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The AmeriCase production area is separate and includes the new Schelling fh4 saw and VS 12 storage and retrieval system.

At a glance

Who: American Millwork and Cabinetry Inc.

Where: Emmaus, Pennsylvania

Divisions: AmeriCase, AMC Installers LLC

What: Architectural millwork, casework

Employees: 45

Plant size: 60,000 square feet

Website: www.amcmillwork.com

Automated panel retrieval system helps millwork firm deliver the whole package

American Millwork and Cabinetry delivers both quality architectural millwork and casework to its customers.

“When a project contains both architectural millwork and casework, AMC shines,” president and CEO George Reitz said. “Since conception, AMC was an architectural millwork house. In 2010, we launched a division called AmeriCase, providing us the opportunity to offer our clients a combined approach.”

The company’s 45 employees use all kinds of wood species, veneers and composite materials to make reception desks, nurses’ stations, semi-



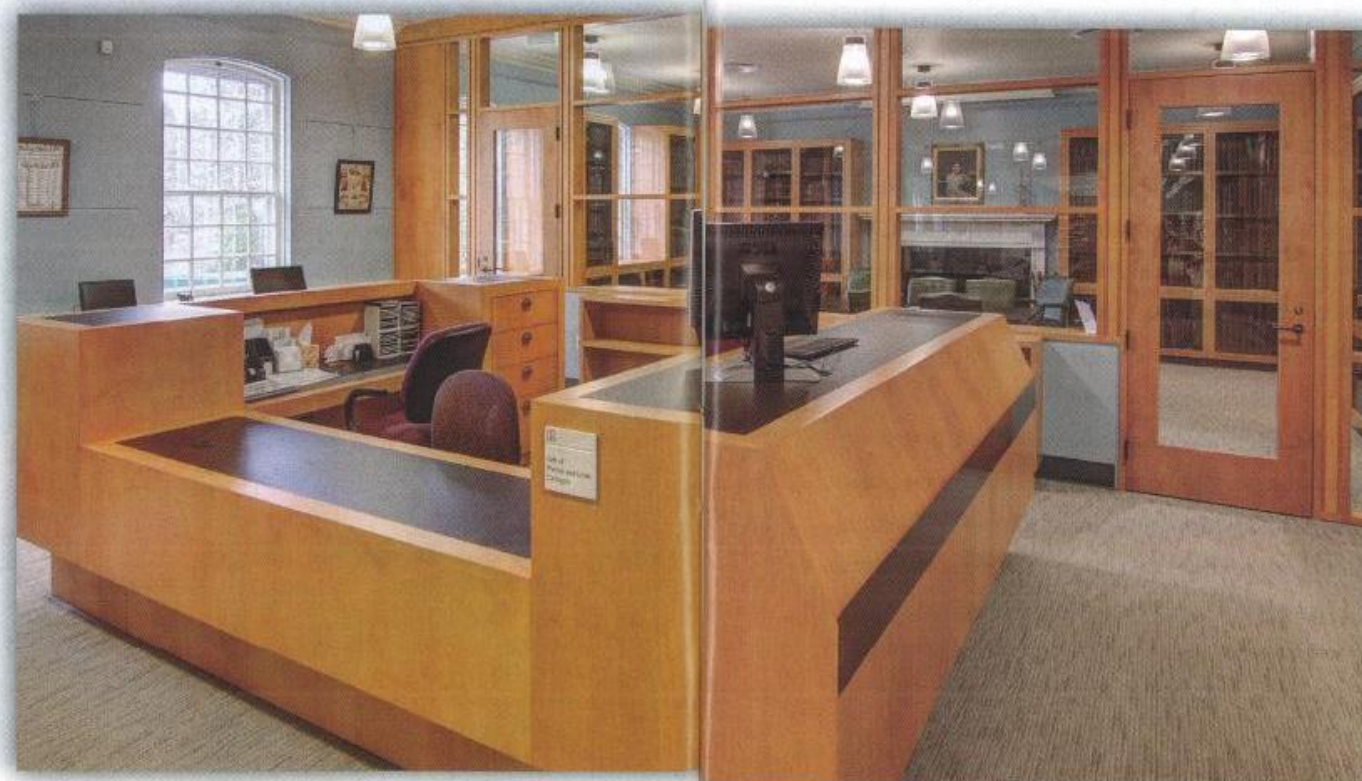
Schelling fh4 panel saw was recently added, along with an automated panel retrieval system.

custom and custom casework, display cases and panel systems in a 60,000-square-foot location in Emmaus, Pennsylvania.

