FRAXINEWS

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FRAXINUS

CHALLENGE US TO AN INNOVATIVE FUTURE. LET'S MEET!

PACKAGING LINES

ROBOT PROJECTS

MECHANICAL ENGINEERING MADE-TO-MEASURE

STACKING SYSTEMS

CONVEYOR SYSTEMS

MANIPULATORS

> “ Continued commitment to strong partnerships with customers and suppliers.

Dear reader,

Since the last edition of Fraxinews, we've had the opportunity to carry out some great projects again. These are achievements where we challenged ourselves over and over again and where we took the production process of multiple customers to a higher level thanks to the combination of their specific product knowledge and our expertise in handling and process optimisation.

For the new edition of Fraxinews we visited TWE Meulebeke, TVH, Trappen Verschaeve and Eternit: these four cases highlight the Fraxinus working method. Projects like this are the result of a close collaboration between Fraxinus and the customer and also the cooperation between Fraxinus and our suppliers. You can read more about this in the article with SEW-Eurodrive.

Finally, this year we are celebrating 15 years of Fraxinus. This is the perfect time to thank all our customers, suppliers and employees for their continued trust in Fraxinus.

Looking forward to another 15 years of innovative mechanical engineering.

Hans Van Essche, CEO of Fraxinus

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TRAPPEN VERSCHAEVE

Increased efficiency in several domains thanks to a single robot

Almost sixty years ago Schrijnwerkerij Verschaeve from Lauwe was born. When bungalow construction began to weaken in the 1970s, the company evolved from a general carpenter's workshop to a staircase workshop. Today, Jan Verschaeve represents the second generation of the company and his sons Bjorn and Steve are also active in the family business. Last year, they planned to buy their **fifth CNC machine** and asked themselves who would operate it. **Could automation be an option** when you're constantly short-staffed? Find out below how Fraxinus provided the managers with an appropriate answer.

FACTS & FIGURES

EMPLOYEES
25 blue-collar workers – 9 white-collar workers

SITE SURFACE
> 25,000 m²

NUMBER OF STAIRS ON AN ANNUAL BASIS
2,000 staircases

NUMBER OF STEPS ON AN ANNUAL BASIS
30,000 steps

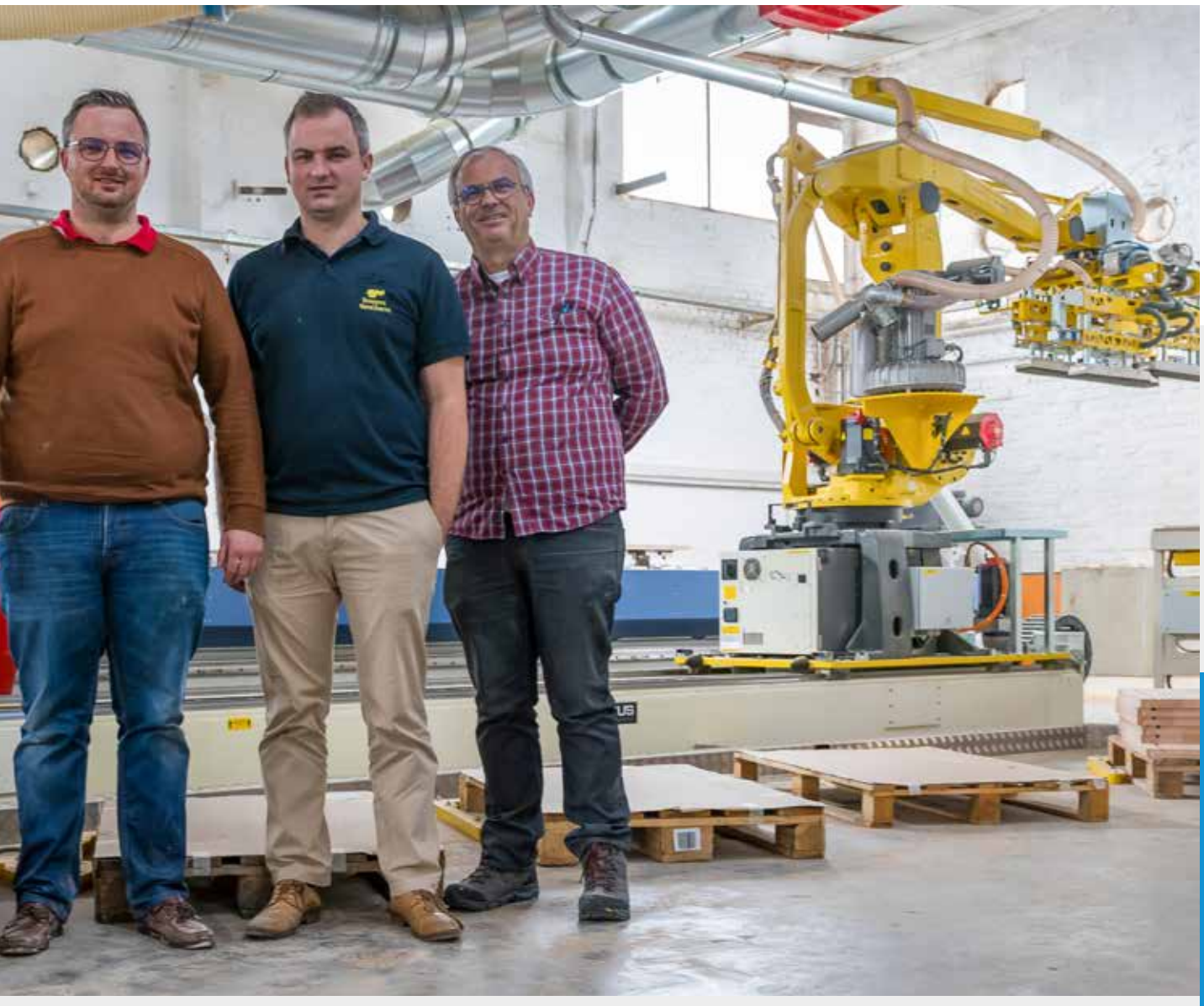
NUMBER OF STEERED AXLES NEW MKM CNC MACHINE
61 controlled axes without robot

