

# Profit H350 5-axis

## compact and versatile machining



Richard Packham & Peter Bjarnesen with the Format-4 profit H350 5 axis.



Peter in front of the copy lathe - made in the 1800's and still in use.

**Peter Bjarnesen's father John emigrated to New Zealand from Denmark in 1950, and in 1960 commenced furniture production. John Bjarnesen Furniture was established in Rotorua, focusing on furniture, but eventually transitioned to manufacturing unique Māori souvenirs.**

A significant turning point occurred in 1969 when the company made a bold decision to acquire a 12-spindle Bulleri carving machine. Peter recalls, "During its era, this machine was equal to modern 5-axis technology and was valued at \$10,000, exceeding the average price of a house at the time." The Bulleri enabled the production of 12 identical souvenirs simultaneously, and prompted a rebranding of the business to Wood Masters Limited.

In 1995, Peter assumed leadership of the enterprise, which, at the time, lay near dormant with only his father and one other staff member. Being a skilled joiner, Peter's passion for working with solid timber led him to revitalize the company. Following in his father's footsteps, Peter also embraced modern technology and in 2002 acquired a flatbed

CNC machine, despite not fully comprehending its applications. Looking back he laughs: "I admit I purchased it primarily out of fascination - a cool toy that I wanted to own." It was also at about that time Richard Packham joined the team. Richard is a furniture maker by trade and had known Peter for years so it was a good fit.

The flatbed CNC machine coexisted with a second-hand "Last" copy lathe that Peter's father had obtained, made in the 1800s and originally powered by steam. This lathe, now modified to run on electricity, continues to be used daily. In line with his penchant for technology, Peter was also among the early adopters of Weinig's Cube. He explains, "I was considering buying a second-hand 6-head moulder but then I was introduced to the Cube. Despite its higher cost, I believe an expensive machine that functions effectively always surpasses a cheap one that doesn't. Every minute the Cube operates saves me 12 minutes."

When the COVID-19 pandemic struck in 2020, Wood Masters faced significant challenges due to the complete halt in tourism, which had been their primary market. Peter recounts, "We found ourselves needing to adapt quickly. We printed a batch of brochures to

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promote furniture restoration, although they were never needed. Surprisingly, we were suddenly inundated with requests for bespoke furniture, repairs, and restorations. Additionally, local joinery businesses sought our services. Before we knew it, we had plenty of work."

As the flatbed CNC machine approached the 20-year mark and started experiencing issues, Peter continued his commitment to remain at the forefront of technology. In 2021, he made a strategic investment in a Format-4 Profit H350 5-axis CNC machine, supplied by Jacks. Peter says, "In the realm of technology, you're either ahead or behind. Falling behind means constantly playing catch-up. But being ahead opens up new opportunities. Interestingly, the price of the H350 in real terms is comparable to that of the flatbed CNC we purchased 20 years earlier."

Wood Masters' work tends towards unique projects, making the combination of Peter's 20 years of software experience and the H350's processing proficiency a distinct advantage. Given their limited workshop space, Wood Masters opted for the compact version of the H350, equipped with a 3-metre bed and a bumper bar safety system. With a 16 HP liquid cooled spindle, it is ideal for extended processing runs. 30 tool positions including a dedicated slot for a 350mm saw blade, and a 20-spindle drilling head, provide extensive flexibility. The H350 is compatible with vacuum pods, clamps, and jigs, ensuring workpieces are held securely for processing.

With the versatility offered by the Profit H350, the gradual resurgence of tourism, and Richard Packham set to assume ownership of the business, the future appears exceedingly promising for Wood Masters.



*The Felder range of machinery is sold and serviced in New Zealand by W & R Jack.  
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