



The Hundegger K2-Industry is Zech Holzbau's most recent investment. The Bavarian company specialized in CNC contract joining already at the beginning of the new millennium

ZECH HOLZBAU

Contract joining as recipe for success

From a competitor in the trade to a reliable, established service provider

Timber construction runs in the Zech family's blood. The company had been a traditional carpentry business for two generations before Hans Zech specialized in CNC contract joining around 25 years ago. Since then, Hundegger machines have been nearly as much a part of the family as Zech's sons – the next generation to pursue the passion for wood as building material.

✍️ & 📷 Günther Jauk

"Once you've worked with a Hundegger machine, you don't want to have to do without it anymore," Markus Zech says. He runs the family company Zech Holzbau, which is located in Sauerlach, south of Munich, together with his father Hans Zech. With just one employee and two Hundegger joinery machines, the company specializes in contract joining for regional carpentry compa-

nies. The cornerstone for this success story was laid three generations ago: Markus Zech's great-grandfather founded a carpentry business and invested in a mechanically controlled joinery machine from Fezer in the 1960s – 25 years before Hans Hundegger revolutionized timber construction with the launch of the P8, the first computer-controlled model, in 1985.

Pioneer of contract joining

In 1999, Hans Zech gave up classic carpentry work and focused on contract joining instead. He established his own business together with a partner and ordered a K1 joinery machine from Hundegger. While the two were waiting for their K1, Hundegger presented the successful K2 model for the first time at the Ligna fair in Hanover, and Zech spon-

aneously decided to order a K2 instead. At the time, this model was characterized by its revolutionary transport and positioning system (two-hand technology).

Equipped with state-of-the-art technology, the recently established company quickly built up a loyal customer base in the early 2000s and generally had the machine run for 16 hours a day. "For a long time, we were the only company with a CNC joinery machine in our region," Hans Zech recalls. He made a continuous effort to further develop the company and invested in a new Hundegger CNC machine of the latest generation every five years.

Family at work

When his son Markus joined the company four years ago, Hans Zech bought his partner's shares and transformed Zech Holzbau into a real family business. His younger son Hans helps out as a working student in work preparation, and 14-year-old Maximilian is already actively involved in the company, too. Four years ago, the next investment in a new joinery machine was in the pipeline. "We noticed that we could no longer manage orders with the K2 alone, which is why we also invested in a Robot-Drive 650," Markus Zech says and goes on to explain this decision. "The Robot-Drive was meant to relieve us. In addition, it is much better suited for certain processing work than the K2."

Hundegger designed the Robot models as particularly flexible universal machines. A six-axis robot arm does all the processing and a tool magazine which can hold 18 tools is available for extensive milling, drilling and sawing work. In addition, the machine in use at Zech is equipped with an additional overhead 5-axis saw-slot-marking unit with a drive power of 13 kW, which further increases the throughput of the Robot-Drive.

Output doubled

The company's most recent investment was made in 2022 when a new K2-Industry was purchased. In 2019, the K2-Industry replaced the tried-and-tested K2i model, making it possible for Hundegger to respond to ever more demanding market requirements, especially in the high-performance area. For example, the company implemented the electronic positioning of the units, using racks and spindles, for the first time. This way, the units can be positioned even more precisely and quickly. Thanks to the open circular saw unit, cuttings automatically fall down and are removed by the wood waste conveyor belt, which saves a significant amount of time. "The K2-Industry and Robot-Drive machines complement each other perfectly. Sometimes, we even split up larger orders and process the purlins on the Robot-Drive and visible-quality elements on the K2-Industry, for example. That gives us maximum flexibility," Markus Zech explains. With the purchase of the Robot-Drive and the replacement of the K2i

with a K2-Industry, the Bavarian company was able to more than double its annual output, from 4,000 m³ to 8,000 and even 9,000 m³.

Established niche

When Hans Zech started offering contract joining, he made a conscious decision not to continue the carpentry business. His son Markus stands by this decision, too: "By focusing on contract joining, we are not competing with our customers, some of whom have been loyal to us for more than 20 years. Also, this is the only way we can make the best use of our joinery machine." In addition to joining, Zech does the entire work preparation for its customers if required and also delivers the wood to the construction site, depending on the customers' wishes.

Zech's collaboration with Hundegger rests on solid foundations as well. In addition to quality mechanical engineering, Zech values the good cooperation at all levels and the quick solving of problems in particular. "The sales department is always forthcoming, the fitters are always committed and very friendly, and whenever we discover a bug in the program and report it, Hundegger fixes it before the next update." //



Hans Zech (second from left) with his sons Markus (third from left) and Maximilian (right) and employee Florian Riegler (left)



With the two Hundegger joinery machines, i.e. the Robot-Drive (left) and the K2-Industry, Zech Holzbau has the ideal equipment



Thanks to the Robot-Drive, the company was able to significantly increase its flexibility and performance



Zech Holzbau has been Hundegger's customer for nearly 25 years and has made several investments in new machines from the manufacturers from Hawangen over the decades