



A publication for and about Kirby-Smith Machinery, Inc. customers
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Connection

L.A. FULLER AND SONS

Amarillo earthwork and paving contractor thrives through three generations



(L-R) L.A. Fuller and Sons management team includes Mike Fuller and his sons Josh, Jonas, Jared and Jason.





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Ed Kirby

Dear Valued Customer:

What an exciting time to be in construction. Today's technology is making companies more productive and efficient than ever. Komatsu continues to lead the revolutionary changes that maximize productivity, decrease downtime and increase your bottom line.

This issue of your Kirby-Smith Connection illustrates that perfectly. Here, you will find articles on new *intelligent* Machine Control products that make every pass count – from rough-cut to finish grade. Among them are the new PC360LCi-11 and PC490LCi-11 excavators.

Last year, Komatsu introduced the world's first *intelligent* Machine Control semi-automatic excavator. Now, Komatsu delivers two more excavators that take you straight to grade.

The fun doesn't stop there. Komatsu also filled a gap in its dozer lineup by adding a new D85i-18. Featuring a patented SIGMADOZER® blade, it moves massive amounts of dirt. Read about the features of this new dozer inside.

Want to know which machine is the right size for your operation and applications? We can help you determine that, and there is an article inside which provides beneficial information on this topic. There is also an informative article on the new Komatsu WA320-8 and WA500-8 wheel loaders.

If you wish to demonstrate any of these machines, or if there is anything else we can do for you, please call or stop by one of our branch locations.

Sincerely,

Ed Kirby,
President

KIRBY-SMITH MACHINERY, INC.



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L.A. FULLER AND SONS

Amarillo earthwork and paving contractor thrives through three generations

CONSTRUCTION

Seventy-six years ago, L.A. (Lon Alvoyd) Fuller bought out a business partner and founded Fuller Construction. Based from his home in Amarillo, Fuller performed earthwork services with a specialty in building terraces. Seven decades later, his grandsons are building on the legacy he left with a multifaceted company that continues to do earthwork as well as other services.

“We call ourselves a highway contractor,” said Quality Control Manager Jason Fuller. “From an earthwork standpoint, we build ponds, commercial building pads and other items. We also install heavy utilities such as large water lines, sewer pipe and lift stations. Basically, if it’s underground or otherwise site-related, we take care of it.”

Jason is one of four grandsons who now run the day-to-day operations for L.A. Fuller and Sons. He and his brothers, Josh, Jonas and Jared, each have specific roles. Jason takes care of quality control; Josh handles estimating, procurement and finance; Jonas is a senior project manager; and Jared directs human resources.

“Honestly, we don’t put much stock in titles,” explained Josh. “What we believe in is working together to ensure the company’s success. Our grandfather, father and uncle built a good foundation for us, and we continue to work hard every day to build on it.”

All are sons of Mike Fuller, who along with his brother Mark, joined their father, L.A., full time in the business in the 1970s, prompting the name change to L.A. Fuller and Sons. Today, Mike is a consultant for the company and remains closely involved in operations. Mark passed away several years ago, and his son, Dustin, is now the head of safety operations.

“The boys grew up in the business just like Mark and I did,” said Mike. “He and I worked summers and college breaks, then came on board full time after college. At that time, the focus largely remained on earthwork, and the company was still relatively small. I think there were about 10 employees.”

New divisions

The number of workers increased dramatically during the 1980s, starting early in the decade when the Fullers fired up an asphalt plant, which led to paving projects. The company now makes several hot and cold mixes, as well as stabilized base, pre-coat rock and other combinations to meet customer specifications. Jason’s son, Chris, works full time at the asphalt plant, representing the fourth generation in the firm.

In 1986, the Fullers bought a utility company that added another division to L.A. Fuller and Sons. More recently, the organization began a crushing division. A sister company, Alpha Pavement, provides asphalt repair and maintenance, such as sealcoating, patching and striping.

(L-R) L.A. Fuller and Sons management team includes Mike Fuller and his sons Josh, Jonas, Jared and Jason. Mike’s father, L.A., founded the Amarillo-based company 76 years ago. Mike and his late brother, Mark, ran the firm for several years.

▶ VIDEO





▶ VIDEO

This Komatsu WA320 is one of several wheel loaders that L.A. Fuller and Sons uses to feed its asphalt plants. "Every one of our crews has one," said Josh Fuller. "The reliability is outstanding, and that's critical to us because if a loader is down, it often means the crew and the job are, too."

"Multiple services allow us to work both as a prime and a subcontractor," said Jonas. "It also gives us the opportunity to provide a full site package or break services out and do just a dirt, utility or paving project. We're willing to do whatever is best for our customers. That's probably why we have a long list of repeat business."

L.A. Fuller and Sons' projects fall into multiple categories, including residential, commercial and governmental. The residential and commercial jobs often involve the earthwork and paving division working in conjunction with the utility division. Crews from the first group build roads, prepare sites and install utilities on new residential developments. On commercial jobs, they also perform similar work, as well as parking lot construction.

"As far as highway work goes, we don't build bridges; but we do perform embankment and approach construction, put down base material, install utilities and provide asphalt paving," noted Josh. "We typically stay in our own district and prime or subcontract, depending on the project."

Several jobs keep crews busy

Recent assignments have included site construction for a commercial building in Amarillo that saw L.A. Fuller and Sons move close to 50,000 yards of dirt, perform stabilization, and put down nearly 100,000 tons of flex-base, hot-mix asphalt for parking. It installed junction boxes and conduit under the building slab as well.



▶ VIDEO

Operator Jaime Baeza moves material with a Komatsu WA380 wheel loader at one of L.A. Fuller and Sons' leased pits. "It's a strong machine with good power," said Baeza.

L.A. Fuller and Sons also worked on two separate state highway projects in Amarillo, including a bridge widening that called for moving more than 100,000 yards of earth for embankments. It installed storm sewer and put down approximately 8,000 tons of asphalt. A second job involved underpass turnaround construction and paving.

