
FEBRUARY

FDMC

2018

Best Practices in Woodworking Technology & Business | woodworkingnetwork.com

Special report: Sales for industry leaders up 5 percent

FDMC

300

Taiwan machinery makers going global

They are developing smarter technology and integrating wood manufacturing systems to stay ahead of China.

Most readers would not be surprised to see a list of the top three nations in woodworking equipment export: Germany (Homag and Wienig), Italy (SCM and Biesse), and China (63 exhibitors already listed at IWF Atlanta 2018).

Who comes next? Well that's Taiwan, an island of 23 million and about the size of Indiana, off the southern coast of China. For that same Atlanta show, Taiwan has 26 exhibitors booked.

But those 26 are just a smidgen of the 270 members of the Taiwan Woodworking Machinery Association, and they do

not include companies like Anderson and Giben, headquartered in Taiwan, but with free-standing U.S. operations. Or Leadermac, which exhibits at IWF and AWFS, and Ligna and Xylexpo. In the U.S. it is known through Cantek, based in Blaine, Washington, as well as under its own banner. In Canada it sells through Akhurst, with five provincial sales offices around the country.

The U.S. represents Taiwan's fifth largest woodworking machinery export market, though the vast majority of the unit volume is through private label manufacturing of smaller machines, such as belt sanders (made by Sander-

son/Jin Shiau Machinery) for some of the biggest catalogers, and small equipment sellers like Jet.

Michael Chang, the dynamic CEO of Leadermac, is also chairman of the Taiwan Woodworking Machinery Association. His goal is to make Taiwan-sourced equipment more highly visible in North America, as he has done with his Leadermac brands. He also wants to raise their profile in all the end user markets so that woodworking companies recognize in Taiwan sourced equipment a quality and sophistication that is not available from their chief competitor,

Continued...



Gears on Gootdek double-sided planer. Taiwan machinery is known for quality.

mainland China.

Despite its well-developed wood machinery manufacturing industry, Taiwan is not really a player in wood products. Following the rapid decimation of its domestic forests a few decades back, the government banned commercial logging. Now more than 90 percent of its lumber and panel is imported, and so Taiwan emphasizes machine manufacturing over machining wood.

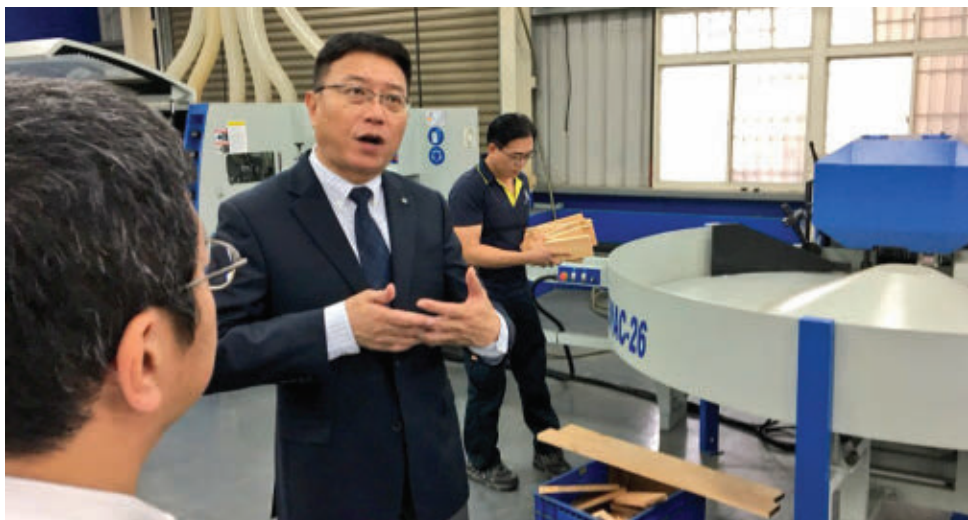
It faces tough competition, though, as mainland China expands its manufacturing might. Until last year, Taiwan was the third largest exporter of machinery globally (it remains third for overall machinery exports globally).

To meet the challenge, the 300 or so wood machinery manufacturers in Taiwan are building smarter machines, and working together to sell integrated systems.

More than 80 percent of Taiwan wood machinery manufacturers are located in the central part of the country, near the city of Taichung. +



Anderson Group's first CNC, built in 1985, can still run.



Michael Chang, CEO of Leadermac, heads a global machine business.



Leadermac sorting (above) and moulding machinery is widely used in hardwood flooring operations around the world.