



Precise investment

CNC guide dresser optimizes fileroom operations

BY
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When Duke Point Sawmill opened up shop in 1980, it was designed as a dimension mill for servicing the North American housing construction market. Fast forward to present day, and the Nanaimo, B.C.-based mill still serves the Canadian and U.S. markets, but it has also expanded to service the needs of China, Japan and Europe from small dimension wood to large timbers.

The large log, headrig mill consumes 347,000 cubic metres of logs annually from several species including western redcedar, hemlock, Douglas fir and cypress. The mill produces approximately 75 mmfbm annually and employs 135 people.

The large log mill is currently equipped with

two double-cut head rigs; two shifting edgers; two gang edgers; an optimized trimmer with cut-in-two capabilities; a 56-bin J-Bar sorter; a coastal planer with auto setworks; a 46-bin planer sorter; chip and lumber barge loading facilities; and an anti-sap stain treatment dip tank.

To continue growing and adapting to the needs of its customers around the globe, Duke Point is undergoing several multi-phase capital projects, which will enable the mill to consume a wider spectrum of log sorts and species.

The management at Duke Point Sawmill and its parent company, Western Forest Products, are looking to position the mill to be able to add increased value to its lower quality fibre supply,

Duke Point Sawmill chargehand Jim Lebitschnig operates the mill's new CNC guide dresser.

while converting its large log, high value volumes. In other words, management is looking to optimize the various processes at the mill.

One of the more recent upgrades the mill has undergone to help improve efficiencies is the installation of a Precision Machinery CNC Guide Dresser for its filing room.

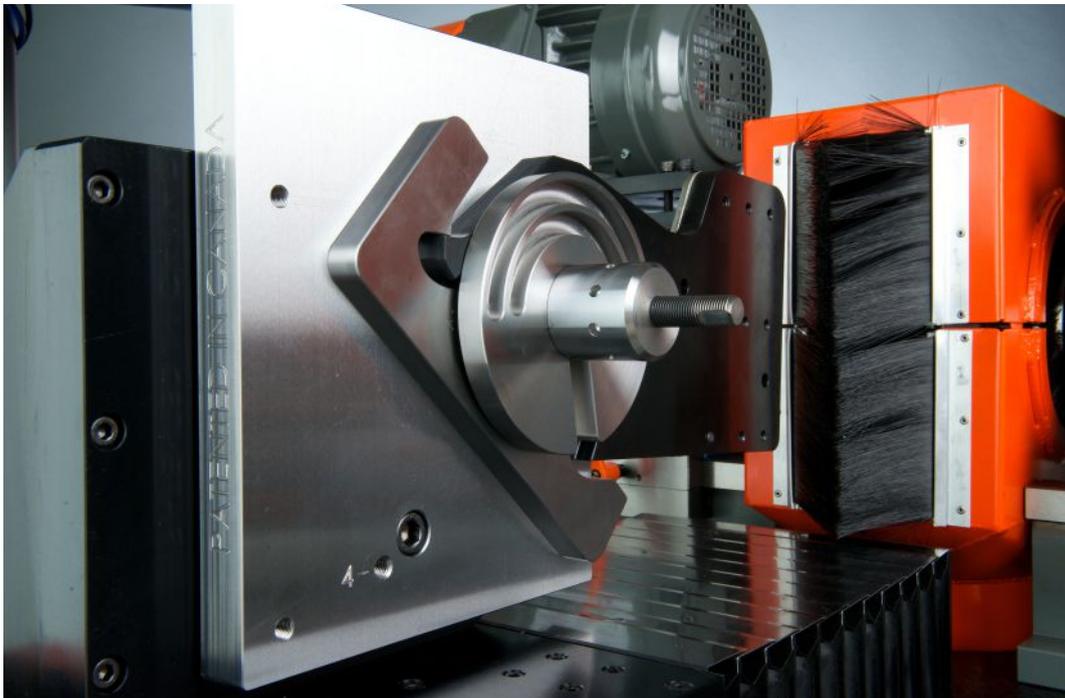
“We needed a dresser that would give us better tolerances and help with our lumber size accuracy,” explains Frank Singbeil, fileroom chargehand for Duke Point Sawmill. “We haven’t had a long relationship with Precision, but one of our other mills has an older model.”

The decision to invest in the new guide dresser

our guides. The machine saves us a lot of time, not only in the dressing time, but also the set-up time. Once we set our size, that is it. We can do 30-plus guides and sizes never change. We have large guides 20-inches long with 11-inch by six-inch pads.”

The set-up time for the machine was extremely fast. It took less than a day to get the machine into the filing room, setup and ready to go, and go through all of the necessary safety precautions.

“It was a really professional experience working with Precision,” Singbeil says. “The machine was in perfect condition, nothing was overlooked in the build.”



Precision Machinery’s standard CNC Guide Dresser is designed to have all the mill’s guides processed in one machine with operators able to change between guide profiles and store up to 90 customized guide settings.

has already been paying off at the predominantly old growth mill.

The standard CNC Guide Dresser from Precision Machinery is designed to have all of a mill’s guides processed in one machine with operators able to change between guide profiles and store up to 90 customized guide settings.

The unit’s ground slides are adjustable in increments down to 0.0002” so operators can fine tune guides with extreme precision in seconds. These are features of the equipment that have improved day-to-day efficiencies within Duke Point’s fileroom.

“The new Precision Machinery guide dresser has got our guide clearances to our exact specs,” Singbeil says. “We no longer have any taper in

Since the installation of the CNC guide dresser, Duke Point has only had to overcome a few small challenges.

Of course, these issues were related to the learning curve involved in how to operate a new piece of equipment and training the necessary staff, and not with the machine itself.

“They were really helpful,” Singbeil recalls. “I just made a couple of calls and they were answered immediately with no waiting.”

Overall, Singbeil says the equipment has been an incredible addition and will significantly help increase efficiencies in the fileroom moving forward.

“The machine and service are second to none, and have exceeded our expectations,” he says.

To continue meeting the needs of its customers, Duke Point is undergoing several multi-phase, capital projects.