Compass Software

TRADITION MEETS DIGITALISATION: BAST JOINERY TAKES STAIRCASE MANUFACTURING INTO THE FUTURE

Now in its sixth generation, the family-run Bast Joinery has been in business for over 150 years. By investing in a 5-axis CNC machine and Compass Software, the company is combining its traditional craftsmanship with modern, efficient manufacturing methods. For Silas Bast, digitalisation is a crucial step towards developing the business further and exploring new opportunities in staircase manufacturing.

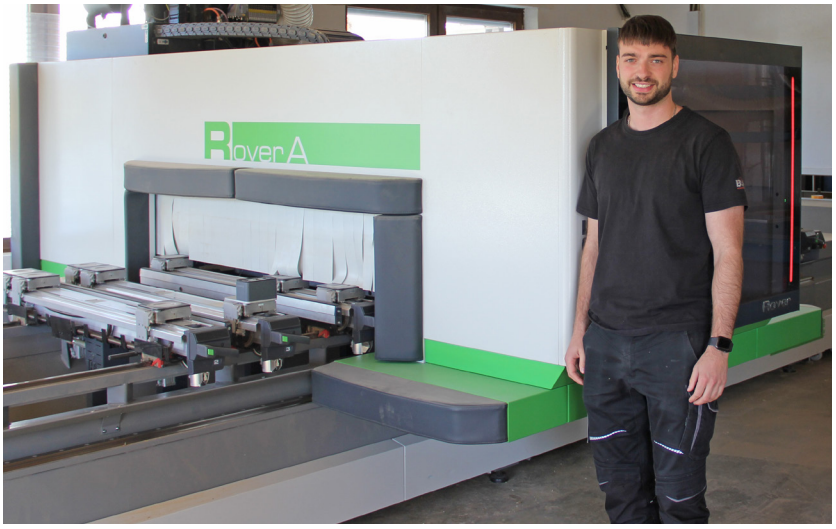
Bast Joinery: A Family Business with an Eye on the Future

What began as a small workshop carrying out repairs in the centre of Ravengiersburg, a village in Germany near the Luxembourg border, has evolved into a sixth-generation family business that specialises in bespoke staircases. The company also provides interior fitting services and custom furniture.

Silas Bast grew up surrounded by the trade and now runs Bast Joinery together with his father. After completing his apprenticeship as a joiner and obtaining his master craftsman's qualification, he initially gained experience outside the family business before going on to study business administration. Today, he focuses not only on the quality of the craftsmanship itself, but also on the company's processes and commercial development. „One of the first things I wanted to do was to invest in a modern CNC machine and software that would enable us to manufacture staircases more efficiently and on a larger scale."

Bast Joinery in Ravengiersburg in the Hunsrück region is now run by the sixth generation of the family.





Silas Bast at the new 5-axis CNC machine: "It used to take us two days to lay out and manufacture two stringers. Now, we can mill them completely in just 20 minutes."

Another reason for modernising the business was the retirement of a long-standing employee who had spent around 50 years shaping the company's traditional, hands-on approach to staircase manufacturing. The challenge was to preserve decades of accumulated craftsmanship and expertise while making production more efficient and ensuring the business was ready for the future.

Software That Fits the Business

When the time came to select the right software, Silas Bast prioritised machine integration, ease of use, design capabilities, and the support provided during implementation. After speaking to several providers, he was ultimately won over by Compass Software's subscription model. A recommendation from a business partner who was already using the software also influenced his decision. „The software covers 100% of the staircase designs we need. In fact, its capabilities go well beyond what we currently require, and everything can be tailored perfectly to meet our customers' individual requirements."

Precision CNC Manufacturing with 50% Time Savings

The joinery business also invested in a 5-axis CNC machine from Biesse. The machine was installed in May 2025, and the staircase design software was introduced shortly afterwards.

