

MKT

The Beauty of Durability:

Seamless Panel Edges are Changing the North American Market.

'Zero-edge' panels have changed the European furniture market. They're about to do the same in North America.

It's the finishing touches that make – or break – a commercial-grade decorative panel. In many cases the edge is the weakest link in an otherwise ideal solution.

Whether it's PET or acrylic surfaces in high-gloss or fingerprint-resistant supermatte textures, or exquisite woodgrain TFL panels, impressive advances in design and performance have inspired designers to specify them in high-profile, high-use commercial environments. You'll find them in hotels, clinics, offices, retail fixtures, elevator cabs and other applications where more expensive materials are just too fragile and impractical.

Unfortunately, some of the technology used to finish the edges of these panels hasn't quite kept up.

Edge fails are still too common.

Maybe the glue wasn't formulated or applied properly. Or maybe the edge overhang wasn't trimmed after manufacture. Either way, you're stuck with a grungy, raw edge that will continue to degrade and attract moisture and bacteria.

But they don't have to be.

An entirely new edge technology that has forever changed European furniture design is now available in North America: the zero-joint edge, or simply "zero edge."

"This approach removes the gluing step from the edging process," says Marian Schuchardt. Schuchardt works for MKT, producer of Alpha-Tape Zero polypropylene zero-edge materials in thousands of colors and patterns matching popular panel designs.

'Welded' edges deliver long-term durability and seamless design.

"Our edges are extruded with a functional polymeric layer that's exactly the same color as the rest of the edge. It is activated by hot air, laser or near-infrared energy to create a bond with the edge of the panel and surface layer. We're essentially welding the edge to the panel, creating a seamless joint that's much more durable and long-lasting than traditional edgebanding methods."

In the past, applying edges to decorative panels required heating large "glue pots" before a run that then had to be cooled and cleaned afterward, adding hours and energy to production costs. The glue would often smear on the panel, requiring extra cleaning after edgebanding.

"It was quite a messy process," says Schuchardt, "and resulted in a visible glue line that would get brittle and yellow over time. Even simple cleaning would degrade the quality the edge. With a zero-joint edge there is no seam, and no chance that the bond will degrade over time. The edge is now part of a monolithic panel."

Making decorative panels even more sustainable.

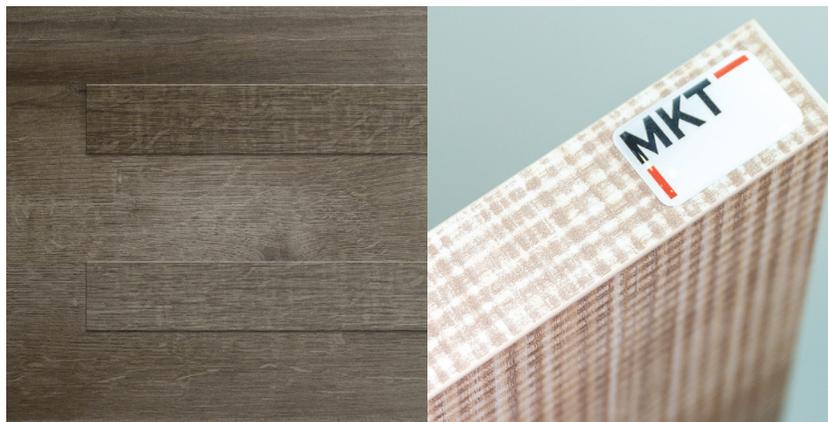
Decorative panels made with MKT's Alpha-Tape Zero edges add to the sustainability advantages of these panels by reducing manufacturing time and energy, increasing the durability and longevity of the finished panel, and using greener plastics like polypropylene.

"Specification of zero-edge panels is growing because of the obvious design advantages," says Schuchardt. "But in a practical sense, this technology has further reduced the environmental impact of a huge category of decorative surfaces."

ABOVE Zero-edge technology "welds" the edges to the panel for a seamless appearance and a permanent bond.

LOWER RIGHT MKT's edges perfectly match 2,500 solid colors and 7,500 decors sold throughout the world.

LOWER LEFT Alpha-Tape Zero help streamline the manufacturing process, saving time, energy and materials.



See us at NeoCon,
Materials Pavilion
Booth #7-1000

MKT's Alpha-Tape Zero edges are sold exclusively in North America by SSI International. Alpha-Tape Zero® is a registered trademark of MKT GmbH.