

Quick Tips

Easy ideas to improve production efficiency

Set up Joiners by Line Number

Programming computerized joiners so that anyone can run the machines is vital to today's production needs. Whether someone is out sick, has to be laid off, or is simply replaced with a new worker, you have to keep joining. Regardless of joiner brand, the same system should be used. When programming line 1 of the joiner, take a very short piece of that moulding and mount it to a board in plain sight of the machine. For multiple machines, each one should be programmed the same way. Line 1 is for a specific profile, regardless of machine brand. On the board the profile is labeled "1." Continue programming the machines in the same manner using small wood chips of the moulding profiles and labeling them "2", "3", etc.

You can assign any moulding number to the program line of the joiners if you want, but each machine should be programmed by the line number first. Many different

operators over time will use their own moulding numbering system, which will be impossible for others to decode later. Keep it simple and program by the line numbers. When you get duplicate profiles but with different finishes, assign the same line number to those profiles. Since all brands of computerized joiners allow you to search by line number, it's the best way to store them and make all machines equal in your production line. When an operator needs to switch to a different machine, they already know the system to find the needed program.



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Contributors to this column are industry members who have experience in production framing operations. If you have a tip of your own, please send it to: Quick Tips, PFM Production, 207 Commercial Court, Morganville, NJ 07751.

Computerizing Production

Effective use of computerized software can increase profits and create a better experience for employees and customers alike. To add software effectively, plan carefully, define a specific goal, and do not rush into anything. Your business may be fine without computerizing. There is nothing wrong with manual processes; they shouldn't be abandoned just for technology's sake.

Have a clear understanding of the benefits and costs associated with any software purchase. Start with a detailed understanding of your production operation—where can you increase capacity or simplify processes? Most software does a great job of accumulating information. At what points do you really need information, such as number of frames/mats cut in a day, and how are you going to use that data—creating an incentive plan, improving productivity, or something else? Having a detailed flow chart of your current process is key. Who uses what and why? Having a paper trail of your current process is important to prospective software vendors because it helps them create software to fit that process.

Some software applications allow a partial integrated approach while others work through order software. Finding the right software and compatible equipment is a long-term decision. Do your homework up front, find a vendor you are comfortable with, and you will have a much higher degree of success.



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