The combination of the software's extensive design capabilities and CNC technology has significantly transformed the way Bast Joinery works. This is particularly evident when machining staircase

stringers. Previously, contours and tread positions had to be marked out by hand, measurements had to be transferred, and components had to be machined manually. Now, the CNC machine performs these tasks based on the digital design created in Compass Software. “It used to take us two days to design and manufacture two stringers. Now, we can mill them completely in just 20 minutes. That‘s a huge time saving, and everything fits perfectly!“ says Silas Bast enthusiastically.

The difference is equally significant when looking at the production time for an entire staircase. Whereas the business previously needed around four days, it now takes approximately two days to manufacture all the components for a complete staircase under comparable conditions. Only minor finishing work and surface treatment remain afterwards. „Depending on the design and the complexity of the job, the time savings vary, but on average I‘d say we‘re saving 50%. That‘s a considerable advantage.,“ confirms Silas Bast.

In addition to faster production, the business benefits from greater precision and consistency. The CNC machine reproduces the dimensions and contours from the digital design, reducing the risk of errors that can occur when measurements are transferred and components are marked out by hand.

Precise digital planning also facilitates collaboration with external partners. Drawings and manufacturing data for glass or metal balustrades can be sent directly to external suppliers without them needing to digitise the drawings themselves first. This helps to ensure that all components fit together properly with minimal on-site adjustments required.

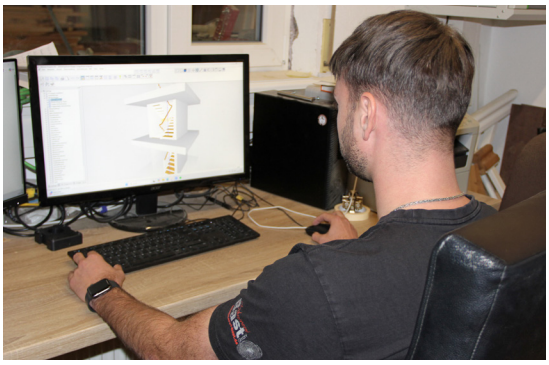




With Compass Software and CNC manufacturing, Bast Joinery now also takes on challenging staircase projects that would previously have been too time-consuming.



After CNC machining, only minor finishing work and surface treatment are required.



Customers’ ideas are planned as 3D designs in Compass Software – easy to visualise when discussing them with customers and ready to use for CNC manufacturing.

More Scope for Challenging Projects

The software not only frees up time for additional orders; thanks to the extensive range of features in the subscription package, it also provides greater confidence when tackling complex projects. “I can now take on complete staircase projects without worrying. I have powerful software that enables me to bring any staircase design to life. All I need is my expertise, ideas, and technical understanding - Compass Software takes care of the rest,“ says Silas Bast.

Customers‘ ideas can be presented as detailed 3D designs. Different options can be generated directly on the computer and discussed with customers in real time. This is a significant advantage when it comes to securing new orders.

The results are impressive completed projects, which Silas Bast showcases on Instagram together with his sister. „We‘ve already won some great new projects thanks to the work we‘ve showcased online. Before, staircases like these would often have been far too time-consuming for us to take on.“

The combination of greater design flexibility and more efficient manufacturing has created numerous new business opportunities. Thanks to this, Silas Bast can now compete with larger regional staircase manufacturers for demanding projects, including standardised staircases for tiny houses and turnkey homes.

Craftsmanship remains a key element in digital design

For Silas Bast, digitalising production is not about replacing traditional craftsmanship but rather building upon it. As a child, he watched his grandfather make curved staircase components by hand. This knowledge of the craft now helps him to work through complex designs on the computer and find

solutions to unusual challenges. „Sometimes, when I'm stuck on the computer, I think about how a particular staircase component would have been made by hand. Quite often, that understanding helps me find the right settings in the software. Since I started working with Compass, I've learnt more about staircases than I did during my entire apprenticeship and master craftsman's training combined."