AmeriCase was formed to highlight and differentiate the strengths and capabilities of the two operations. American Millwork specializes in high-quality architectural millwork. The AmeriCase line produces a more standard, or semi-custom, product primarily targeted for the institutional, educational, retail and medical/health care users. (A third division, AMC Installers, does installation.)

In the AmeriCase semi-custom line of commercial casework, they can make all the cabinets the same width to fit a certain space, rather than making three 20-inch cabinets and having 6 inches left over. All boxes can be the same custom dimensions, not stock sizes.

A new Schelling fh4 saw and VS 12 storage and retrieval system were added recently. “This system enables AmeriCase to streamline the process and allows the caseloads to be manufactured in a more



Emmaus, Pennsylvania, company can handle all aspects of millwork and casework for customers.

+ PANEL RETRIEVAL SYSTEM



+ Lehigh Valley a good location for industry

George Reitz says Pennsylvania's Lehigh Valley is a wonderful resource for people. He appreciates the work ethic of Lehigh Valley people, including showing up every day and being committed to quality.

Reitz is involved in the Lehigh Valley Economic Development Corp., www.lehighvalley.org. Pennsylvania has always emphasized manufacturing, but the effort here is also focused on large corporations and has made the area, which

includes Allentown and Bethlehem, into a logistics pivot point. Recently, more European companies have set up manufacturing or distribution operations here to serve the U.S. East Coast.

Reitz also sits on the advisory board of the Lehigh Valley Technical Institute for cabinetmaking, and is on the board of Lehigh Economic Advancement Project, and partners with the East Stroudsburg Business Incubator (East Stroudsburg University).

The company makes reception desks, nurses stations, semi-custom and custom casework, restaurant millwork, display cases and panel systems.

efficient manner," Reitz said. "Greater efficiency means we can offer our customer a more competitive price even when the product is semi-custom."

AMC is being asked by customers to handle a wider range of details and materials, including metal, glass, stainless steel and preformed stone. "Our project management team will organize and orchestrate the buyouts on those things. Architects have an appreciation for that."

The company serves the Mid-Atlantic region, and works with architects

and contractors from Long Island to Virginia. Most millwork is commercial, and customers include colleges and universities, all kinds of health care, assisted living, restaurants, yacht clubs, country clubs and offices. The company also does some job shop work for millworkers in New York City, and their semi-custom casegoods are featured in places such as the new Freedom Tower on the World Trade Center site in Manhattan.

Solid wood and custom

Within the Emmaus operation, the solid wood production cell includes a Weinig moulder, SCMI shaper, Northtec sander and a Timesavers four-head 55-inch sander for veneer sanding. A tool room has a Weinig Rondamat 960 tool grinding machine and tooling profiles displayed on the wall.

The custom production cell includes the bench work area where skilled craftsman make custom projects such as mahogany bars, courtroom witness stands, custom reception desks and nurse's stations. This area includes a Holzma panel saw, Andi router, Brandt edgebander and a Ligmatech panel retrieval system.

A finishing booth handles anything the architect and designer specify. AMC will use conversion varnish, precat lacquer, polyester, or conversion



The casework production area has a Holz-Her Pro-Master point-to-point machine.

To see the Holz-Her Pro-Master point-to-point in the casework production area, watch the video on your smartphone or www.CabinetMakerFDM.com/92850.html



varnish, and will mix their own stains from dry pigments. A DeVilbiss 9-inch spray machine is used for finishing mouldings, especially when orders exceed 1,000 lineal feet.

Reitz said that American Millwork's five engineers have stepped up their game in software, using the latest Microvellum version 7.0. They have also used Crow's Nest software management system for several years, which Reitz says tells the next person in the process what to do and has been very beneficial.