"Typically, we have 15-20 jobs open at any time," said Jared. "We have two utility crews; roughly 10 dirt crews; one hot-mix crew; and a couple more that can do dirt work, paving or utilities, depending on the need. Currently, we have nearly 105 people on staff, including many key employees who have been here for 25 years or more. In some cases, their kids and grandkids work or have worked here. We believe that longevity, along with dedication, hard work and loyalty, play a critical role in our success."



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Continued . . .

Vögele paver improves L.A. Fuller's quality of work

... continued

Trust in Komatsu, Kirby-Smith

Approximately five years ago, L.A. Fuller and Sons started looking to replace its aging wheel loaders. Working with Kirby-Smith Machinery, Inc. and Territory Manager Britt Stubblefield, it added Komatsu WA250, WA270, WA320 and WA380 wheel loaders to its fleet.

"Britt and Kirby-Smith presented a package that highlighted the value they and Komatsu

could provide," said Jason. "Price was important, but we also took maintenance and service into account. We like the ability to track idle time with KOMTRAX, and that Kirby-Smith handles scheduled maintenance through Komatsu CARE on our Tier 4 machines. That's a great value, and when we had some machines pass the 2,000-hour mark, we purchased extended coverage through our Product Support Rep, Shane Westbrook. We trust Britt, Shane and Kirby-Smith to back up what they say. They are honest and fair to work with; and we appreciate that because it fits with our values."

"We use the Komatsu loaders in a variety of situations, including backfilling, moving pipe, feeding crushers and even doing demolition work. Every one of our crews has one," added Josh. "The reliability is outstanding, and that's critical to us because if a loader is down, it often means the crew and the job are, too."

L.A. Fuller and Sons also notes the versatility of its Komatsu PC200LC and PC300LC excavators, which are used for digging and compacting trenches with buckets and rollers. Additionally, the company recently added a Vögele 5200-2i paver and Hamm rollers.

"Our quality of work really improved with the Vögele paver," said Josh. "We compared it to other brands, and it won."

Expansion in certain areas

The brothers say it's not likely that L.A. Fuller and Sons will offer additional services, but they don't rule out growth in certain areas of the business. Specifically, expanding its material-supply operations is on the agenda. The company currently recycles asphalt and concrete and crushes caliche and hard aggregates to make products ranging from half-inch gravel to riprap.

Mike notes a few things that have helped the company prosper and will continue to serve as the driving forces going forward.

"Hard work, strong ethics and honesty have all played roles in our success," he said. "Another is perseverance. My dad lived through some tough times and kept battling. He passed his values on to Mark and I, and I have tried to instill those in the next generation as well. Finally, we give credit to God. He's blessed us greatly, and we thank Him every day." ■

L.A. Fuller and Sons uses a Komatsu PC200LC excavator to dig as well as backfill and compact trenches.

▶ VIDEO



▶ VIDEO

The addition of a Vögele 5200-2i paver and Hamm rollers has helped L.A. Fuller and Sons increase efficiency on paving projects.



(L-R) Mike, Josh, Jonas, Jared and Jason Fuller of L.A. Fuller and Sons meet with Kirby-Smith Machinery Territory Manager Britt Stubblefield and Product Support Sales Rep Shane Westbrook. "We trust Britt, Shane and Kirby-Smith to back up what they say," said Jason.



CONSTRUCTION



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WILDSTONE CONSTRUCTION, LLC

Opportunities lead Fort Worth utility contractor into business, fast growth

CONSTRUCTION



▶ VIDEO

John Kolb,
Owner

Sometimes a good opportunity falls into your lap, and it certainly helps if you have laid the groundwork first. Take John Kolb, for example. His dedication to quality work and customer satisfaction earned him a solid reputation and the chance to start his own business.

After college, Kolb moved to the Dallas-Fort Worth metroplex and began putting pipe in the ground. Through the course of several years, he worked with some large, specialty underground-utility contractors. Customers got to know him well and liked the quality of service he provided.

“In 2013, a general contractor acquaintance presented me with an offer,” explained Kolb. “His company was having issues with the civil side of its business, and he wanted someone to take it over from him. We discussed options,

Wildstone Construction uses Komatsu wheel loaders, including WA270 and WA320 sizes, to move materials and pipe. “They give us great versatility,” said Owner John Kolb. “Forks for carrying pipe, buckets for putting bedding material in a trench or loading trucks – they do it all efficiently.”

▶ VIDEO



and by the end of the day, I was filing for a company and hiring employees. That was the founding of Wildstone Construction, and we’ve been growing ever since.”

The timing, it turns out, was good. “Work was picking back up after the recession, so we got off to a good start,” Kolb recalled. “In fact, our first job was a nearly \$1 million installation of water, sewer and fire line for a detention system at a Fort Worth school. Our range of work today runs from \$20,000 to \$5 million, but those million-dollar jobs like that first one tend to be our sweet spot.”

Complete service

Wildstone Construction has also found its forte with the services it provides, specializing in underground utility installation. The Fort Worth company offers complete projects, including digging trenches and putting down bedding material, as well as installing various sizes and types of pipe and backfilling. Additionally, it provides testing and chlorination to ensure the lines are ready for service.

“We’re considered a specialty contractor,” said Kolb. “Our niche is putting water, sewer and storm-drain pipe in the ground. Everything we do is open-cut. If the project calls for cast-in-place structures, we build those ourselves, along with head walls and inlets. We also will do miscellaneous pavement repair. Nearly 90 percent of our work is new construction, but we do jobs that involve removing and replacing old lines as well.”

