

# Western Panel Manufacturing, Inc.

Located in Eugene, Oregon

TPM Member since December 2013



Founded in 1985, Western Panel Manufacturing, Inc. is an independently owned, diversified company with a wide raw material base and a very personalized sales operation. Western Panel is a specialty producer of high-end and exotic hardwood veneers, creating architectural panels for commercial and interior applications.

Owner, Raleigh Pedersen, worked in the wood panel industry over 15 years before getting involved with Western Panel. Pedersen and three others were the original investors in the company. The company was manufacturing round the clock, producing items for home entertainment and cabinet markets. This initial success has led the company forward, and now roughly 90% of production is made up of high-end architectural millwork products.



*Veneers are prearranged to check for natural defects and to insure adequate supply to complete the project. If more than one flitch is required additional flitches are matched for color and character.*

as desk, kitchen cabinet, door, and residential furniture manufacturers) who require products that use custom veneers of premium quality and need special sizes that are not readily available from the larger commodity hardwood plywood mills.

Western Panel utilizes four single-opening, flow-through press lines, with lay-up and inspection tables for pressing panels up to 60" x 162" and up to 2 3/4" thick. The company also uses a double-opening flow through press for pressing panels 48" x 96" and up to 2" thick. It also has two double-end tennor saws equipped with scoring blades and detailing heads, and one 14' beam saw. It utilizes 4' and 5' wide belt sanders for sanding plywood. Two of these sanders are state-of-the-art, with segmented platens for controlled sanding configurations. Also available are two cross-grain sanders for sanding panels up to 5' wide, such as modesty panels and counter fronts.



*There are 3 to 4 million feet of the most popular domestic hardwoods, imported Mahogany, and exotic veneers always in stock. Veneer grades and lengths are in inventory for architectural paneling, door panels, kitchen cabinets and wood furniture.*

In the early '90s, during an economic hard time, Raleigh and his wife Jan, bought out the three original partners. It was a very difficult time, Pedersen did everything including production, sales, and equipment work, keeping his overhead down and developing a good customer base. Pedersen had a background that included marketing and sales and he utilized his knowledge to cultivate a variety of customers, both end-users and re-sellers. The company was able to pull through the recession and Western Panel emerged as a stronger operation.

Its unique operation allows the company to meet customer needs quickly, with the ultimate goal of quality in mind. Western Panel's market includes architectural users (as well



*Veneers are first cut to length then moved to be parallel clipped on one of three guillotines (7', 9' or 14') depending on flitch length.*

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Wood veneers are selected for blueprint specifications to match in color and character for the desired project. Veneers are carefully assembled to provide the most pleasing appearance for fixture manufacturing or wall paneling; thus achieving the desired beauty that architects and designers prefer over other materials. The natural characteristics of wood make it attractive to the eye when veneers are carefully selected for individual projects. This method of panel matching achieves maximum grain continuity since all panels, doors, and other veneered components are made to the exact veneer sequence. If possible, flitches will be selected that will yield sufficient veneer to complete a prescribed area or room. If more than one flitch is required, the transition should be accomplished at the least noticeable location. This panel selection matching method is more expensive, but does express veneering in its most impressive manner.



*The end result is perfectly matched veneer, with invisible splice joints.*



*Material is carefully packaged to assure that it will be received without damage.*

Pedersen and his staff educate distributors, customers, sales representatives and others on the processes the company uses to make panels and how the flitches are laid out to match each other. Training is offered anywhere from two to six times per year. Often those in the training are allowed to actually try to make the match. Everyone loves the hands on experience and they usually realize that it is an art form rather than basic math.

The knowledgeable staff has a very diversified range of skills and many years of experience in the industry. Pedersen appreciates his staff and is often found on the floor discussing products and quality with the team. The company culture promotes a feeling of ownership of the company's products and quality among the employees. Western Panel's team is committed to meet or exceed its customers' high expectations for consistent quality and service.

Sliced and rotary cut veneers are purchased in various grades from veneer slicing companies throughout the United States, Europe, and Asia. Veneer can be chosen for a specific application. Other veneer stock is graded to provide the most pleasing use of color, character, and desirable appearance and stored in the warehouses to be available as needed for "just in time" shipment to customers. Western Panel stocks a large selection of core that can be cut to any size needed. The finish sanding department offers selective sanding options with the use of its state-of-the-art equipment.

The company's panels are packaged on solid pallets, securely banded, and wrapped in plastic for protection. Western Panel can also package for LTL shipments. The company is located close to several main arterial roadways allowing convenient access for shipping. Shipments can also be made in conjunction with other nearby hardwood plywood mills and providers of specialty and commodity products.



*Western Panel's finished product installed at the Portland Marriott. The stately staircase is accentuated by the beautiful panels.*

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