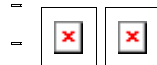


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- **Drum, brush sanders return under new ownership**

- Brian Caldwell

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- In November 2005 a group of original Performax employees purchased a line of drum sanders from the WMH Tool Group. The sanders are now manufactured in Eagan, Minn., under the name of SuperMax Tools.

- SuperMax sells single- and 3-phase 25" and 37" drum sanders with one or two drums, and 24" and 36" models that have the company's SuperBrush.

- "Our SuperBrush is quite unique in the marketplace for profile sanding and finishing," said company president Bill Schroeder. "This machine fills a very important niche for the woodworker. Our most popular brush head is designated grit of impregnated silicon/carbide nylon brush. This brush is effective when sealer sanding raised panel doors, moldings, any material that has a profile in it. Our other popular brush does the opposite. A wire brush can be used for distressing wood and composite material.

- "The SuperBrush machine has both variable speeds for the brush head and the conveyor table. Many different finishes can be obtained by varying the machine settings."

SuperMax also offers a single- and 3-phase 50" double drum sander, and a single-drum ShopPro 25" sander that runs on 110 volts.

The SuperMax machines feature abrasive conveyer belts instead of rubber feed belts. Schroeder noted that an abrasive belt is basically as thick as sandpaper so it's going to lay flatter on the steel-enforced table and provide a more consistent finish from side to side.

The SuperMax 220-volt drum sanders have a patented SandSmart feature that will automatically slow down the feed rate of the conveyor should any high spots be found in the work piece or if an inexperienced operator attempts to oversand a work piece, according to the company.

"It's an auto sensing on your main motor, so as a piece of wood feeds in it will automatically sense the amp draw on your motor," Schroeder explained. "Say you hit a high spot ... it will sense the amp draw on the motor and automatically slow down your feed rate to let the drums work through that high spot, and then



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it will speed it up to the original setting. If you're trying to overfeed it, then it will stay at that lower setting so it is going to prevent you from burning your wood or basically destroying your abrasive strips as well."

When asked, Schroeder said drum sanders are not a step down from wide belt sanders.

"They [wide belt sanders] have bigger motors but as far as precision, they're as comparable. What you get with a wide belt sander — and the only thing you get with a wide belt sander over a drum sander — is faster through-put. If you're a large cabinet shop and you have a department that does nothing but sanding, and you can keep a wide belt busy 60 to 70 percent of the time, that's great. Again, with a wide belt you're probably looking at one drum, so just the number of passes you have to make, we can compete with that intermediate-priced wide belt."

The SuperMax drum sanders range from \$1,999 for the ShopPro 25" up to \$9,699 for the 50" double-drum sander. Contact: SuperMax Tools Inc., 1275 Corporate Center Dr., Eagan, MN 55121. Tel: 651-454-3401.

<http://www.supermaxtools.com/>

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