Wildstone Construction works across several sectors, including governmental, industrial and commercial sites. It has completed several major sewer-main contracts, like a recent



▶ VIDEO

A Wildstone Construction operator uses a Komatsu PC360LC-10 excavator to dig a pipe trench. "The PC360s are our mainline digging machines," said Owner John Kolb. "Some of our projects call for deep digs, and with the excavators' breakout power, those jobs are no problem."

CONSTRUCTION

rehab project for Haltom City, Texas. There, Wildstone replaced an old sewer line that was at capacity with a larger one. The company has accomplished projects on multiple retail sites, restaurants and warehouses.

"All municipal work is hard-bid, and we do those projects as a general contractor," said Kolb. "We hard-bid some commercial and school jobs, but we have done quite a number of sites through negotiations with customers with whom we have developed strong relationships. We also sub our work out to general contractors. We generally have 40-50 projects in various stages of development at any time."

Fast growth

As Wildstone Construction's project list grew, so did its employee roster. In three years, it expanded from a handful of employees to 115, including key individuals such as General Superintendent Joe Alvarado. Wildstone runs one concrete, one cleanup and 11 pipe-laying crews and mainly works within a two-hour radius of Fort Worth.

"The economy has played a big role in our growth," explained Kolb. "The Dallas-Fort Worth metroplex has gone gangbusters with new construction. Another factor is the relationships we have built with general contractors. They know we will meet

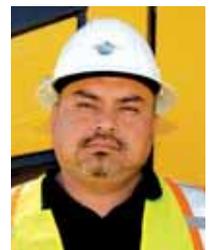
their schedules and budgets. When we say we will show up on a certain day, they trust that we will be there, ready to go. That's led to a lot of repeat business.

"I give credit to Joe and our entire staff," he added. "Sometimes, companies that grow as fast as we did will take on almost anyone to fill a vacancy. We concentrate on hiring quality individuals – many of whom I worked with in the past – who share the same values of hard work and dedication that we do. Wildstone wouldn't be where it is today without them."

Komatsu reliability, durability

Wildstone Construction began using Komatsu PC200LC and PC360LC excavators as well as WA270 and WA320 wheel loaders almost from the start. Kolb cited quality, reliability and durability as factors in his decision to purchase Komatsu.

"I ran Komatsu machines quite a bit for the companies I was with before I started this business, and I was always impressed," said Kolb. "We're confident every day that our Komatsu equipment will run consistently. The PC360s are our mainline digging machines. Some of our projects call for deep digs, and with the excavators' breakout power, those jobs are no problem. We equip



Joe Alvarado,
General
Superintendent



Discover more at
KirbySmithConnection.com

Continued . . .

Honesty helps forge strong customer relationships

... continued

the PC200s with quick couplers for fast changes from buckets to compaction wheels. All of our Komatsu excavators have fast cycle times and are good on fuel."

Wildstone Construction puts quick couplers on its Komatsu loaders, too. "They give us great versatility," said Kolb. "Forks for carrying pipe, buckets for putting bedding

material in a trench or loading trucks – they do it all efficiently."

Kolb tracks the machines for location, hours and other critical information with KOMTRAX, Komatsu's remote machine-monitoring system. So does Kirby-Smith Machinery, which takes care of scheduled service for the first 2,000 hours or three years under the Komatsu CARE program.

"Kirby-Smith ensures that services are done on schedule at a convenient time and place with little or no downtime; and as busy as we are, that's a great value," said Kolb. "It's also helpful because our mechanics learn how to do the services before they take over the maintenance. Kirby-Smith has been great about working with us on that, as well as responding quickly to any other needs we have. It's especially been a pleasure working with our Territory Manager, Kris Phillips. He and Kirby-Smith are big reasons why we chose Komatsu and have stayed with it."

Market-driven

In addition to quality work, Kolb said honesty has helped create strong relationships between Wildstone Construction and its customers.

"If customers call and we can't get to their jobs for some time, I tell them that," Kolb said. "I've turned down work, which I hate to do, but I'd rather be upfront and honest. I won't make a promise I can't keep. Customers appreciate that, so we stay on good terms. That's the way I want to keep it."

He didn't plan to grow as big or as fast as he did, but Kolb said circumstances allowed it and will dictate what happens going forward.

"I had a business plan mapped out to maybe double each year, but we threw that out the window right away," he said. "I'd like to maintain where we are now, but if the market allows us to grow more, we'll consider it."

"A few things will stay the same," he added. "We won't sacrifice quality and customer service. The other is our focus. We could branch out and offer other types of work, but right now I would rather focus on doing one thing and doing it well." ■



(L-R) Wildstone Construction General Superintendent Joe Alvarado and Owner John Kolb meet with Kirby-Smith Machinery Territory Manager Kris Phillips on a jobsite. "It's especially been a pleasure working with Kris. He and Kirby-Smith are big reasons why we chose Komatsu and have stayed with it."

Owner John Kolb says Wildstone Construction uses Komatsu PC200LC excavators for backfill and compaction. "All of our Komatsu excavators have fast cycle times and are good on fuel," he said.





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MORE EFFICIENT LOADERS

New WA500-8 and WA320-8 feature high production, lower fuel consumption in a variety of applications

Wheel loaders perform a variety of tasks and in a wide range of applications. Komatsu's new Tier 4 Final WA500-8 and WA320-8 models provide increased efficiency and high production under all types of conditions. These new models also use less fuel than their Tier 4 Interim predecessors – up to 5 percent less with the WA500-8 and up to 3 percent less with the WA320-8.

The WA500-8 has an increased bucket capacity of 7.6 cubic yards, and the bucket now fills easier and retains material better, contributing to machine efficiency and productivity gains of up to 10 percent. It also features greater horsepower than the Dash-7.

"The WA500-8 is made for loading on-highway trucks or smaller rigid trucks in quarry applications, articulated trucks on construction sites or load-and-carry applications," said Komatsu Product Marketing Manager Rob McMahon. "Operators will also appreciate enhancements in cab comfort and features, such as the integrated load meter and full automatic digging function."

