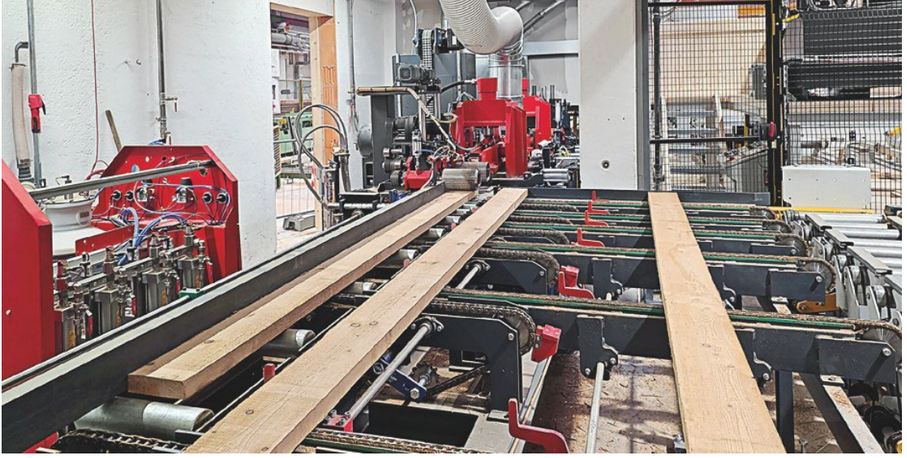


*Howial installed a compact finger-jointing line type HVP 28-250 at Huter & Söhne*

HUTER & SÖHNE

# Flexible allrounder

## Compact system with separate melamine-hardener application

With the new compact finger-jointing system from Howial, a company within the MINDA Group, the long-established Innsbruck-based company Huter & Söhne is transforming its GLT-production. The result: maximum flexibility, a significant increase in material efficiency, and the first approval for the separate glue application of melamine-hardener in Austria.

Günther Jauk

*Large, complex glulam beams for such large timber-construction projects are the specialty of Huter & Söhne*

„The only drawback of the system is that we'll have less material available for biomass heating in the future," Tobias Huter, managing director of Huter & Söhne, jokes during a visit by *Holzkurier* to the company's headquarters in Innsbruck. This humorous dig is actually a huge compliment to the new investment: Resource efficiency has increased significantly as a result of the higher raw material yield.

For over 160 years, the name Huter has been synonymous with consistency in Tyrolean timber construction. But tradition doesn't mean standing still. On the contrary: In the midst of one of the most challenging construction phases in recent history, the company—which passed into the hands of the next generation two years ago—decided to make another major investment in the timber construction sector. The heart of this modernization is a custom-built finger-jointing line from Howial, which represents not just a machine, but an entirely new production concept.

**Precise allrounder**

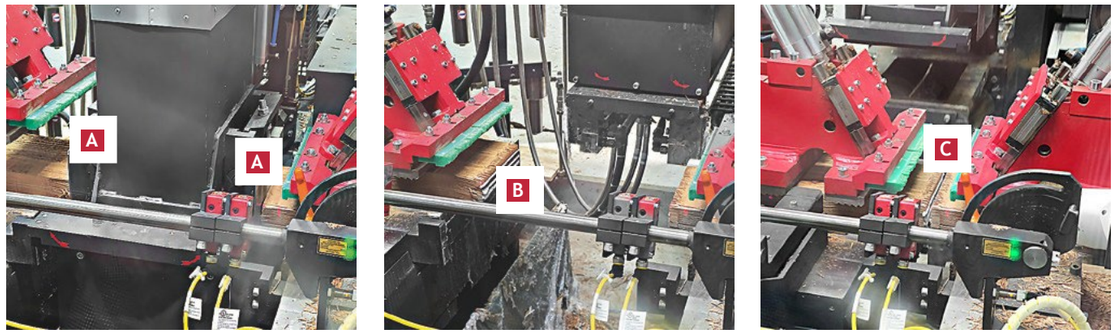
Until a few months ago, the GLT-production at Huter & Söhne was characterized by intensive manual labor. The raw material was sorted by hand, marked with fluorescent chalk, and, after joint milling into batches, glued with a roller. This was equally time-, labor-, and resource-intensive",
Huter recalls.

The search for a solution led the Tyroleans to Howial in Pohlheim, Germany. "We visited a facility in the spring 2025 and knew right away: "This compact machine is just right for us," Huter recalls. The goal was clear: As an "allrounder" in the field of timber engineering, Huter needs a system that is just as flexible as its employees. Whether spruce, larch, Douglas fir, pine, or Retrotimber—the new line must be able to process it all, handling glulam beams up to a length of 40 meters, a width of 280 millimeters, and a height of 2 meters.

**Contactless MUF application**

The delivered system, a compact line HVP 28-250, combines milling, glue application, and pressing in a fast and precise cycle. With a pressing force of up to 250 kN, the machine can process timber up to a width of 300 mm. A key advantage of the compact system lies in its design: Since the entire process takes place in a matter of seconds, the glue does not have time to run or set prematurely. This also enables the contactless, separate, two-sided application of the glue and hardener for the MUF glue. Following several successful implementations of the glue application systems supplied by Oest in other countries,

*View through the window: In just a few seconds, joints are milled (A), glue is applied (B), and lamellas are pressed together (C). This quick sequence enables contactless, separate application of melamine - hardener. The system significantly reduces the amount of cleaning required.*




Huter is the first project in Austria to be approved by Holzforschung Austria (HFA).

For this purpose, Howial had to modify the design of certain components. "Since standard steels cannot withstand the aggressive hardener, we had to use special high-resistance steels," explains Managing director Howial Michael Hofmann. In addition, the system includes an integrated re-gluing function in case the sensors detect an insufficient application—a safety feature that, according to Huter, visibly impressed even the HFA experts during the acceptance.

The redundant system ensures maximum process reliability and reduces the cleaning time from three quarters of an hour a day to a minimum.

**Experienced general planner**

Howial did not only supply the machine but was also responsible for the entire layout planning and concept. That was a logistical masterpiece in the existing halls in Innsbruck.

The system had to connect two separate hall areas, which even required the integration of a fire damper directly into the finger-jointing line.

The new line begins with unstacking of the raw material packages, after which each lamella is measured and evaluated by an Alpiscan scanner.
Based on this analysis, an existing crosscut saw integrated into the system removes the defects. Next, the raw material is transferred to a buffer storage being built by another supplier. Three buffers ensure sufficient temporary storage, so that the right lamellas always arrive at the right time.

The renovation was like open-heart surgery. "In timber engineering, you can't go three months without producing anything," Huter emphasizes. Until just before Christmas 2025, lamellas for 33-meter-long glulam beams were manufactured on the old production line, and then came the radical cut: Dismantling, digging a pit, new installation, starting up, and integration into the existing ERP system. Thanks to close coordination between Huter, Howial, and the other partners, the relaunch was successfully completed within the tight schedule.

**Investment in the future**

For Huter, the new system is more than just a technical upgrade. It is a statement of both economic and environmental responsibility. "In times of a construction crisis, we are deliberately investing in the niche market of high-quality custom construction." "We don't think in terms of five-year cycles, but rather in terms of what will stand the test of time."

The plant's technical availability is now over 90% — a figure that seemed to be utopian
simply due to cleaning and setting up times.
. By savings in glue, lower energy consumption, and a significant reduction in wood waste, the system also pays off from an environmental standpoint. The precision of the joint and the gluing take the quality of the final products to a new level.


*Managing director Howial Michael Hofmann (center), together with Tobias Huter, Managing director of Huter & Söhne and Head of wood construction Huter Richard Waldauf*