



A staircase manufacturer's profitability has been boosted by more than 30% after switching from traditional production methods to Masterwood CNC machining centres.

It has cut out substantial amounts of overtime while increasing productivity by more than 40%.

HMS Joinery, of Newcastle-under-Lyme, Staffordshire was set up in 1990. Although it became successful in winning contracts from national house builders, the staff, including owner Harry Murray, were regularly working a seven-day-week in order to get the work out.

Said Mr Murray: "Due to all the overtime that was being paid out and eating up the profits, the long-term future of the business became uncertain."

The turn-round in HMS's fortunes began when it bought a Masterwood Atlas XL. It took over the production of the staircases, replacing a semi-automatic trenching machine and the need for other tasks to be done by hand.

It has since been joined by a smaller Project 416KS model. While the Atlas now concentrates on producing the main body of the staircases, all of the components, including the newel posts, treads and kite winders, are made on the Project.

More Efficient

"The first Masterwood machine totally transformed the way we worked while adding the second has allowed us to become even more efficient," said Mr Murray. "In a short time we have gone from being a traditional joinery based on hand-work to running a modern staircase production line."

Having the two Masterwood machines has allowed HMS to increase its output by 40%, enabling it to take on additional work from existing customers. It used to take a day to produce a standard staircase with kite winders, which can now be done in about three hours. The company turns out 50-60 staircases each week, based on five-and-a-half-day working with minimal overtime.

"The bottom line is that we are saving hugely on overtime payments, which has made the business far more profitable", said Mr Murray.