The combination of digital planning and practical experience also shapes the way the team works together. Consistent, detailed production drawings document all the relevant information, reduce queries and make collaboration easier. Repetitive tasks can be standardised, while individual requirements and installation work still call for skilled craftsmanship and experience.

The young team at Bast Joinery relishes the opportunity to make the most of new technology. Using it provides motivated employees with fresh challenges and opportunities to develop their skills. Consequently, the business is well equipped for the future, offering an attractive working environment for both apprentices and experienced professionals.

A Subscription Model That Pays Off

With Compass Software's subscription model, Bast Joinery has access to the latest software versions and can call on technical support whenever needed. Silas Bast believes that the model is ideally suited to his business's needs, as the investment pays off through the time saved and the additional manufacturing opportunities it creates. The predictable costs also make budgeting easier. „The monthly software costs are already covered by the first two staircases we sell."

His verdict is clear: „The decision has been 100% worthwhile. I wouldn't want to be without the combination of Compass Software and direct machine integration."

Fast, Reliable Support Makes All the Difference

Compass Software's ongoing support is an important source of reassurance in day-to-day operations. The software helps the team to manage design and manufacturing efficiently, and the support



Where it all began: Jakob Bast's workshop (third from left)

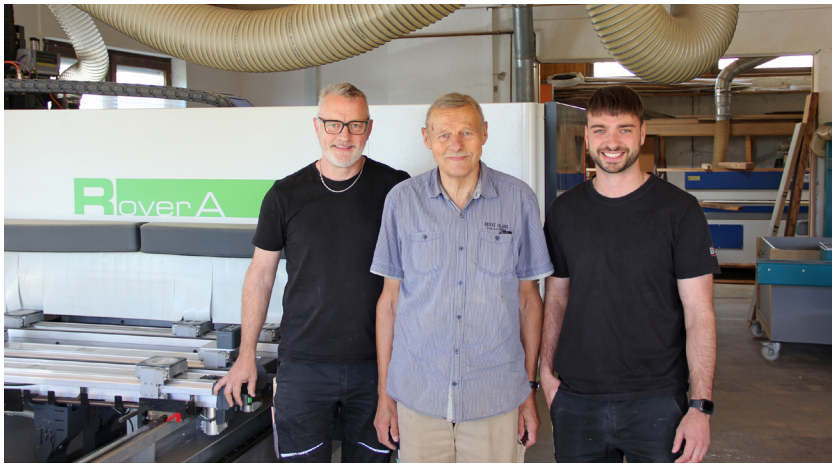
team is always on hand to help whenever a question arises. „I'm really pleased with the support from Compass Software, from the initial consultation and training right through to ongoing support. These days, we raise fewer and fewer tickets, and the issues we do encounter are becoming less significant. However, the support team is always happy to help and responds quickly."

Despite experiencing more than two months of downtime during the year of the CNC installation and software implementation, the business managed to maintain the previous year's production levels. Looking ahead, Silas Bast anticipates producing an additional 10–20 staircases per year with the present team and equipment. With current annual production standing at 40–50 staircases, this would represent an increase of 20–50%.

Preserving Tradition and Shaping the Future

With its new CNC technology and Compass Software, Bast Joinery has taken its manufacturing processes to the next level without compromising the individual character of its work. Thanks to more efficient processes and a team that embraces this development, Silas Bast is now well positioned to continue producing high-quality, bespoke staircases. Passing on traditional craftsmanship and inspiring young joiners to pursue staircase manufacturing are equally important parts of his vision.

Digitalisation is therefore not a replacement for traditional craftsmanship, but rather an opportunity to develop it further. The knowledge and experience accumulated over six generations remain at the heart of the business. With its new technology, Bast Joinery can carry this expertise into the future, working with greater precision and efficiency while exploring new possibilities.



Three generations: Mario Bast (left) runs the joinery business with his son Silas Bast (right). Grandfather Manfred (centre) is still active in the workshop.

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