

Rs. 100

SEP - OCT
2011

Bi-monthly
Vol.21 No.3

WOODNEWS

Furniture and Manufacturing Technologies

Nirav Shah

PLUS



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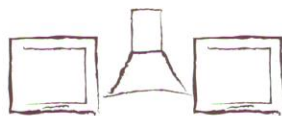


Mike
Snow



Ingo
Bette

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Kitchens



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“Setting standards in industry is not easy.

Harder still, is living up to our own.



Nirav Shah

Director – Jai Industries

Wood News Managing Editor Daniel Ship met up with Mr. Nirav Shah, Director of India's biggest woodworking machinery manufacturer, at Jai Industries' head office in Ahmedabad. With over 40 years' experience manufacturing woodworking machines and a wide range of models, Jai Industries is practically a household name in woodworking industries all across the country.

Jai Industries has been around since 1965. Can you give our readers a picture of what the company looked like in those days?

It amazes us as well! In those days we had a factory of 800 sq ft. with only three or four workers to support our father, the late Sri Niranjan Shah who was making the machines by himself. In those days, Jai Industries used to manufacture five to eight machines a month, with a range of eight to ten basic machines for solid woodworking and selling through just two or three dealers. Initially, we were promoted by the Gujarat Small Industries Corporation. They used to sell our machines in South India.

How has the company changed since that time?

It was a gradual process, but growth excellerated after we two brothers joined forces with Jai. Our major contribution was to make Jai Industries a professionally managed company. Quality manufacturing, precision engineering and professional sales and marketing practices made Jai what it is today.

In 2006, we expanded our range from solid wood working machines and started a new line of panel processing machines. In 2007, we also started importing some machines from companies like SCM to meet our customers' requirements. We have always paid special attention to the needs of our customers and done our best to accommodate them. For example, we initially focused mostly on SCM's entry level machines like the Minimax panel saws. We plan to bring in more of their high end machines in the near future because our customers are asking for them.

Now Jai is the biggest player in the wood-work and panel process machinery field, with 2.25 lakh sq. ft. manufacturing floor, having production of around 25,000 machines per annum with the widest

range, having the largest sales network throughout India and considered the highest selling brand in the woodworking industry. In a couple of years we will be celebrating our Golden Jubilee year! Till now, we have sold roughly 300,000 machines.

In what ways has the company stayed the same?

Though the company size, functioning systems and operational abilities have undergone a sea change over the years; Jai has stayed grounded in its basic principle of "value-for-money products" and "value-added services". 'The Spirit of Excellence' is our motto, and that has remained the same with quality, honesty and excellence being our guiding force. The urge to provide total satisfaction to customers has also remained with all of us. This enables Jai to provide quality machines at reasonable cost, along with fair dealing, fast delivery and good after-sales support.

How about your customers? Can you describe how they have changed over the years?

Oh, that's the story of India! The way India has changed in these years, the way all industries and markets have changed, including the woodworking field! Very fascinating, very educating. We have always kept in live touch with our customers and that's one of the reasons Jai succeeded and has more than 300,000 user-base. Till the '70s it was not such a large market – whatever you gave was accepted by the industry. Since the '80s, carpenters and woodworking workshops in India realised the need of machines for quality and better productivity. Since then, the market has become highly competitive; even sales figures have increased dramatically. Now, as the wood become precious, we see the trend changing from woodworking to panel processing machines.

How many employees does Jai Industries have today?

Newer manufacturing and marketing technologies, techniques allow us to perform excellently with relatively fewer employees. Yet currently Jai has a cumulative strength of over 550 employees, spreading over our various manufacturing units, corporate headquarters, administrative offices, national and international representatives and roaming service engineering staff.

How many machine models do you have in your range?

115 models in Jai-Wudpro (solid wood machines) series.

60 models in Jai-Modula (panel processing machines) series.

20 regular high-end machinery models in Jai-SCM range, however innumerable models are available through SCM (European panel and wood machines) range.

17 models in Jai-Turanlar (specialised panel processing machines from Europe).

Overall more than 212 models are available on demand with Jai branding, with the cost ranging from ₹ 5,000 to ₹ 5 crore.

How many are being manufactured here in India?

Currently we manufacture 126 models in-house. Some other machines are manufactured at world-wide facilities, according to Jai's India-specific dynamic designs, though our thrust is now acquiring world manufacturing standards here, which is already benefitting our customers. Our 'Pride of India' range is a testimony to that.

How has the response in the market been to the Pride of India machines?

We have received very good response to our Pride of India range machines due to quality at par with European standards, reasonable pricing, immediate and low cost availability of spares, backed by engineering expertise and service focus of Jai. It is because of this great response that we have planned to launch a few more Pride of India machines at Indiadwood 2012, including the Jai-Turanlar soft forming machine (also covered in this magazine).

We have been regularly exhibiting at Indiadwood exhibitions since 1999 and every edition, we launch several new machine models. We have eight engineers working full time on R&D to develop these new models, some of which are tailor-made for certain cities or regions of India, which have different requirements.

At Indiadwood 2012, we are planning to exhibit about 70 machines, including eight new solid wood processing machines and five new panel processing machines.

What are the secrets of your success?

Cost-Quality-Availability-Service, in a nutshell – but I can elaborate some more. Jai has kept the end-user of the machine in focus at all times. Not only the work-shop owner, but the worker/machine operator will also insist on Jai machines! That's how we have come to a stage where we once claimed, "When working on wood, India works on Jai".

What kinds of promotional activities do you do and how effective are they?

We believe in keeping Jai a 'happening' brand. Something or other is always happening around Jai. New models, new features, new outlook, new campaigns, new catalogs to communicate properly and in detail with the users. Giving choices to customers and making the process of selection easy and truly beneficial to them through various media has worked well for both the customer as a buyer and for Jai as a company. We advertise regularly through industry-specific magazines like *Wood News*, take part in major trade exhibitions like Indiadwood, use our website and other electronic tools, provide detailed manuals and video films of the machines and of course keep in live touch with all our important customers.

What does the industry need most to go forward?

In the woodworking industry, the 21st century has shown us that solid wood has become very expensive and time consuming while working. So now the consumers will opt more and more for modular furniture. We foresee really good growth in panel processing. All innovations and technological advancements are happening there.

The industry requires expert guidance to start or expand and go forward in this industry and these new ventures require huge capital investments in machines. They also require funds for land, buildings and raw materials. The Pride of India range from Jai-

Modula has proved to be a boon for such up-coming customers who aim to move forward with reasonable budgets and keep adding to their strength in a gradual manner. **WN**