'Utility knife on four wheels'

The WA320-8's parallel-lift linkage, with auto tilt-in to simulate a Z-bar, can be used in any application from pallet handling to hard digging. With increased operating weight, the WA320-8 features an S mode that gives operators maximum control in slippery conditions.

"The easy-to-control hydrostatic transmission makes the WA320-8 ideal for agriculture and residential applications, but its size and attachment-friendly quick coupler make it an all-around performer for almost any work site," Komatsu Product Marketing Manager Craig McGinnis said. "The WA320-8 works well for snow removal. It's a multi-purpose utility knife on four wheels."

Komatsu designed its Komatsu Diesel Particulate Filter (KDPF) and other after-treatment components in its new Tier 4 Final loaders to work in conjunction with the engine for efficiency and longer life. More than 90 percent of KDPF regeneration is performed passively, with no action required by the operator and no interference with machine operation.

"These new models are a great fit for companies using construction-sized and small quarry loaders," said McGinnis. "We encourage anyone who uses loaders to demo a WA500-8, WA320-8 or both. We believe owners and operators will see the clear advantages that the new models offer." ■

The WA500-8 has an increased bucket capacity of 7.6 cubic yards, and the bucket now fills easier and retains material better, contributing to machine efficiency and productivity gains of up to 10 percent.



Rob McMahon,
Komatsu Product
Marketing Manager



Craig McGinnis,
Komatsu Product
Marketing Manager

Quick Specs on Komatsu WA500-8 and WA320-8 Wheel Loaders

Model	Horsepower	Operating Weight	Bucket Capacity
WA320-8	165 hp	34,128-34,392 lb	3.0-4.2 cu yd
WA500-8	357 hp	76,708-77,856 lb	6.8-8.2 cu yd



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011

'STRAIGHT TO GRADE'

Komatsu adds larger, more productive *intelligent* Machine Control excavators

Want to dig straight to grade with an excavator? You can with Komatsu's new *intelligent* Machine Control excavators, including the PC360LCi-11 that fits in the popular 30-ton size class and provides excellent productivity and efficiency in a wide range of applications.

"Nimble, yet highly productive, the PC360LCi-11 is easily the most anticipated *intelligent* Machine Control product to launch from Komatsu in recent memory," said Jason Anetsberger, Komatsu Senior Product Manager. "From trenching on a utility work site to mass excavating on a highway project, the PC360LCi-11 is flexible and versatile enough to be at home on almost any jobsite."

A 257-horsepower Tier 4 Final engine powers the PC360LCi-11, while the larger PC490LCi-11 has a Tier 4 Final, 359-horsepower engine. On top of an already very productive base machine, incorporation of the *intelligent* Machine Control technology boosts productivity up to 66 percent when compared to conventional excavation methods.

"Many of our customers have enjoyed the precision, versatility and efficiency of our first *intelligent* Machine Control excavator, the PC210LCi-10, and have asked us to scale *intelligent* Machine Control technology to larger-sized excavators. The wait is over," reported Anetsberger. "Whether you are mass excavating, trenching or fine grading, the PC490LCi-11 will help increase productivity and efficiency, while removing the burden and worry of overexcavation."

Revolutionary automation

Komatsu introduced the world's first *intelligent* Machine Control excavator, the PC210LCi-10, to rave reviews in 2014. Like that machine,

the PC360LCi-11 and PC490LCi-11 feature Komatsu's revolutionary, fully factory-integrated, machine-control system. The exclusive control function lets operators focus on moving materials efficiently, without worrying about digging too deep or damaging the target surface.

Komatsu's *intelligent* Machine Control excavators utilize 3D-design data loaded into the touchscreen display to show machine position relative to target grade. When the bucket reaches the target surface, automation kicks in to limit overexcavation.

"Once the target elevation is reached, no matter how hard the operator tries to move the joystick control to lower the boom, the excavator won't allow it," said Anetsberger. "From rough digging to finish grade, these machines improve efficiency and precision and minimize overexcavation, making every pass count." ■



Jason Anetsberger,
Komatsu Senior
Product Manager



Discover More

Quick Specs on Komatsu PC360LCi-11 and PC490LCi-11 Excavators

Model	Net Horsepower	Operating Weight	Bucket Capacity
PC360LCi-11	257 hp	78,484-79,807 lb	0.89-2.56 cu yd
PC490LCi-11	359 hp	105,670-107,850 lb	1.47-4.05 cu yd



The new *intelligent* Machine Control excavators feature Komatsu's fully factory-integrated machine-control system. The exclusive control function lets operators focus on moving materials efficiently, without worrying about digging too deep or damaging the target surface.

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015

ROUNDING OUT THE LINEUP

Komatsu's new D85i-18 dozers hog dirt, excel at finish grades with *intelligent* Machine Control

Three years ago Komatsu unveiled its first *intelligent* Machine Control dozer, the D61i-23. Several models followed, ranging from the 105-horsepower D39i-23 to the 354-horsepower D155AXi-8. However, one size class remained without an *intelligent* Machine Control dozer. Komatsu filled that gap with its new 30-ton, 264-horsepower D85EXi-18 and D85PXi-18 models.

The new D85i-18 dozers feature factory-integrated GPS grade control that eliminates the need for cables and masts. Once engaged, the system automatically starts the cut and lowers the blade to grade in a typical dozing pass. If the load increases to maximum capacity, the blade automatically raises to minimize track slip, ensuring productive dozing. This allows the dozers to achieve up to 8 percent greater efficiency in moving materials, based on start-to-finish-grade testing against typical aftermarket machine-control systems.

A new standard, operator-selected Reverse-Grading mode enables automatic blade control while in reverse.

