

"It's completely changed the way we work"

Ghia Cabinets

Robert Ho relocated his Cabinet making business to his country property in the Swan valley on the outskirts of Perth as part of a lifestyle change in 2001.

"I'm a chair maker by trade but learnt cabinet making in the 80's, started my own business in 1992 and it built up to 7 people in the workshop using the traditional Panel saw based approach. It was hard work and a hassle and I decided to downsize and eliminate the 'commute'. That worked well initially but I carried on with my determination to deliver a top quality job, on time. Combined with lots of recommendations and referrals from long term customers and I soon found my workload building up again."



Robert was determined to maintain the 'lifestyle' advantages of the move which meant he had to streamline his production and work much more efficiently as he didn't want to turn away clients. His decision 15 months ago to move to nest based manufacture with Weeke, the CNC specialists of the German Homag Group has enabled him to achieve this goal easily.

"I saw Weeke's new 'pocket rocket' at AWISA and was surprised by what it could do. I compared it to other '8 x 4' options but could see it was much heavier and typical German quality with a lot of smart features like the variable speed drills. The investment was a little more but the bottom line for me was that I could produce better results faster. So we went for the Weeke and Planits 'Cabinet Builder' design package and we haven't looked back."

In fact it's fair to say Ghia have actually moved forward as they have been happily taking on 'outwork' producing carcass components for other Cabinetmakers. "The accuracy and finish from the Weeke is perfect, we get no chipping with our drilling, we can produce our own face routed doors and 'mortice and tenon' carcass joints that fit perfectly and Mason Mitre our own tops. Our customers like that but because we are quick we've got surplus capacity to do work for others and this side of our business is building up nicely."

Ask Robert to quantify the time savings and he gives an example everyone can relate to. "Our first year apprentice cuts and assembles a '15 sheet' kitchen in a day." Robert goes further: "It does the work of 2 good tradesmen and it's ready and willing to work as and when required. These labour savings are for me the single biggest advantage."

Being easy to get up the learning curve of a new way of working was a plus too. "Homage's WoodWop software was quick and easy to learn and works in with Planits software seamlessly. We label the finished components from the Planit software and this eliminates mistakes in edge banding and makes it very easy to identify parts and jobs. It all works! The installation was straightforward and I've been happy with Homage's backup. I was making a decision for the long term and my trust and faith in the Homag product and people was an important factor."

And amongst all the 'business' advantages just as important for Robert is that his relaxed lifestyle goal has been maintained despite the growth of his business. "There are only 3 of us here now but I put out more work than in my old business, without the staff and deadline hassles. We couldn't have got we're we are today without the Weeke and I'm excited about our ability to grow the business and what we are now offer our traditional Builder and Homeowner clients and our new 'component' customers."

www.ghiacabinets.com.au