



TKstairs takes staircase business to new heights with the support of Staircon



Summary: TKstairs is one of the UK's largest direct-to-customer staircase manufacturers, delivering made-to-measure staircases nation-wide. Recent growth has already seen it double the size of its manufacturing capacity in a new location – and the future positive.

TKstairs has used Staircon since 2010. Today it forms an integral part of the sales and design process, as well as generating the production data to drive CNC manufacturing.

TKstairs is one of the UK's leading staircase manufacturers, now manufacturing more than 100 staircases per week and delivering throughout the UK from its state-of-the-art CNC manufacturing facility near Hull.

TKstairs is a family business. Tom Parsons joined his father Kevin in the business more than a decade ago and has been a key player in the company's digital transformation. The company has embraced CNC manufacturing and can now produce at a level, speed and quality that would not be possible via traditional joinery methods. He told us "We chose Staircon because it produced the best 3D visualisations compared to other tools we reviewed at the time."

"Everything is based on Staircon's CAD/CAM system and we're producing 100 plus staircases a week. I don't think that would be possible without a system such as Staircon."

Tom was the first trained user, and has since trained numerous colleagues on the system. Today the software is integrated into the whole business process.

End-to-end process support

Staircon generates 3D drawings and plans based on the measurements provided, to support the process of customer quotations and sales agreements. Customers include new build developers, home-owners, self-builders, DIY renovators, and an array of businesses such as joiners who sell, but don't make, staircases, and smaller joinery companies who prefer to buy staircases from a dedicated staircase manufacturer.

Handling hundreds of enquiries each week would be a challenge without the ability to automate some of the process. Tom confirmed. "We produce an average of three or four drawings for people, before they actually order – that can mean 300-400 drawings per week. For some, we may produce up to 15 drawings, before they make their decision."

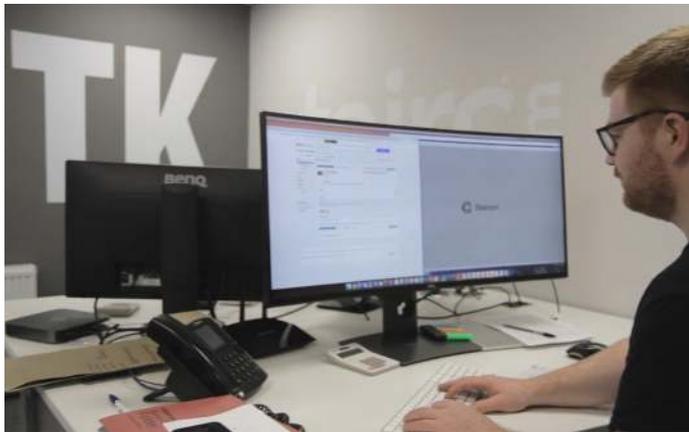
“Many customers enjoy being involved in the process, spending time online considering different designs and materials. We’re on hand to help them as much as they need; it depends how involved they want to be. Once they’ve provided all the measurements, we use Staircon’s 3D module to generate an interactive 3D file we can send to the customer, and we can keep revising their quote until they’re happy.”

The company has multiple Staircon users across various departments. The sales team uses it to generate pricing, produce and revise drawings for potential customers. Later, the design team will use it to generate the precision drawings and data files that help to drive the manufacturing process. “Staircon is efficient and flexible, so you can draw any staircase and once it’s drawn it’s easy to edit and change. After it’s complete, it produces the cutting lists, glue patterns and so on.”

Cost-effective production

Staircon helps TK Stairs manufacture all its components accurately. “We have four CNC machines running full-time, and all of them generate staircase components using Staircon CAM. After that they can be put together and sent out, without any issues.”

With Staircon the company can also minimise cost and waste. When it processes the stair details into production data, the software can help assure maximum usage of the materials required: “Staircon helps us to minimise waste, by telling us the size of the piece of timber we will need and generating a cutting list that is the most efficient way to use that timber. That’s good for us in terms of cost, and is great for the environment.”



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Ready for anything

The company prides itself that it stands ready to produce any order, in any of the materials it lists on its site, at any time, and the speed of production is staggering compared to traditional approaches. “In theory, we could produce a staircase within a single day. A typical staircase can be cut on a machine within quarter of an hour. In reality, of course, it takes longer as it must not only be put together, but we have to plan and manage our workflow and how we process each order right through to delivery logistics.”

The future of staircase manufacturing couldn’t look more different than in the past, as Tom reflected: “Ten years ago, when I started in the industry, we produced around ten staircases a week and all our drawings and manufacturing were done by hand. Now everything is based on Staircon’s CAD/CAM system and we’re producing 100 plus staircases a week. I don’t think that would be possible without a system such as Staircon.”

TK Stairs has already invested significantly in its manufacturing capacity, adding two more 3-axis CNC machines since moving to its larger facility. The factory has the potential to allow a further doubling of production capacity in future.



More information

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