"Customers who use a standard D85-18 like that it moves massive amounts of dirt, yet is easy to transport," said Chuck Murawski, Komatsu Product Marketing Manager. "The new D85i-18 does that with the added benefit of machine control, so that every pass counts. Eliminating the components of traditional aftermarket systems, and the time required to remove and install them, means even more passes and greater profits."

Increase production with SIGMADOZER® blade

Increased production of up to 15 percent during those passes is possible using a Komatsu-patented

SIGMADOZER® blade that rolls material to the center for increased soil-holding capacity and reduced sideways spillage.

Maintenance and repair costs remain low with Komatsu's Parallel Link Undercarriage System (PLUS) that provides up to double the wear life of traditional systems. A new Triple Labyrinth final drive provides added protection for the drive's floating seals.

"With the monthly production gains that are realized by starting sooner, finishing faster and using less fuel, owners are finding that the more they run the D85i-18, the more they save," said Sebastian Witkowski, Komatsu Product Marketing Manager. "From heavy-slot dozing to finish grading, this dozer is perfect for larger earthmoving jobs where accuracy and efficiency are important." ■



Chuck Murawski,
Komatsu Product
Marketing Manager



Sebastian Witkowski,
Komatsu Product
Marketing Manager

CONSTRUCTION

Quick Specs on Komatsu D85i-18 Dozers

Model	Net Horsepower	Operating Weight	Blade Capacity
D85EXi-18	264 hp	67,439 lb*	9.4 cu yd*
D85PXi-18	264 hp	65,080 lb	7.7 cu yd

*With SIGMADOZER®

Komatsu's new *intelligent* Machine Control D85i-18 dozers move massive amounts of dirt and grade efficiently while remaining easy to transport. They feature a new standard, operator-selected Reverse-Grading mode that enables automatic blade control while in reverse.



Discover More



BENNETT STEEL INC.

Tulsa crane contractor's growth comes from making the right moves to ensure customer satisfaction



Dave Bennett,
President



Matt Bennett,
Vice President-
Production

Many businesses are willing to travel outside their territories for the right customers. Few would consider moving their entire operations, but Bennett Steel did just that about a year after Dave Bennett founded the company in 1980.

Bennett Steel started in Okmulgee, but its largest customer was located near Tulsa. So, in 1981, the company moved to Sapulpa to better accommodate what was known at the time as Liberty Glass Company. Three years later, Bennett Steel moved across town to its present location. Today, Bennett Steel is a multi-pronged company that provides erection services, steel fabrication and crane rental.

“In the early days, our mainline offering was erection, but through the years, we transitioned into about half our business being erection and fabrication, with rental making up the balance,” recalled Bennett, who is President of the company. “We believe that diversity allows us to best serve our wide-ranging customer base, as well as help us react to changing market conditions.”

In addition to Dave Bennett, the company's key personnel includes Vice President-Production Matt Bennett; Vice President-Sales Jack Pitcock; Shop Superintendent Delbert Brown; Project Managers Floyd Duncan and Richard Williams; Drafting Coordinator Carla January; Crane Superintendent Chris Wilson; Field Operations Manager Harvey Swift; Operator Foreman Max Glendinning; Sales Reps Randy Magee, Billy Rice and Pat Morgan; Shop Foreman Tony Palmer; and Field Safety Director Charlie Whitesell. In total, the business employs nearly 200 people.

About the same time that it moved to its current location, Bennett Steel opened a fabrication division, which has a 65,000-square-foot, full-service shop. The fabrication division does work for Bennett Steel's erection division and offers its services to outside customers as well. The American Institute of Steel Construction (AISC) has certified Bennett Steel as a fabricator.

“Our shop takes projects from concept to finished product,” Bennett explained. “We provide detailed drawings, fabricate beams, bolt or weld them together and deliver them to any location the customer wants. We have ample space that allows us to handle practically any size job. Additionally, we have a group that fabricates form metal, such as stainless and aluminum handrails, and installs them. We also manufacture grates.”

Strong credentials, safety focus

Bennett Steel is one of the largest and most sought-after erection service providers in the region and holds an advanced, certified-steel-erector credential from the AISC. The company also is recognized as a qualified erector by the Precast/Prestressed Concrete Institute.

Bennett Steel's fabrication division has a 65,000-square-foot, full-service shop that takes projects from concept to finished product. The fabrication division does work for Bennett Steel's erection division and offers its services to outside customers as well.



CRANES



Bennett Steel offers everything from taxi service, where a mobile crane moves from job to job each day, to large multi-day projects that require comprehensive rigging and lifting plans. All operators, riggers and signalmen are certified to ensure that lifts are done safely and properly.

Bennett Steel carries a large, diverse fleet of cranes for rent, with capacities from eight to 400 tons. The crane-rental division works closely with customers to determine the right crane for their needs and offers lift plans. Rentals come with a certified crane operator.

“Our crane rentals run the gamut. We offer everything from taxi service – where a mobile crane moves from job to job each day – to large, multi-day projects that require comprehensive rigging and lifting plans,” Bennett noted. “Having certified operators, riggers and signalmen ensures that our customers’ lifts are done safely and properly.”

Bennett Steel emphasizes safety, and its record is among the best in the industry. The company employs six safety professionals who audit jobsites and the company’s fabrication shop to ensure proper safety practices are always in place and followed. That’s helped Bennett Steel gain and maintain a very low OSHA total recorded incident rate (TRIR).

“We, and the companies we work with, take TRIR very seriously. In fact, you can’t get on many of the companies’ sites if your TRIR is too high,” said Bennett. “More importantly, we make safety a priority because we value our employees. They are the backbone of the company. In fact, our employees built this company. Fortunately, I have pushed and pulled the right levers at the right time. Currently, we are bringing on new blood. Last year, we lost nearly 260 years of experience, but I have confidence in our staff to recruit and train quality people.”



