

“We’ve reduced our labor per kitchen to 65% in the first 9 weeks”

Supreme Kitchens and Design. Bayswater Perth

Until recently Supreme was your traditional kitchen shop with production starting at the Panelsaw. Operated by the Murray family and with 11 employees dealing directly with the homeowner they had built a strong business based on good service, producing ‘built to fit’ custom cabinetry focused on the top end of the market. Mostly with high gloss lacquer finishes but solid timber feature work including inlays were also ‘no problem’. Design skills with daughter Lisa using ‘Quisine’ software saw Supreme offering a full customized design and install service with everything built to a very high standard.



But now things have changed dramatically. The friendly family style remains as does the quality customized product but the big change is that labor costs per kitchen have been slashed to just 65% and Supreme have the magic 50% figure clearly in their sights. At the centre of this dramatic turnaround is a move to nest based manufacture with Weeke, the CNC specialists of the German Homag Group.

Just 9 weeks after the Weeke was installed Supreme are happy to report dramatically reduced delivery times, increased design flexibility, with quality further improved. In addition to all Carcass work Corian tops are now easily machined in ‘one hit, quick smart’ Laminate tops are purchased as blanks and ‘Masons Mitre’ these easily on the Weeke.

Importantly for Supreme they also now make big cost savings on their high gloss doors. “We machine these on the Weeke quickly to a very high standard requiring minimal sanding before painting. We’re saving 60% of our previous sanding time and now produce these for 30% of the cost of buying them in” notes Factory Manager Mathew Murray. “That’s one of the reasons we went for the gantry design and Weeke’s ‘heavyweight’ build, because we knew they were essential to get the results we wanted for our doors.”

Supreme already see their Weeke investment as a big success just in labor savings but there’s a lot more to it as Manager Vic Murray explains.

“The move to nesting has been a really big change to how we work and made a huge difference to our efficiency. We are moving into ‘flat pack’ as I know we can build a 100% accurate product that will assemble perfectly. That’s another reason we went with the Weeke as they were the only one’s who could guarantee their drilling depths. That’s going to be important to us with our flat pack as our cams and hinges will be absolutely flush and everything will line up”

Supreme also had a space problem – they were running out of it! The Weeke combines 3 or 4 separate operations into one compact work centre. Because of the efficiency and speed of the machine work can be produced ‘just in time’ and together this has taken the space pressure off.

Supreme describe their training experience as ‘awesome’. “We were producing our own work within 4 days and found mastering the Homag ‘WoodWop’ software a ‘walk in the park’” says Mathew.

Like most businesses Supreme struggled to find qualified tradesman and this was a constraint on the business. “It was big boost when we moved to a Brandt Edgebander 4 years back. That machine has been bulletproof, made a big difference to edge quality and gave us confidence in Homag Group products and the local service backup here in Perth. With the Weeke on board we are again in a position to expand our business in both volume and the range of work and that’s been a huge morale boost. We now look up and forward with real confidence, rather than working damned hard just to tread water. I like the fact our staff are excited about what we can do with the Weeke and Mathew and I both really appreciate being able to go home at 5 rather than the 9.00pm finishes we were often having to do to get work out on time. I no longer look at big jobs and worry about getting them done on time. The Move to nesting with Weeke has transformed our business and I’m very happy with our decision to go with Homag”. concludes VIC