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• Robotic Automation P/L • RA Service
• RA Technologies P/L • RA Consulting
The RA Group of Companies

Celebrating 20 years

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Autumn / Winter Issue - May, 2009

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Local Installation Case Study - Robotic Tending

RA's installation case-studies feature in selected industry magazines. Perhaps you'll recognise new automation potential in your own plant from the solutions you see here...

WOODEN IT BE LOVELY?...

CLIENT: ErgoFurn - a leading QLD manufacturer of commercial furniture, seating and office screens, offering custom designs as well as an express stock range.

PROBLEM: Take apart any typical office work station or boardroom cupboard and you'll find yourself with a pile of wood panels in groups of similar sizes & thicknesses, and with various patterns of drilled holes. It's a crucial need for each panel to be accurately drilled - securing the flush joins between panels that give the final unit its strength and quality in workmanship and appearance.

Despite a skills shortage reducing the availability of cabinet makers, the industry has continued to grow and achieve greater efficiency through automation. You don't need to be **IKEA*** before you're producing enough units to make automation viable. To produce a reasonable quantity of completed furniture units (say twenty desk stations) it's quickly apparent that this will require an exponential amount of operator and machining time. CNC machines such as the **SKIPPER 100** from **Biesse** have delivered substantial time savings while assuring accuracy in drilling, while other such machines can even include gluing, dowel insertion and more in the same process. This reduces errors and strain on the operator while improving quality and consistency in the final unit.

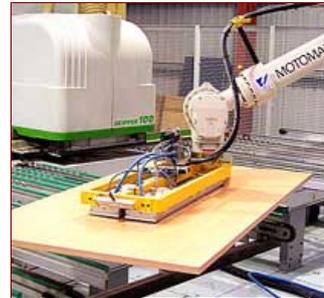
However, there is still a need for each panel to be carefully picked, loaded onto the machine, which then needs to be activated, then panel unloaded again after machining and carefully stacked. Unfortunately this has meant that an operator is still effectively tied to the machine while it is operating. ErgoFurn recognised the opportunity to capitalise on their investment in a CNC machine by automating this last step and multiplying their productivity gain.

SOLUTION: **Robotic Automation P/L** engineers consulted closely with Biesse and ErgoFurn to automate an end-to-end, quantity-production solution.

The **MOTOMAN HP165** robot features best-in-class reach (2,651mm) and repeatability (0.2mm) to allow it to serve panels from an infeed conveyor station, to the **SKIPPER 100** CNC boring station and finally, to stack the finished panels carefully on an outfeed station. The **MOTOMAN NX-100** controller activates the **SKIPPER's** drilling sequences as well as controlling the robot itself.

With a variety of panel sizes, shapes and finishes to handle, as well as finely finished surfaces to preserve, Robotic Automation P/L's incorporated the UNIGRIPPER vacuum driven gripping system. The flexibility of the MOTOMAN robot is enhanced by the use of the UNIGRIPPER which allows the robot to handle all panels without need for tool changing or adjustment. The patented design of the Unigripper allows vacuum to be applied only to the area of contact with the product/part, so there is no loss of suction due to uncovered areas of the gripper surface.

ErgoFurn's robotic solution tends their **SKIPPER** CNC machine with small panels for drawers at under 15cm wide, right up to large panels for desktops at 2 metres long. That's flexibility! "With as little as twenty panels to drill it saves time to engage the robot tending system - time that my operators can spend on other machines and processes, while the robot does the grunt-work" commented Trevor



MOTOMAN HP165 robot (165kg payload) with UNIGRIPPER vacuum gripping tool positions the next panel on the SKIPPER 100



The panel infeed conveyor can be seen at bottom/foreground and the outfeed station beyond in the background.



Take a look at some video of the system in action: click the video image above to play the video at the [Youtube](#) website.

EQUIPMENT:

- **MOTOMAN HP165** multipurpose robot (payload 165kg) and **NX-100** controller
- **UNIGRIPPER** intelligent vacuum gripping tool from Romheld Automation
- **MOTOCOM** robot interfacing software

BENEFITS:

- **Increase Productivity and reduce overall labour time and associated costs in the machining process.**

Chivers, Quality Control Manager at ErgoFurn.

Using the firm but gentle vacuum gripper, and the smoothly controlled motions of the robot, the system reduces panel damage and leaves not even so much as a finger print on the panel veneer!

*Speaking of **IKEA**, take a look at the **MOTOMAN** robotic packaging plant that assembles their popular furniture kits: You can view video of the whole process in action on [YouTube](#) by pressing this image...



- **Increase Staff Safety and reduce repetitive strains, injuries, lost production time, potential claims and compensation**
- **Increase Quality and Consistency while reducing marks and handling damage to panel surfaces**
- **Increase Reliability and Continuity of production through multiple shifts, staff breaktime and staff shortages**
- **Increase Competitiveness by reducing overall costs**

DEADLINE NEXT MONTH!...

