

Commercial Application of LP® SuperStruct® Furniture Panels

Industrial Timber



The use of LP® SuperStruct® Furniture Panels in upholstered furniture production

SUMMARY

Industrial Timber, based in Hiddenite, North Carolina, provides various wood panels and related products to the furniture industry. With five manufacturing facilities in four states (Mississippi, Tennessee, North Carolina and Pennsylvania), they have the ability to meet the product volume and production deadline needs of the fast-paced furniture industry, while also offering time- and cost-saving engineering solutions to furniture manufacturers.

Through extensive research and development practices, Industrial Timber offers engineering solutions that help reduce product and process waste, while maintaining desired aesthetics and performance requirements. Industrial Timber works directly with each of its wholesale customers to find better, more efficient ways to manufacture furniture. The company assists with the engineering of the frames, produces the components, and then organizes and delivers the components in such a way that the manufacturer can efficiently assemble the frames and produce the finished piece of furniture.

OBJECTIVES

According to Mike Ruch, CEO of Industrial Timber, the furniture industry re-prices every six months. Massive fluctuations in raw materials pricing can be detrimental to the success of a manufacturer. Therefore, Industrial Timber is constantly seeking new ways to help manufacturers streamline processes, reduce product waste, and replace furniture components with comparable product alternatives that are less expensive or easier to use.

In 2008, after extensive testing, Industrial Timber began replacing some plywood components with LP® SuperStruct® Furniture Panels in many of the frames they engineer for leading furniture manufacturers in the U.S.

“We absolutely recommend the SuperStruct line to others. Every time we approach a new upholsterer, we talk to them about LP® SuperStruct® Furniture Panels.”

Mike Ruch, CEO
Industrial Timber

In Brief

LOCATION

Hiddenite, North Carolina

PROJECT SUMMARY

Industrial Timber is a company that manufactures wooden frames for the upholstered furniture industry. Using oriented strand board, plywood and hardwood products, Industrial Timber produces thousands of frames per week for multiple customers.

WEBSITE

www.industrialtimber.com

PROJECT OBJECTIVES

- Structural soundness
- Stable pricing
- Waste reduction

SOLUTION

Industrial Timber uses a substantial amount of plywood and hardwood lumber. However, they are now using more strand technologies, including LP® SuperStruct® Furniture Panels, to construct frames for their upholstered furniture customers.



IMPLEMENTATION

Today, Industrial Timber uses a mix of hardwood, plywood, and LP SuperStruct Furniture Panels in the frames they produce. The materials that make up each frame are carefully selected based on the customer's design, quality, and cost requirements.

One of the major reasons Ruch began using LP SuperStruct Furniture Panels is pricing. He said the product is far more affordable than plywood, and pricing has been more stable as well.



"Massive moves in pricing create challenges," Ruch said of the furniture industry. "With LP SuperStruct, we've been able to do a better job of locking in prices."

He added that LP SuperStruct Furniture Panels are easier to use, saying they lie flatter and tighter on the routers than plywood and have no voids, knots or other imperfections commonly found in plywood. Not only does this allow his team to work more efficiently, but he said they can engineer the panel around the end-product, which increases efficiency for the furniture upholsterers Industrial Timber serves.

The reduction in waste results in significant savings. The panel's consistency allows the company to cut multiple orders in one panel. For example, Industrial

Timber can nest small components for one customer within the wasted space of another customer's nest diagram.

Industrial Timber can also combine multiple customer orders in their lumber cutting operations, allowing them to substantially reduce waste and increase yields. What little waste is produced is collected in 55-gallon drums for recycling.

OUTCOME

According to Ruch, the proof is in the increased usage of engineered panels within the industry. He said growth of engineered wood products in the industry is substantial—50 percent or more in the last two years—and that it has gained wide acceptance due to cost efficiency, performance advantages and environmental benefits.

"We're using LP SuperStruct for just about all promotional and mid-priced products," Ruch said.

The added plus for him is customer service. "On top of it all, the service from LP has been fantastic as well," he said.