

The Saw Revolutionising Inotek

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HUNDEGGER
Innovationen für den Holzbau

This piece was written by FTMA's Kat Welsh with FTMA Supporting Partner, Hundegger.

Inotek Timber Systems are a frame and truss business based in Sunshine West, Victoria. When they first opened their doors in 2019, making frames and trusses for residential builders throughout Victoria, they started off with an alternate brand of saw but within the first 12 months purchased a second-hand Hundegger. Even though they are a young business and have gone through the industry pitfalls of recent times, last year they made a mighty decision to upgrade their equipment.

Their choice? A **Hundegger TURBO-Drive saw**.

Hans Hundegger AG, located in the Bavarian town of Hawangen, was founded by Hans Hundegger in 1978. The company's success is built on the dedication of its global work force, excellent customer service, innovative designs, and ideas that are often sparked from customer feedback and industry needs. The Hundegger family is passionately involved in innovation, management and operations helping to ensure Hundegger AG's continued success as the experts in CNC-controlled wood component machinery for generations to come. The universal, flexible machines are used in all timber construction sectors from carpentry, joinery, timber frame construction, log house construction, prefabricated house construction, mass timber (CLT, Glulam), and right down to the production of playground equipment.

For Inotek, and their business requirements, when it comes to framing, the tools are just as important as the quality of the wood, the software, and the design. The TURBO-Drive seemed like the obvious choice.

Ian Ashby, Managing Director at Inotek, and Barry Sheridan, Sales and Service rep from Hundegger, met to go over the details of how the TURBO-Drive has impacted the Inotek business.



What are the key benefits of the Hundegger TURBO-Drive saw?

Ian – We've got another branded linear saw, and we've got an older Hundegger, and it's simply better than both of those. We believe it's better than anything else available on the market. It's certainly quicker, the software's more advanced and what it can actually achieve is better, and the quality of the cuts. The ability to stack 4 high and mitre cut all those at the same time saves so much time for us.

How long have you had the saw operating?

Ian – About 6 weeks.

Barry – It arrived mid-June and was installed and fully commissioned within 2 weeks.

Given the recent installation, what impact has it had in that time?

Ian – For us, from an investment point of view, we were running an additional shift for the cutting, to be able to keep up with the production team. After this saw was installed, and after 3 or 4 weeks of the team getting used to it, we cut that shift completely. It's saving us more on labour, than it's costing us to pay off the saw. It's been great for our staff, we've been able to pull them off a late shift, back to normal hours. The affect it's had on the business has been superb, in no time at all. It was unexpected to be honest.

Did you have a projected financial outlay of when the machine would be paid off?

Ian – Our expectation would've been 4 to 5 years. The reality is probably 2 to 3 years. It depends on how the market goes. If the market carries on at a level we anticipate it will, then I would say 2 to 3 years and the machine will be paid for itself. The productivity gains and quality improvements of our end products are hard to quantify but there is no doubt that the new Hundegger TURBO-Drive saw is paying us back already both financially and through the quality of our products which enhance our company's reputation.

What features have you noticed, that perhaps the other saw wasn't capable of, for example drilling, or the different attachments?

Ian – The immediate affect would be the truss cutting. It's able to perform cuts on all 4 timbers in the stack, whereas the previous one couldn't. Plus the speed advantages, plus the software. According to our production staff, the new saw is at least 2 and half, to 3 times as fast as the alternate branded lineal saw we have.

In terms of the maintenance of the machine, and the supports from Hundegger, what are the features?

Barry – The TURBO-Drive has been in production for numerous years and it's flooded the Australian market. The feedback we get from customers, in the difference from a SPEEDCut, which is our older machinery, is that maintenance wise its huge savings for them. It's all automated. The older machinery would be manually greased and can be an intense 2 to 3 hours per week [in maintenance]. It's usually the first failure on machinery – the lack of knowledge or care from operators. The TURBO-Drive takes all of that away, it automates the whole lot. Ongoingly we provide supports and work with any issues, e.g. we have the ability to download diagnostic files. We help customers out with whatever they need.

What was the training like for staff with the new software and machine?

Ian – We had training for our supervisors. It ended up being 4 full days in the office to go through the software. It sounds like a lot but it's time well invested. They transitioned onto the new saw very easily. One of the key things is putting that time in up front, so supervisors understand it fully, that's helped us be more productive, quicker than we anticipated.

What does this mean for Inotek moving forward as a business?

Ian – We're only in our 4th year of business, we're fairly young. We started in 2019. We've gone through everything, COVID, timber shortages, labour issues, you name it – it has hit us in the first 4 years. And we've grown and grown from there. We're doing 15-20 deliveries a day on average. We've gone from having zero equipment in our factory in January 2019 to now having 3 linear saws, 3 pull-through saws, 2 frame lines, and multiple roof truss and floor production equipment and are looking to invest again in 2024. In July, we bought the factory that we were leasing here, which includes the factory at the back. In 12 months time when the leaser moves out, we will expand into there, and double production again. We'll be looking at another Hundegger. It's been a pretty steep growth curve for us.

We're fortunate that we've got a number of very loyal customers that have been with us from day one, and we've been bringing new customers onboard, word spreads about the quality of the product and the quality of the service. We pride ourselves on quality which is why we went for the Hundegger. We produce somewhere in the region of 80% of our frames with LVL studs, which gives a much better quality product but it's not just the materials, it's the production equipment as well that produces that quality. And the staff. We insist on employing good staff, that have good experience. We look at every aspect of the structural build, so we don't just supply frames and trusses, we supply all the metal work, all the bolts, all the packers, everything that a builder needs. We focus on that to make sure our customer gets everything they need for their build, giving them a true timber engineered product.

We supply an offsite timber engineering product and we're trying to bring that into the ethos here. Our timber designers are involved in every aspect of the build. They take on a project and they design it from start to finish. Our customers know they're getting everything they need to complete the whole build, and it's going to be a quality product using quality materials.

Our next step is to go more and more into the offsite space producing semi closed frames, floor cassettes and beyond. The Hundegger helps with that. The TURBO-Drive will be utilized for its design features – It open up the side of industry that we're keen to continue towards.

For anyone interested in finding out more information about the Hundegger range, they will be at the **Timber Offsite Construction 2023 Conference and Exhibition** running over 11th – 12th September, at the Crown Promenade Melbourne.

Or for more information about any of the products and services of **Hundegger** or **Inotek** their contact details are;



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