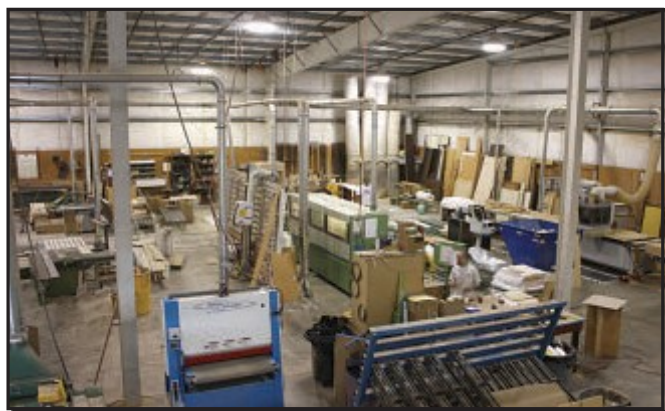


# New millwork company goal:

**DO IT RIGHT!**

New company uses technology and hiring the right people to do the job right.



Custom Source Woodworking started in a new 26,000-square-foot space.



Custom millwork and casework are the primary focus.



A commitment to quality and being the low-cost producer has led to growth for CSW.

Jim Mammina started Custom Source Woodworking, Inc., in June 2007 with partner Joe Wadsworth and start up capital from their savings.

The goal for the new company was simple. "To do it right," Mammina says. "Years of working for others and seeing things done improperly made us both desire to set the company the right way from the start. This meant integrating as much technology as possible into the firm.

"One of our first hires was a full time IT person. Also, we developed our own information management software. We also purchased Keytrix and Bluebeam and have used and integrated them so that work is done seamlessly between the different software packages."

The competitive marketplace led the company to combine new technology in cutting-edge software and machines with traditional craftsmanship in its 26,000 square foot location in Olympia, Wash.

"We also are very selective in the people that we keep. We run fast and hard and need people who are highly motivated and very good at what they do. We constantly assess all employees using this method. We rate them on a scale between 1 and 10, 1 being you would not hire them if they were the last person on earth and 10 being you cannot pay them enough to keep them. If they rate below an 8, we work with them for a few weeks to see if there is interest on their part to become better and if not they are let go."

## Recruiting employees

Mammina says that recruiting employees has been a challenge. "Especially with the extended unemployment benefits that our government has passed," he says. "People that should be in the market actively looking for jobs are being paid pretty well to stay at home."

CSW makes reception counters, nurse's stations, paneling, standing and running trim, teller lines, kiosks, doors and windows for schools, hospitals, restaurants and hotels. Recent projects have included Olympia City Hall, Courtyard by Marriott, Valley Medical Center and Tacoma Mall. Ruth's Chris Steakhouse in Portland featured a monumental stair as well as many elaborate wood ceiling systems.

"We are doing a lot of marketing directly to owners of restaurant and hotel chains, this has worked out very well for us," Mammina says. "We only use our own installation group because the quality of subs has not met our expectations. So logistics is always

## At a glance

**Who:** Custom Source Woodworking, Inc.

**Where:** Olympia, Wash.

**Product:** Custom millwork and casework

**Shop size:** 26,000 square feet

**Website:** [www.cswwinc.com](http://www.cswwinc.com)

CSW handles a variety of materials for custom jobs in public buildings.



## For more info:

**Omga Inc.**, Gang rip saw  
574.243.0120 [www.omgainc.com](http://www.omgainc.com)

**SCM Group North America**, Busellato  
Jet 4 nested CNC, Casadei shaper, sander,  
Omni CNC boring machine  
800.292.1850 [www.scmgroup-usa.com](http://www.scmgroup-usa.com)

**Stiles Machinery Inc.**, Homag  
edgebander  
616.698.7500 [www.stilesmachinery.com](http://www.stilesmachinery.com)

**J.C. Uhling Products Co.**, case clamp  
208.962.3271 [www.jcuhling.com](http://www.jcuhling.com)

Or go to

[www.CabinetMakerFDM.com](http://www.CabinetMakerFDM.com)

a challenge."

"We have invested heavily in technology, implementing many software programs and linking them all seamlessly together to create a smooth flow of information through our country. We developed our own Information Management software, Crows Nest ([www.crowsnestsoftware.com](http://www.crowsnestsoftware.com)), which we market to other firms," Mammina said. "This is a comprehensive package that manages everything from the first sales contact to the final shipment and invoice. It is all Auto-Task driven, so our associates can view their tasks and the days left to complete and once completed triggers the next task in our firm."

## Nested machining

For casework, all machining is done on CSW's Busellato Jet 4, which is a nested CNC machine. When the part comes off of this it only requires edging on a Homag edgebander and/or boring-doweling on an Omni CNC boring and doweling machine. A Uhling case clamp is also used.

For millwork CSW uses a Wadkin eight-head moulder, Omga gang rip saw, Northfield planer, Casadei shaper and sander. The company uses wood veneer and solids, HPL, Richlite and Paperstone countertops and Trespa panels. "We have finishing capabilities, we spray catalyzed lacquer and conversion varnish," Mammina says. "We also use a great company just north of us here, Numatic Finishing, for large volume flat line finishing.

"The biggest challenge so far has been cash flow, by far the toughest thing when you are growing like we have. We have a good bank, that has helped, but credit has been tightened dramatically for our suppliers, which makes it hard when we have to wait 60 to 90 days for our money on certain projects."

Mammina says that CSW has kept busy by competitive pricing, reducing costs to be the low cost producer, and aggressively exploiting every market there is for what they produce. CSW also practices a just-in-time program for material procurement that allows for low inventories and minimizes shrink.

In CSW's plant everyone is charged with quality control and has the ability to stop production if quality is not up to standard. CSW also practices the "Shewart Cycle" Plan-Do-Study-Act.

This policy allows the company to improve on a continuous basis, always looking for ways to make things work better.

"Continuous Improvement happens daily, sometimes in the smallest of ways," Mammina says. "Here is one example: We were faced with issues at the loading dock and at receiving

at the job sites. Items would be left off the truck, even though we produce a precise shipping manifest that lists out all items, by room. So we developed a barcode system which checks off items as they are scanned and at the end, prints out a shortage report. On the receiving end, we scan as well, and then print a manifest at the site for the customer or our installers to sign. These manifests are then scanned and stored in our Crows Nest software. I can't tell you the number of times that we have not had to reproduce something because we could email the site the signed document accepting the goods that they say are missing. And it is always funny to here a day later that they found the items they were "missing".

## Implementing technology

"I would say one of the biggest things (I learned from other companies) is simply staying the course when it comes to implementation of new systems," Mammina says. "There will always be 20 percent of the people in an organization that hate all change, 20 percent who will embrace it and 60 percent that sit on the sidelines and wait to see what the outcome is before voicing support or condemnation. Upper management has to be willing to continually push toward full implementation, even during those painful times of transition when not only is the new system not as good, it is slower than the old one.

"We have a firm commitment to Deming's upward spiral of Continuous Improvement. We evaluate continually all of our processes, with the focus to continue to drive out inefficiencies. This has allowed us to lower our prices by 30 percent and still remain profitable. ◀