▶ VIDEO

Operator Kyle Cummings lifts structural beams with Bennett Steel’s 165-ton Grove GMK5165 all-terrain crane. “The Grove cranes are powerhouses,” said Cummings. “I like that there are similarities among the different models we have. They are all user-friendly, with hand-held controls and computers that help take the guesswork out of a pick.”



High-profile work

Bennett Steel’s completed project list includes numerous high-profile jobs throughout the Midwest, but one of the biggest was right in its own backyard. With nearly 60 employees and five cranes, the company put up 1.3 million square feet of roof and 950,000 square feet of mezzanine for a new Macy’s in Tulsa. This project also involved installing precast walls during a six-month period. Crews worked



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Continued . . .

Company earns Project-of-the-Year award

... continued



Jack Pitcock,
Vice President-Sales



Floyd Duncan,
Project Manager

47,000 man-hours with zero incidents on the Macy's project and helped Bennett Steel earn a Project-of-the-Year award from the Association of General Contractors.

"That's the biggest project we've done to date, and we're certainly proud of it," said Bennett. "We take great pride in all our work. We approach each job as if it's the most important one we have, no matter the size or how long it takes to complete. Our jobs last anywhere from an hour or two, all the way to months and sometimes years."

For another highly visible job, the company fabricated structural steel, handrails and stairs and erected them for Oneok Field in Tulsa, home of the Tulsa Drillers AA baseball team. Bennett Steel also made and installed steel at Oklahoma State University's football stadium and Devon Tower in Oklahoma City.



Delbert Brown,
Shop
Superintendent



Chris Wilson,
Crane
Superintendent



Carla January,
Drafting
Coordinator

(L-R) Bennett Steel President Dave Bennett works with Kirby-Smith Machinery Crane Division Account Manager Todd York and Territory Manager Peyton Chatham. "Kirby-Smith understands that downtime is critical, and they work to keep ours to a minimum," said Bennett. "Todd, Peyton and Kirby-Smith are terrific to work with."



Kirby-Smith service, Manitowoc cranes

About the same time that Bennett founded his company, Ed Kirby and Fred Smith started Kirby-Smith Machinery. Bennett said that the service Kirby-Smith provided at that time and through the years has factored heavily into why Bennett Steel mainly uses Grove and National cranes as well as Multiquip welders. Bennett works with Kirby-Smith Crane Division Account Manager Todd York and Territory Manager Peyton Chatham.

"They helped me greatly when I was starting out, and I can still call anyone at Kirby-Smith and get a quick response," Bennett shared. "Kirby-Smith understands that downtime is critical, and they work to keep ours to a minimum. Todd, Peyton and Kirby-Smith are terrific to work with."

Bennett Steel's crane fleet includes Grove truck-mounted 110-ton TMS900Es, 165-ton GMK5165 and 275-ton GMK5275 all-terrain models, as well as 45-ton National NBT45 swing-seat boom trucks. All are part of the Manitowoc crane family.

"The technology on cranes has changed dramatically from when we started, and Manitowoc is the industry leader," Bennett noted. "All brands and models we run allow us to make the picks, easily put together lift plans and communicate from the office to the jobsite via tablet. We particularly like the all-terrain cranes because we can drive them from job to job. We can set them up quickly, and they have ample load charts."

Growth beyond expectations

In addition to its headquarters in Sapulpa, Bennett Steel offers crane rental from locations at the Port of Catoosa in Pryor, Oklahoma, and in McPherson, Kansas. Bennett admits that he never expected the business to be as big as it is today.

"I started with three other people," recalled Bennett. "I thought if I could make a good living for the four of us, it would be as good as it got. The opportunities kept coming, and we continued to capitalize on them. We focus on providing quality work and excellent service, and if you do that, customers tend to find and stick with you. And, we tend to stay with them, too." ■

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SERIES INTRODUCTION

Wirtgen Group launches new Vögele paver series with launch of Super 2000-3i

The Wirtgen Group recently unveiled its new 10-foot tracked Vögele Super 2000-3i that refines the productive features of the Vision paver (5200-2i) it replaces and elevates asphalt paving to a new level of performance. The Super 2000-3i introduces a new group of wheeled and tracked pavers that will eventually supplant the acclaimed Vision series.

“The Super 2000-3i is designed primarily for use in highway construction and large-scale commercial applications, where power and productivity are paramount,” said Gary Corley, Kirby-Smith Machinery Paving & Compaction Specialist. “It features a basic width of 10 feet, a maximum paving width of 28 feet and has a top placement rate of 1,540 tons per hour. It will lay a lot of asphalt quickly and efficiently.”

Three main components define the power unit of the Super 2000-3i: its modern, liquid-cooled diesel engine; a splitter gearbox flanged directly to the engine; and a large cooler assembly. The powerful six-cylinder Tier 4 Final engine rated at 250 horsepower drives the paver through even the most robust applications. It is also fuel-efficient and has an *ECO mode* that is sufficient for many applications. A large cooler assembly ensures that the power unit always delivers its full output.

The Super 2000-3i has an innovative and reliable drive concept for accurate tracking. All drive components, including a three-phase generator, are supplied from the central splitter gearbox and operate at maximum efficiency. High-traction crawler tracks efficiently convert drive power into forward motion.

ErgoPlus 3

ErgoPlus 3 is the latest version of Vögele’s operating system, now enhanced with a number

of ergonomic and functional features. With its new mounting system, the paver operator’s console can be shifted even more conveniently and easily between the right and left sides of the operator’s stand. In addition, it now has a large color display that ensures good readability even in poor lighting conditions.

“Vögele focused on the operator when designing the Super 2000-3i,” said Jim Holland, District Sales Manager for the Wirtgen Group. “Ergonomics, safe operation and operator comfort were key design elements. Vögele’s commitment is to provide the highest quality machine and the industry’s most reliable paver.” ■

The Vögele Super 2000-3i is designed primarily for use in highway construction and large-scale commercial applications.



