says. "In terms of dust mitigation, which is a massive talking point, we have something called the Tracker Jet. It's a system for providing a jet of air that sits on a rotating axis and follows the cut line, cleaning as it goes. There is no need for any cleaning of the machine after it's been in operation. There could be some

remnants of dust but in terms of the dust in the air and dust on the floor, it's gone. It improves efficiency, productivity and also the environment that people are working in. We're not showing it on every CNC machine in the Tech Centre, even though it's an option on others but we can demonstrate it on the Rover A FT."

Moving on to the Rover K FT, Michael focuses on the offloading end of the machine. "This is a closed configuration machine that, in terms of nesting, most customers would choose when they move up from manual processing and want to get into nesting for the first time. By adding an offload conveyor, we can demonstrate how it speeds up the process and how label printing can help with parts identification. Between the two machines we have in the Tech Centre, we are able to demonstrate how our machines are fully

configurable with features that you can choose to suit your specific needs. We have something that can be tailored to just about everyone.

"All nesting machines work the same, so we can easily show a customer one in the showroom, demonstrate relevant features and quote for the machine specification that they are interested in. There isn't much of a difference other than the fact that the machine is likely to be bigger, or have more features. We can demonstrate the same software they would be using on the smaller machine we've got here."

Looking around the Tech Centre, I'm struck by the lack of a Rover Edge and wonder how Michael would provide an adequate demonstration for anyone wanting to edge-finish curved components. "We could still bring them here and do a



Lorenzo Ricciardi



Viet Opera 5 Sander



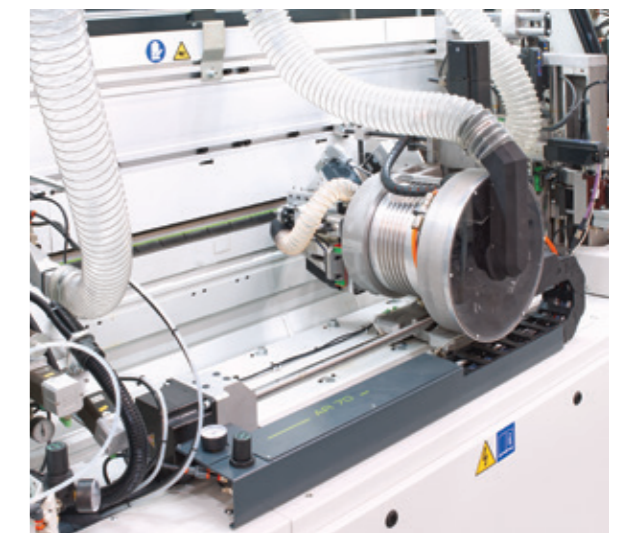
Omal Insert PT



Selco WN2



The edgebander line-up in the Tech Centre includes entry level machines with specialised features, like the AR70 corner rounder.



simulation using our digital twin simulator. They would be able to see everything the machine will do in a simulated environment. Then I would probably either try to take them to Italy or to a customer that we have locally in the UK. We can showcase just about every eventuality here, unless it is something really specific. Customers are generally willing to let us in to show specific features and machines in operation but often, even the most complex solutions that we're offering start with people coming to the Tech Centre to see basic concepts."

In addition, the Tech Centre is used for demonstrations using materials supplied by the customer and, says Michael, that's not just wood-based panel products and edging materials. "With CNCs, I cross over into the world of advanced materials and there, material testing is the most important thing. We often test the material before we even

start to look at what type of machine a customer might need, as well as setting up demonstrations to prove the technology we are suggesting is the right solution for the customer.

"Around 70% of the manufacturers we work with are using materials that are not only wood-based. People are diversifying, exploring new markets outside kitchens and bedrooms like washrooms and laboratories. They are often machining materials like compact grade laminate, even thin aluminium. It's still furniture, but furniture for specific applications and environments."

Lorenzo Ricciardi, who takes care of Biesse UK's sizing, drilling and sanding solutions, works with huge angle plant right the way through to smaller companies, for whom a basic sanding machine represents a big step up from hand sanding. With a modest WN2 beam saw already taking up a

large footprint in the Tech Centre, the opportunity to demonstrate key features that work in masked time – like Biesse's twin pusher solution, board turning, or automatic loading – is more limited. Angle plant would be impossible. "Key account customers generally already know how everything works," he says, "So for those who want to increase their production significantly and have a five-year plan to achieve, we usually take them to Italy where we can show first, the production line and second, the showroom. It's a different set-up in Italy. We can also arrange to take them to a reference customer here in the UK where they can see the process.

"We have to determine who would benefit most by coming here and who to take to other companies or to Italy. In my opinion, there's no sense to bring a customer here to discuss an angle plant I

cannot show. So for beam saws, we focus on bringing smaller to medium-sized companies here and show the options and talk with Nigel. Nigel is a real asset to the company. He can spot immediately what the issues are for the customer and what benefit a machine can provide. With our help, he can help steer the customer to the ideal solution, especially with sanding machines.

"We currently have Opera 5 and S2 sanders in our Tech Centre. These can cover most applications including calibration, high gloss, base coat and lacquer sanding. The customer can see the process and quickly realise that they can specify the exact machine for their needs and automate their sanding process rather than relying on hand finishing.

"In terms of drilling, we are well covered in the Tech Centre because we can

demonstrate machines suitable for smaller companies, like the Omal Insert PT – and the Skipper as well as the Brema Eko 2.2 with a panel return system that is suitable for more complex operations.

"It is a similar scenario when looking at edgebanders. Malcolm Storey, who is responsible for the single-sided edgebanding range adds, "The range covers every type of application from EVA, to PUR or glueless using our AirForce technology. The range also covers machines to suit every production capacity. The common factor is that you can get the same quality finish regardless of the machine that you purchase.

"This means we can talk about the technology inside the machines. Customers are really seeing the benefit of some of our newer features, including the new AR70 corner-rounding unit that rounds top and bottom corners with the choice of four radii

profiles or chamfer. Other options, like hybrid pre-melters and hybrid glue pots provide customers with options to reduce changeover times and increase productivity."

Lorenzo continues, "One really important function of the Tech Centre is for events. Recently, we had a CNC master class to help users get more from their machine and get deeper into our bSolid software. We are also having an **event in mid September** and customers can also visit our Tech Centre for one-to-one demos if they want to see something specific. It's an opportunity for them to see new machines and technology, find out how they can do more with their machine, or maybe overcome some of the smaller problems they might have that can improve the quality they are achieving, or increase their efficiency."

For more information call Biesse UK on 01327 300366 or visit www.biesse.com/uk/

