



JEGATHESWARAN: Excited about the collaboration with the University of Applied Sciences in Rosenheim, Germany

A wood effort

Dr Jegatheswaran Ratnasingam's first English language wood sanding book in the world since a 1964 publication has generated rave reviews and attracted industry interest for collaborative efforts with Universiti Putra Malaysia. **SUMITHA MARTIN** reports.

UNIVERSITI Putra Malaysia woodworking academic Dr Jegatheswaran Ratnasingam, in collaboration with German professor Dr Frieder Scholz, scored a first in the global woodworking community recently.

They co-authored *Wood Sanding Processes—An Optimization Perspective*, which is believed to be the first English language wood sanding book in the world since a 1964 publication.

Launched early this year, the book is also the result of a partnership between UPM and the world-renowned University of Applied Sciences in Rosenheim (FHR), Germany.

The book addresses wood sanding processes, surfaces, machines and the economics of wood sanding processes as well as research and development, among others.

An interesting aspect of the book is its

chapter on wood sanding economics which tells industry players that the wood sanding process (long thought of as “an indirect cost” or “consumable” in factory accounting practices) can in fact be quantifiable and therefore, make an impact on overall productivity.

Wood sanding, explains Jegatheswaran, is “the process of smoothening a wooden surface before paint or varnish can be applied onto it to enhance its aesthetic appeal”.

A significant triumph for Jegatheswaran is the “unprecedented” response from the woodworking industry, particularly leading German woodworking machinery manufacturers who “have come forward with the intention of collaborating with UPM in future”.

One example of this was the sponsorship of a one-day wood sanding seminar for the local industry at UPM by Karl Heesemann GmbH, the largest

sanding machine manufacturer in Europe, and SIA Abrasives, a Swiss-German sand paper manufacturer.

Held in conjunction with the launch of the book in February, the seminar drew about 150 participants.

The book also has two contributors — Professor Erwin Friedl, an expert in industrial robotics from FHR, and Dr Adrian Riegel, a lecturer at the University of Applied Sciences in Lemgo and who is currently a visiting lecturer at FHR.

Jegatheswaran bases his claims that his text is the first English one since Peter Koch's in 1964, on the result of searches at the British National Library, the library at the Technical University of Munich (which is touted to be one of the oldest wood science schools in the world) and Amazon.com.

All searches confirm the non-existence of any other English text. Koch's publication is no longer in print.

Jegatheswaran's book has also drawn exacting reviews from *The Woodworker*, the leading woodworking magazine in the world.

Its review states: “This is the most comprehensive book on woodsanding processes and will serve as an excellent reading and reference material for the woodworking, machine technology and academic fraternities worldwide.”

Jegatheswaran is particularly excited about the collaboration with FHR because the German approach to wood technology education is to “view it as an engineering field” and to therefore place emphasis on efficient processing methods.

This contrasts with wood technology education in Malaysia which assumes a material science approach, an inheritance from the Anglo-Saxon

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