Gary Corley,
Kirby-Smith Machinery
Paving & Compaction
Specialist



Jim Holland,
District Sales Manager,
Wirtgen Group

Quick Specs on the Vögele Super 2000-3i

Model	Max Paving Width	Max Laydown Rate	Transport Width
Super 2000-3i	28 ft 3 in	1,540 tons per hour	10 ft



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Kirby-Smith Machinery sponsors annual TxSWANA Road-E-O

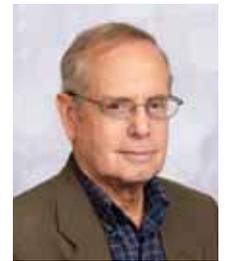
Kirby-Smith Machinery was a sponsor of the 2016 TxSWANA Road-E-O, held at the City of Denton ECO-W.E.R.C.S. Resource Recovery Park in June. Employees from three branches were on hand to ensure their customer's event was a successful one, and Kirby-Smith sponsored the opening reception.

TxSWANA is the Lone Star Chapter of the Solid Waste Association of North America (SWANA). The chapter is comprised of more than 400 individual members from various areas of the solid waste industry. Each year TxSWANA hosts an equipment "Road-E-O" consisting of equipment competitions across landfill, mechanic and truck categories. Winners of this year's TxSWANA contest earned the right to compete at the International SWANA Road-E-O in Georgia.

Several Kirby-Smith Machinery customers, including the City of Denton and the City of Dallas, actively participate in TxSWANA's Road-E-O each year. The City of Denton has purchased numerous pieces of Komatsu Tier 4 Interim equipment from Kirby-Smith in recent years, including a D65EX-17 dozer, an HM400-3 articulated truck, a PC490LC-0 excavator and a converted Komatsu articulated truck with an 8,000-gallon water tank. The D65 dozer and the HM400 articulated truck were used during the event.

"Hosting the competition provided Denton the opportunity to not only put the machinery from Kirby-Smith on display, but also allow operators from all over the state to get in the cab and experience Komatsu equipment for themselves," said Sol Gieser, Kirby-Smith Texas Governmental Sales Manager. "The event once again proved to be a triumph for

TxSWANA, with Dallas, El Paso, Lubbock, Abilene, Houston, San Antonio and Plano participating, along with Denton. We enjoyed volunteering and look forward to serving our customers' equipment requirements in the future. We hope they will join Kirby-Smith at the TxSWANA Road-E-O next year in Midland." ■



Sol Gieser, TX Governmental Sales Manager



Kirby-Smith Machinery was a sponsor of the 2016 TxSWANA Road-E-O held in June. The City of Denton used its Komatsu D65EX-17 dozer and HM400-3 articulated truck during the competition.



IS BIGGER BETTER?

Companies employ rightsizing strategy to purchase equipment and build efficient fleets



Ken Calvert,
Director, Komatsu
Business Solutions
Group

While the lowest points of the Great Recession are in the rearview mirror, construction companies are applying the lessons learned from those tough economic times to their current business models. As a result, companies today are continually looking for the most efficient ways to operate. One area where that mind-set is put into action is with equipment fleets.

Owners are concentrating on maximizing the value of every piece of equipment in their yards. The strategy of rightsizing – matching equipment to its most cost-effective application – is helping owners accomplish this.

In a 2014 interview with Equipment Manager magazine, industry consultant Andrew M. Agoos noted that equipment owners emerged from the economic downturn with changed attitudes. He says that rightsizing grew in popularity as many owners were skeptical of the economy’s continued growth. Because of this belief, owners continued to increase their efforts to manage and maintain equipment judiciously.

Buying the right machine

One of the most effective ways to own an efficient fleet is to purchase the correct machines.

Fleet managers need to consider several factors when purchasing equipment – budget, work-site conditions, current and future projects, technology and transportation. Companies can save time and money by doing their homework.

Ken Calvert is the Director of Komatsu’s Business Solutions Group, a team that handles special projects relating to customers, distributors and corporate personnel. As part of this mission, the group collaborates with customers to help with the fleet-building process.

“Our favorite thing is to present a customer who has a \$2 million budget with a package that costs \$1.5 million and is much more efficient,” shared Calvert. “We work with companies to help them monitor machines, look at the future and make the best decisions. Our goal is to save them money up front and in the future.”

The group achieves this goal by often advising customers to buy smaller equipment with a focus on rightsizing.

“The data shows that many people own machines which are too big,” said Calvert. “Buying a smaller machine is the single-best thing customers can do to save money. Large machines cost more up front, are more expensive to run and maintain, require more fuel, and they depreciate faster. Smaller machines have a higher utilization rate because they can be used on more jobs, and their residual values are more predictable and potentially higher.”

Ego can play a role in the decision to purchase a larger machine, but Calvert says that many times it’s a lack of information that causes customers to select machines that are too big. Customers may believe they are protecting themselves by purchasing a larger machine with the thought that it can handle more jobs. Using the wrong-sized machine is also common with new or growing companies. Many times, those businesses are



Kurt Moncini,
Komatsu Senior
Product Manager –
Tracked Products

To operate cost effectively, equipment owners are building their fleets by purchasing smaller machines and renting or leasing larger ones when needed. The rightsizing strategy has grown in popularity since the Great Recession.





Owning and Operating Cost Comparison Among Komatsu Excavators

Model	PC88MR-10	PC138USLC-10	PC170LC-10	PC210LC-10	PC360LC-10	PC490LC-10
Price Variance	x	1.4x	1.5x	2.1x	3.4x	4.6x
Fuel Usage	1.41 gal/hr	2.04 gal/hr	2.97 gal/hr	3.38 gal/hr	5.77 gal/hr	7.55 gal/hr
Average Maintenance Fee Variance	x	1.3x	1.4x	1.4x	1.9x	2x

trying to do jobs with the machines they already own to avoid paying for an additional one. For a short time, this strategy may prove beneficial, but not over an extended period.