**BUSINESS 'CASH-SPLASH'
30% Investment Tax Break**

An important reminder: The Australian Government has introduced a tax-break incentive to help your business continue investment during the current 'Global Financial Crisis'. This generous **30%** tax-break is set to fall back to 10% after June (**next month!**) so you need to hurry to take full advantage! [Follow this link for our full information sheet.](#)

STOP PRESS! - The Federal Budget announcement includes an increase in the tax-break to 50% for companies with turnover under \$2million.



It's official...



MOTOMAN has crossed the landmark figure of **over 200,000 robots installed globally**. MOTOMAN have also scored a record 92% customer satisfaction rating for the 2008 year, based on responses to their annual survey. No wonder they have become the world's favourite robot!

Robotic Automation P/L proudly continues as MOTOMAN's exclusively appointed Australia & NZ representative since 1988.



Some of the 100+ siblings in the MOTOMAN robot family.

OTC DAIHEN wins GOLD!

At the 2008 **ITM Trade Fair** (a specialist welding exhibition under the auspices of the Institute for Welding Technology) held in Poland, **OTC Daihen** was presented with the Gold medal recognising the highest quality and use of the most advanced technological solutions - specifically, The OTC digital AC/MIG Pulse Inverter **DW300**.

Achieving a welding process with lowest heat input (ideal for very thin plates), the system developed by OTC has been of particular advantage in the automobile industry, in which the stability and the appearance of weldable components have utmost priority.



RA Project Videos - on your screen now

There's a growing selection of videos on [YouTube](#) from RA's vast library of projects completed over the last 20+ years. If you want the clearest idea of how our automated solutions can work at your site - we strongly suggest a visit. Over 21,000 people around the world have viewed these videos so far. We must be showing something of interest.

If a picture paints a thousand words ...then a video is a whole novel!

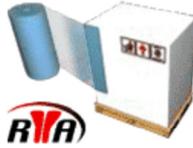
Are you missing out?

Have you had an audit of your site's automation potential? Our team is always happy to advise you over the phone or at your site - call us on **1300 552 333** to enquire or simply [reply](#) to this email.



Some of the RA videos on-line at Youtube now. Many varied automation applications.

RA Pallet-Wrapping Offers



Have you visited the ["Special Offers"](#) section of our website lately?

Along with robotics, you'll find new, great-value offers on fully and semi automatic pallet-wrapping systems from **ROBOPAC** (of Italy) and

RA Technologies P/L -our packaging automation division. Check back regularly for additional offers.



Press on the images to view directly

Wrapping up help for VIC Bushfires

RA has donated use of the **ROBOPAC 'Jolly'** PPS stretch wrapper - used by the good folk of the **Lions Club** to wrap food, clothing and other items for homeless victims of the recent fires. For six weeks the wrapper sped up the process of distributing the donated goods which had to be palletised and wrapped for shipping out to these distressed recipients in urgent need. Our thanks to all involved in the support!

If you would like to contribute in the wake of this worthy cause, please visit [The Victorian Bushfire Reconstruction & Recovery Authority](#) for details.



The Lions Club staff palletising and wrapping donated goods for the bushfire homeless.

RA Sydney makes an Olympic move...

Please note that RA's Sydney offices/factory has relocated to **Newington**. This central location in the Sydney Olympic Park precinct will allow us to better serve our clients across the Sydney metro area. The building itself housed an international media centre during the 2000 games. Please update your records now (for RA Sydney only) to:

**14 / 4 Avenue Of The Americas, Newington
NSW 2127** (enter via Fariola Street) [Sydways Ref. p273 R3](#)
PO Box 544 Rydalmere BC NSW 1701.
Ph: (02) 8748 6500 Fax: (02) 8748 6501



RA Finance - Launched!

RA Finance is our newest business unit - created to support the purchasing power of our clients and their investments in the automated solutions that will deliver immediate productivity, efficiency, safety and also **savings** for the medium term and for many years ahead.

Particularly timely given the prospect of a slow recovery in financial availability. Contact us on **1300 552 333** and our staff can take you through the options to package your purchase in easy monthly instalments. Ask about **Commercial Hire Purchase, Rental**, and of course the Government's **30% Investment Tax-Break** (ending soon!).



A new service to increase your options and purchase-power!

"FMC" is now spelled "JBT" for AGV's!

While still the same company with over 20 years experience in Automatic Guided Vehicles, **FMC Technologies** of the USA has undergone a name change to reflect its new independence from parent company **FMC**, which is now concentrating on its power businesses.



Shakespeare said it best: "A rose by any other ...three-letter-acronym... would smell as sweet".

Just Ask!



Our Melbourne facility (Knoxfield) has a permanent **Demonstration Area** - call us on **(03) 9730 9000** or simply [reply](#) to this email and arrange a visit & demonstrations!

RYA The RA Group Ph: 1300 552 333 www.ragroup.com.au

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