

Miller

WOOD TRADE PUBLICATIONS



Strasser Celebrates 40 Years As A Family

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Woodinville, WA—Strasser, headquartered here, manufactures bathroom vanities, furniture, and accessories. The company utilizes 125,000 board feet of Hardwood lumber annually of Cherry, Maple, Alder and Oak in 3/4-inch thicknesses. Moulding blanks are also used to build furniture components and shaker doors.



Employees at Strasser take pride in crafting beautiful and elegant furniture including the Alki collection.

The people at Strasser take pride in crafting beautiful and elegant furniture in a clean facility that meets or exceeds all federal and Washington State EPA guidelines. With a focus on producing high-quality, American-made vanities and components, Vice President of Sales Peter Ollestad said the operation celebrated its 40th anniversary in 2022. **“We are proud to support our employees, their families, and the economy of our community,” Ollestad said.** “Our people are long-term, and they have a lot of

experience. Our Production Manager Eduardo Torres has been here for over 25 years. Purchasing Manager Megan Robinson has been with Strasser for over 20 years. I've been here for 18 years, and many of our factory employees have been with us for 20 to 30 years. We have a tenured team, and this is a family operation. Most of us are not family, but we feel like family.”

Procuring lumber directly from sawmills, Ollestad said sustainability and quality are priorities at Strasser. Recently the company invested in an upgraded beam saw from Otto Mayer Engineering Works. He explained, “We utilize the saw for our side panels, inside divider panels, doors and drawers. Our operator, Jesus Lara, is impressed with its performance. He says it is naturally automated; it is quick starting up and shutting down, saving time. It is also fast to calibrate. Strasser will also save money and material, as the computer system/saw finds the best way to cut in order to minimize waste.”

When asked what sets Strasser apart from other operations, Ollestad said, “Quality product and customer service are our keys to success. At Strasser, our customer service doesn't stop with the people answering the phones. From the factory to myself to the president of Strasser, we realize the way to stay in business is by producing a quality product and offering better service than our competitors. Our strength lies in our selection, quality, and service. With designs, sizes, and different patterns, we have about 50,000 different product combinations,” Ollestad said. “On top of that, we can offer some custom solutions. If the customer can show us what they are looking for, we can probably produce it.”



Strasser makes bathroom vanities, furniture and accessories, including the Belltown.

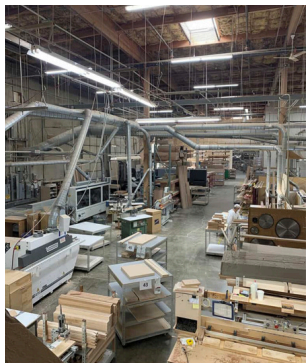


Luxury Products Group named Strasser its supplier of the year for 2021.

Strasser was supported by the Washington Manufacturing Association (WMA) during a time when many companies were moving manufacturing overseas. Ollestad explained, “We don't have inventory sitting around gathering dust. Lean manufacturing allows us to be competitive in the global market and still manufacture our products in the United States. The WMA approached us with pro-bono consulting services in 1999. We reviewed the production operation together, and WMA suggested bringing in GEMBA Research to introduce lean manufacturing techniques. From there the rest was seamless. We introduced lean manufacturing techniques and 'just-in-time' practices in purchasing and production, which eliminated inventory.”

Further investing into a commitment to lean manufacturing, the Strasser company president traveled to Japan. He visited 14 companies in different industries that used lean manufacturing techniques throughout their operations. Toyota City was among the plants he visited where he observed impressive efficiency using lean techniques. Strasser continued to evolve, and over the course of the following two years, production and sales managers accompanied GEMBA Research consultants to Japan to learn techniques firsthand.

The people at Strasser are consistent about finding ways to conserve energy, reduce waste, increase recycling and use cleaner manufacturing practices. Ollestad commented, “We know the importance of leaving a cleaner world for future generations and we are continually evaluating ways to reduce energy consumption. We have upgraded LED lighting, purchased highly efficient air compressor equipment, and upgraded waste management procedures.”



Long-tenured employees in the factory at Strasser manufacture quality products.



Strasser uses hi-tech equipment in its factory.



The work done in the spray room is one step in manufacturing high-quality products at Strasser.