



"Wintersteiger stands out for its extremely thorough pre- and after-sales support"

In conversation with Area Sales Manager Johannes Schachinger and Product Manager Josef Weiermann

Wintersteiger combines 5 product areas for the timber industry under the umbrella term "World of WOODTECH": precise thin-cutting and surface repair of wood, saw blades engineered and produced in-house, mobile and stationary sawmill technology, automation solutions, as well as cutting solutions for a range of materials including lightweight materials. But the company is much more than only the timber industry. "At WINTERSTEIGER Group, we develop solutions for the agricultural sector, the metal industry and the sports industry, among others. Just think of automated ski and snowboard base grinding and

ski edge grinding," says Johannes Schachinger, who has been working at Wintersteiger since 2008. Within the Wintersteiger holding company, the Woodtech division occupies an important place and the division has since grown into a fully-fledged subsidiary. We were allowed to have coffee with Johannes Schachinger, Area Sales Manager for Benelux and the UK, among others, and his colleague Josef Weiermann, Product Manager at Wintersteiger. "Beside high quality machines, Wintersteiger stands for its extremely close cooperation with customers and for the high level of support we provide, even after the machine has been delivered."

Wintersteiger Woodtech, technology and service hand in hand

Wintersteiger operates from its headquarters in Ried im Innkreis, Austria, where production also takes place. The WINTERSTEIGER Group has over 1,200 employees worldwide and operates in the USA, Latin America, Europe and Southeast Asia, among others. "Our solutions are distributed through a network of service stations, distributors and sales offices and in the United States we even have a full-fledged office with support, warehousing and sales. The production is 100% "Made in Austria", Johannes clarifies.

The activities of Wintersteiger Woodtech can be broadly divided into two segments: thin-cutting machines and wood repair machines. "The solutions we develop end up mainly in the wood flooring industry, but equally with furniture manufacturers and panel producers," Josef explains, "this includes both smaller producers to large industrial players with production capacities of several million square metres per year."

The added value provided by Wintersteiger Woodtech is by no means limited to the development of high-tech solutions. "We pride ourselves on our service to customers. That service and after-sales support are not empty promises. Among other things, we provide training, upgrades, maintenance checks and detailed follow-up of the machines during the first weeks of use, but also during the life time of the machine," says Johannes.

Wintersteiger Woodtech is a fine example of a company that perfectly combines both the role of technology player and service company.

Wood repair machines for wooden floors

Wintersteiger Woodtech has built up years of expertise within the wood repair machines segment. The process of "detecting", "cleaning" and "filling" is optimised together with the customer and adapted to the volumes and requirements of that customer.

During the thorough preparation process, nothing is left to chance. Usually, customers send in their samples, which are processed and tested in detail in-house by Wintersteiger. The defects customers want repaired are usually openings and cracks in the wood. Wintersteiger takes into account all the factors involved in filling. Just think of the expansion or contraction of wood as well as the drying time of the filling material.

After several test phases, the integration of the fully automatic technological solution can begin. "We have a range of standard machines that can be customised to meet specific customer needs. Every situation and every customer are different. We put together a personalised solution," Josef continues.

The standard machines to which Josef refers include the TRC Preclean cleaning machine, the TRC M-Easy manual filling machine and the TRC 1000, TRC 3000 and TRC Board automated filling machines. "The development of technology does not stand still. At Wintersteiger, we are always trying to improve the quality of the filling process. For example, we are an industry forerunner in scanning technology. We are constantly improving our technology and also launching new solutions such as wood patches as an additional repairing technology," says Johannes.

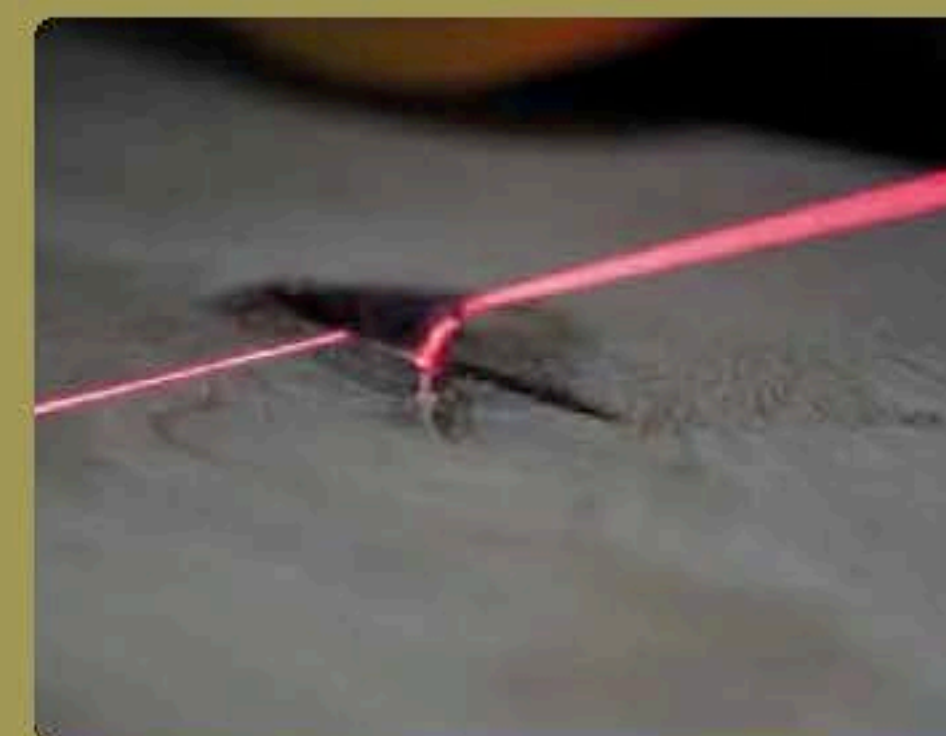
Close cooperation with all market players

To offer the most advanced and relevant solution, Wintersteiger Woodtech works closely with the customer, but equally with the manufacturers of filling material. "We have a deep in-house knowledge about the different types of filling material. In that respect, we act as a link between the customer, for example the flooring manufacturer, and the manufacturer of the filling material. It happens very regularly that the manufacturer of filling material is involved in the development of our solution," Josef clarifies.

Wintersteiger is focused on a long-term relationship with all players in the market. "The parquet industry has become a very competitive market in recent years with margins under severe pressure. Our role is to give our customers a competitive advantage over competition from Asia, for example, but also over the PVC flooring sector," says Johannes.

It is clear that Wintersteiger Woodtech is an innovative player with a clear view of the world. "We firmly believe that our unique technology combined with our services are the ideal mix to further support the wood flooring industry today and tomorrow," Josef concludes.

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