

PRESS RELEASE**Nolte Holzwerkstoff invests in Industry 4.0****New surface scanner supports production employees**

+++ Germersheim, January 10, 2018 – Starting immediately, the Germersheim chipboard manufacturer Nolte Holzwerkstoff is employing a "digital eye" in its melamine lamination area. As of Monday, a new surface scanner monitors whether decorative foil is applied flawlessly onto the chipboard. The cost for the acquisition and installation of the scanner amounts to approximately 500,000 euros.

In the melamine lamination area, a decorative film selected by the customer is applied to the raw chipboard panels. Up to now, employees visually checked whether the decorative foil was applied perfectly onto the chipboard. "One example of a defect is a paper shred pressed together with the film, or an insect that crept into the machine", explains Alexander Kolb, Managing Director of Nolte Holzwerkstoff. This is now where the digital surface scanner comes into play. Starting immediately, eight cameras scan the laminated boards from above and below. "The advantage of this digital eye is based on its endurance. In contrast to the human eye, it never gets tired", says Alexander Kolb. The scanner will be supported by production employees – at least in its initiation phase. "A two-sided development process is taking place. The scanner 'learns' to identify errors while its human colleagues train how they interact with the new device", adds plant engineer and project head Jasper Haunerland. "The goal is to half the number of customer complaints." The employees previously working in Quality Control will be assigned new tasks within the firm. "Nobody will lose his workplace due to the new surface scanner", emphasises Alexander Kolb.

Supplementary major overhaul

Parallel to installation of the scanner, the medium-sized enterprise from Germersheim will carry out extensive overhauls in the melamine lamination production. Included in this is the replacement of the associated conveyor system and a rebuild with new seals and pistons of the press cylinder, which is as high as 16 men standing on each other's shoulders. The costs for the overhaul also amount to some 500,000 euros. Following the modernisation of the plant control system last summer, the current investments are a further step in implementation of Industry 4.0. Moreover, a modernisation of the high-rack warehousing control system is in the planning stage as well as investments in machinery for recycled wood-processing.

About Nolte Holzwerkstoff

As the oldest active chipboard manufacturer in the world, Nolte Holzwerkstoff has over 65 years of experience in the industrial manufacture of chipboard panels that are known and respected by industry and trade throughout Europe. The first chipboard was produced by Nolte Holzwerkstoff in 1951 in Rheda-Wiedenbrück, Germany. The company has been headquartered in the Rhineland-Palatinate town of Germersheim since 1973. Nolte Holzwerkstoff develops and produces chipboard under the brand name "Rheinspan" for many diverse customer requirements. The family-owned company is now in its fourth generation of management and its production is not restricted to certain standard dimensions, rather, it is flexible in regards to both dimensions and cuts. Working jointly with customers in this way, tailor-made special solutions can be developed. At this time, the Nolte Holzwerkstoff plant site in Germersheim employs approximately 200 workers.

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