



PRESS RELEASE



Second CNC machine keeps 5 Star at Cutting Edge

Cambridgeshire based flightcase manufacturer 5 Star has taken delivery of its second CNC Machining Centre.

Again, 5 Star chose the Thermwood Corp of Indiana, USA to supply the CNC Machining Centre, which joins the company's already installed Thermwood Model 40 which has been in use for over six years. Thermwood was chosen for its reliability, ease of use and excellent after sales support.

The move is part of the company's ongoing investment programme, and follows an exceptionally busy period over the last 12 months. "Six years ago, we took delivery of our first CNC system from Thermwood, and this was seen as a big step at the time!", says 5 Star works director, Keith Sykes. "Since then, the move to our new factory five years ago and investment into other CNC systems has continued. With the growth over the last few months, we didn't hesitate in purchasing another Thermwood".

The new Model 40 - which features an operating envelope of 2.4m x 1.2m x 0.2m and is the 2005 version of the existing machine - will be used alongside the other machine for all panel cutting requirements. All recessed case hardware such as handles, catches and stays are contoured, pocket machined and drilled to accept these fittings.

New features on this model include a twelve position automatic tool-changer system. Five of these tools are mounted directly to the machine spindle and operate similarly to an old fashioned typewriter. This function increases the speed of tool-change as the machine head does not need to return to a 'Toolbank' each time. The five most used tools are housed in this tool-changer while the remaining seven are mounted in a 'toolbank' at the rear of the machining table. Other features of the Model 40 include a Becker VLT400 high flow vacuum pump which is used for part hold down. No clamping jigs are required, as this system vacuums the sheet onto a sacrificial spoilboard, again speeding up the machining process.

The control system is similar to the existing Thermwood Model 40 but has received recent software and hardware updates. Windows 2000 is now used as a platform for the Thermwood 91000 control software, which in turn controls Siemens PLC's own proprietary code. Standard PC architecture is used for the hardware, enabling quick and easy maintenance.

"The new machine fits perfectly with our recent investment into Solid Edge 3D modelling software", explains 5 Star's production manager Andy Hudson. "This machine enables us to increase CNC production due to a healthy order book and continued growth". The final installation and configuration were completed by 5 Star's engineering department, and the new Thermwood is now in full production.



For more press info and photos on 5 Star Cases, please call Louise Stickland on +44 (0)1865 202679 or +44 (0)7831 329888 or Email louise@loosplat.com. Contact 5 Star direct on +44 (0)845 5000 555 or check www.5star-cases.com.