Casework production

The AmeriCase production area is separate and includes the new Schelling fh4 saw and VS 12 storage and retrieval system, along with kitting carts that move groups of cut pieces from place to place. The saw takes panels from the retrieval system, cuts them, and then they are machined, edgebanded, and go to dowel insertion and the case clamp.

The new VS 12 storage and retrieval system for the AmeriCase line is the first system of its

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+ PANEL RETRIEVAL SYSTEM

kind installed in an architectural millwork and casework plant in the United States.

"It will make our AmeriCase line much more efficient, allowing us to increase our ability to meet tighter deadlines, while achieving expanded production demands and competitive prices," George Reitz said. "There will be less forklift use, less damage to sheet goods, and it gives us better time and inventory management."

Rear-loaded panel saw

This Schelling fh4 is rear-loaded panel saw, with the ability to cut plywood or composite sheet goods up to 5 x 12 feet. It will also accomplish a significantly larger throughput than any saw without a retrieval system. The retrieval system will keep an inventory system of all sheet goods in the entire operation.



Tooling profiles are stored in an easy-to-see display in the tool room. Mouldings are produced and finished here.

According to Reitz, his engineers can program the retrieval system in the evening before the plant shuts down, and it will work through the night retrieving, sorting and stacking the panels for next day's production. It can store and retrieve materials from up to 4,500 sheets in 24 to 30 stacks of



The custom production cell includes the bench work area where skilled craftsmen make custom projects.

material that are 80 inches high with no dunnage in between. It can also retrieve and sort more than 300 panels in an eight-hour shift, or overnight.

The retrieval system is also an ERP system. "We can look at any given time exactly how many sheets of any material are in inventory. The retrieval system will then

start locating materials at the rear end of the saw. A rear labeling system will label all parts as a sheet. Barcode scanning will tell any machine operator what the drilling code is, where dowels are located. Operators here are also training to write programs themselves at the machine. Operators have phones and can call engineering directly if something isn't clear or doesn't look right. In addition to the new saw and retrieval system, the casework production area has a Holz-Her Pro-Master point-to-point, Accu-Systems HPJY boring and dowel machine, Brandt Ambition edgebander that does 20 mil (3/4-inch wood edge) edgebanding and Ligmatech Optimat MPP case clamp. Reitz says that they've been especially pleased with the Brandt edgebander.

Reitz is the current president of the New Jersey chapter of Architectural Woodwork Institute (AWI) and is active with the leadership counsel and best practices, and supports the Woodworker Career Alliance. The company is QCP certified for supply and

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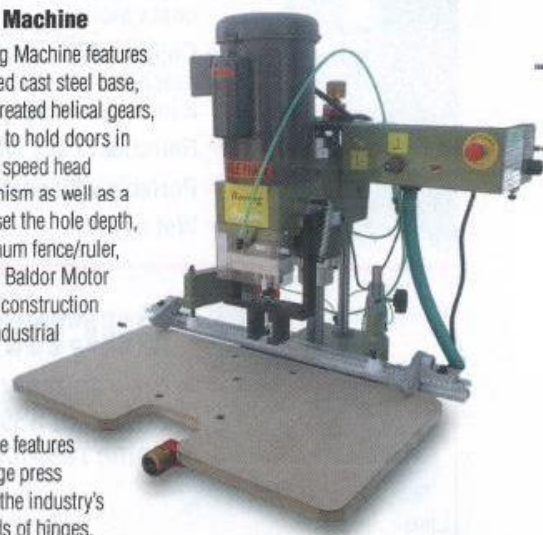
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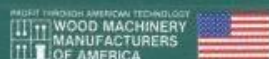
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installation, and millwork and casegoods.

"The continuation of integrating technology with old world craftsman will be a neverending goal and achievement," Reitz said. "We intend to add a separate finishing area which will contain a tow line, downdraft booths and drying ovens.

"The architectural millwork and casework industry is not unique as the margins are being squeezed," Reitz said. "There is not one industry that cannot say the same thing. If a company and/or industry are doing the same thing they were doing five or 10 years ago, they are on the way out. One needs to constantly reinvent themselves and adapt to the market." <

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