



Gary Firman, Nathan McLeod (saw operator), and Hamish Kane with their new Felder panel saw.

“We were looking for a quality cut – something that enabled us to take material straight from the saw and assemble it, every time.”

K940 - innovation and accuracy

Set up by Gary Firman 30 years ago, Firman Joinery is the largest joiner in Oamaru, with 15 staff and large, new premises on the city's Northern boundary. Hamish Kane joined the Firman team in 2000, eventually joining Gary as Co-owner 12 years later.

Today Firman Joinery have a history and reputation for craftsmanship that extends well beyond Oamaru and deep into the Central Otago region. Working almost exclusively with a regular group of building companies in the area, Firman's are well known for their quality work in high-end residential joinery, with plenty of Master Joiner awards in their showroom to prove it.

It's easy to see how the stack of awards came about, because Firman Joinery's staff are all trade qualified or in the apprentice

programme – even the project managers/detailers in the office have a trade (builder, joinery). With such a high level of skill available then it's no surprise that quality comes as standard from the Firman Joinery team. But good skills need to be paired with good tools, and Firman's Felder panel saw is certainly a good match.

Felder's K940 X-Motion, supplied by Jacks, offers all the renowned features and innovations of the Austrian woodworking group's panel saw range. The K940 has a 3.2 metre sliding table with Felder's "X-Roll" system - a precision guiding system that handles maximum loads without compromising the smooth and accurate movement of the table. Named after the 'X' shaped configuration of the roller bearings, the X-Roll system prevents wear, eliminates maintenance and provides play-free accuracy over the lifetime of the saw.

Also maintenance free, the 'Easy-Glide' saw unit tilt mechanism features a highly durable synthetic material that sits between the cast iron guides. This eliminates the need for grease to lubricate the guides and is therefore completely unaffected by dust (not that you see any in Firman's near spotless factory!). Easy-Glide provides smooth and precise tilting of the saw unit over the long term.

“Accuracy was a key reason for buying the Felder,” says Hamish. “We were looking for a quality cut - something that enabled us to take material straight from the saw and assemble it, every time.” With a powered rip-fence controlled from an overhead touchscreen panel, the K940 X-Motion provides powerful, fast and programmable cutting. “For the right job, the overhead controller and powered fence certainly saves us time” says Hamish. “And we're getting repeatable results and consistent quality.”

A 7.35kW (10hp) motor means the K940 X-motion is equally at home working with panel or solid timber – an important factor given Firman Joinery's wide variety of work, from high-gloss panel kitchens through to recently completing a complete house-lot of solid timber joinery for a 900 square metre build.

With Oamaru and the wider Central Otago's residential market booming, and an order book just about to stretch into 2023, Gary and Hamish are confident about Firman Joinery's future. “I've never seen Oamaru so busy in my lifetime” says Hamish. “We've been lucky in the South Island - even at Level 3 we were able to work nearly as normal. We've needed to because business is booming.”