AVERAGE ANNUAL TURNOVER
5.5 million euros

NOTEWORTHY
Last year, turnover increased by 18%

DID YOU KNOW THAT...
the company will be celebrating its 60th birthday next year?

→ more info at
www.trappen-verschaeve.be



From left to right: Steve, Bjorn and Jan Verschaeve

The new CNC machine was the reason to consider further automation.
“That’s right. From the very beginning of our existence, we’ve always kept our machinery up to date. In the 1990s, we were one of the first to work with CNC. Our first machine was from Dubus, France, and then we switched to MKM. Last year, we bought our fifth CNC machine and we considered the idea of automating the loading and unloading of the machine”, says Jan Verschaeve.

How did the cooperation with Fraxinus come about?
“We had contacted several companies and we found out about Fraxinus through a leaflet. In the end, we chose Fraxinus, mainly because they had already made a very specific, detailed and well-defined proposal that could immediately serve as a basis for further work”, says Bjorn. “In addition, during the first conversations with Hans (Van Essche, CEO of Fraxinus), we already felt that we’d found a partner who understands our language and speaks it himself. To the point and with the necessary expertise: that gave us the necessary confidence to go further.”

The installation also required close cooperation with machine builder MKM and staircase software supplier Compass.
“That went very well. The construction of the robot became a partnership between four companies. On the advice of Fraxinus, we went to Germany with them to discuss our project with MKM and Compass in detail and to focus on the objectives. We clicked very well, and they were immediately involved in the story. In addition, all partners had their decision-makers at the table: this allowed us to act and decide quickly”, says Jan.

What influence does this robot have on your workforce?
“The employee who used to load and unload the machine on a full-time basis can now carry out a lot of extra tasks”, says Bjorn. “He even takes over preparatory tasks that normally take place in the office. This is a great advantage: on the one hand, he can prepare everything immediately in his own technical language, which saves time.
On the other hand, colleagues in the office can also work more efficiently again.
In other words, we’ve created more capacity at different levels.”

What does the future hold for Trappen Verschaeve?
Jan: “During every team meeting we talk about finding employees. A shortage of personnel can be a serious brake on a company. It’s not a comprehensive solution, but further automation will certainly be indispensable in the future if we are to continue tackling the opportunities that come our way.”

Highlighting the solution

BY HANNES DEKEYZER
Sales engineer Fraxinus
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“We’ve installed a robot track for the CNC machine. In addition, six pallet positions and an alignment table are provided.
An employee comes to place three full pallets of unprocessed planks and three empty pallets. The robot then picks up a plank with the automatically adjustable suction cabinets and places it on the alignment table. In this way, we ensure an accurate position before the planks are placed on the machine. Then the robot takes a second and possibly a third plank, aligns them and places them on the machine.

This loading and unloading of the planks take place during the milling process of the machine on the free zone. The machine is divided into two zones on the table, and a pole unit. This gives you **a continuous process that only requires human intervention every two to three hours**.

Trappen Verschaeve works completely to measure, which means that numerous combinations and dimensions are possible. That’s why **each plank has to be read in by the robot via a barcode**, so that it can be optimally positioned. In addition, the software also calculates whether it can lay two or three planks in one milling plane. This allows us to make maximum use of the table’s capacity and to optimise tool changes, which saves an extra amount of time.

In addition to the two zones on the table, as discussed earlier, there is also a pole unit. This section is used to process the poles on all four sides and to make them to the right length. This works in combination with the first section of the table so that we also get a continuous process here. The poles themselves are transported to the robot via a chain conveyor system, taking into account the position of the barcode.”