Another important component of rightsizing is matching equipment that will be working together in the same applications. For example, loading and hauling equipment need to match for optimum efficiency. If a loader is too large for a truck, or vice versa, the project will not be as efficient.

"I think people would be surprised at the benefits of buying properly sized machines," continued Calvert. "Just because a PC360 excavator can do the same jobs as a PC210, doesn't mean it should. The PC360 isn't nimble enough for smaller jobs. Using a right-sized machine is not only cheaper from an equipment standpoint, but it also saves time and eliminates wasted effort, which reduces the cost."

Technology changes fleets

In addition to buying right-sized machines and maintaining a proper-sized fleet, owners today also must consider technology advancements. With every new generation of equipment released, fuel efficiency, hydraulic performance,

visibility and emissions output improve. Simply purchasing the previous model again can cost companies a great deal of money.

"If an owner of an older machine, like a Komatsu PC400LC-6 excavator, was ready for a new machine, getting the latest 400-series excavator may not be the best decision," explained Kurt Moncini, Komatsu Senior Product Manager – Tracked Products. "Some of today's machines are so advanced that they are able to outperform older, larger machines."

To illustrate this, Moncini compares a Komatsu PC400LC-6 excavator to a new Komatsu PC390LC-11. The PC400 is 93,000 pounds with a 125-series engine; the PC390 is 90,000 pounds with a 114-series engine. Despite being smaller, the PC390 has a similar bucket capacity (2.97 yards to 3 yards), more horsepower (267 hp versus 266 hp), better over-side lift at 25 feet and comparable over-front lift at 15 feet. The PC390 also has the ability to match engine modes to application, offers advanced hydraulic features and has better fuel efficiency while meeting the latest emissions standards.

"With improvements to engine efficiency and hydraulic systems, the smaller PC390 can do just about everything the PC400 can," said Moncini.

As machines increase in size, so does the cost to purchase and maintain them as illustrated in the chart above. Ken Calvert, Director of Komatsu's Business Solutions Group says that owners would be "money ahead" by purchasing smaller machines and renting or leasing machines for larger projects as needed.

Continued . . .

Rentals and leases both growing in popularity

... continued

“For companies that are looking to replace older machines, there is value in considering newer, smaller models. In many cases, they are just as productive.”

The idea of rightsizing can also apply to the number of machines in a company’s inventory. Traditionally, firms built large fleets by holding onto older machines that were paid for, on the small chance they would be needed on a future project. While the machines may not have a payment, they lose value annually, and the costs associated with running those machines are higher than new ones. To run a leaner operation, some companies may want to sell older machines and begin building more efficient fleets by purchasing right-sized machines, renting or leasing.

“What many people don’t realize is they may be money ahead by buying a smaller machine to handle a majority of their projects and renting a larger machine when needed,” reported Calvert. “If a company can handle 90 percent of its projects with a smaller machine, it would be better off financially to rent a larger one for the other 10 percent.”

Meeting the trends

Equipment distributors and lenders have noticed this trend and designed programs to accommodate these changing attitudes. Agoos said that rental purchase options (RPOs) and similar programs were uncommon five or 10 years ago, but are now standard because dealerships have built large rental fleets.

Advanced technology makes newer machines just as productive as older, larger machines. “With improvements to engine efficiency and hydraulic systems, the smaller PC390LC-11 excavator can do just about everything the PC400LC-6 can,” said Kurt Moncini, Komatsu Senior Product Manager – Tracked Products.



Short-term leases have also experienced a similar spike in popularity.

“Twelve-month leases were almost unheard of before the recession, but now they are very popular,” revealed Tony Suits, Retail Finance Manager at Power Motive Corporation, a Komatsu distributor for Colorado and Wyoming. “A number of companies were stuck with big equipment payments during the recession, and they want to avoid that situation again. Today, some companies have work scheduled for eight to 12 months, but may not be sure what is coming after that. They love short leases because of the option to walk away or extend the lease after 12 months, depending on what work becomes available.”

Another reason that managing equipment through rentals or leases has grown in popularity is the benefits that come with the agreement.

“During a lease, we cover the maintenance and repairs, taking much of the risk out of the equation for the customer,” said Suits. “If something goes wrong, we can fix it or get them a new machine, and it’s all part of the agreement. Customers like being able to write the same check each month and not worry about downtime.”

Calvert says that financial protection should give owners the confidence to develop their fleets and grow their businesses.

“As companies grow and get into applications where they don’t own the optimal machines, they should consider rental,” he suggested. “It’s a cost-effective, low-risk way for owners to decide how to build their fleets and test out machines before they purchase.”

Mix and match

While rightsizing is a technique that allows companies to operate more efficiently, it is far from a one-size-fits-all solution. The onus is on a company to do its research and tailor a strategy to its needs.

Calvert points out that each company is different and should create a plan based on its production needs and goals, but he suggests a mix of machines that can handle many jobs cost effectively.

“Think of it like a basketball team,” he explained. “You can play with five centers, but you aren’t going to be very successful. You need a mix of abilities to succeed. The same is true when building a fleet.” ■



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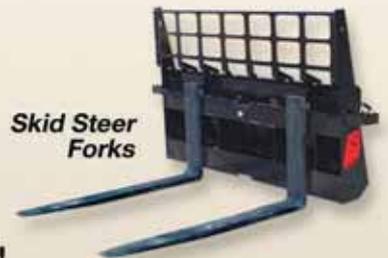
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CREATING A SAFETY CULTURE

Companies should focus on more than just recording zero incidents



Bob Fitzgerald,
Manager of Project
Safety and Health,
Southern Company
Services

The following article has been republished with permission and originally appeared in the fall 2015 issue of NCCER's Cornerstone Magazine at nccercornerstone.com.

Bob Fitzgerald, Manager of Project Safety and Health, Southern Company Services, says it's important for companies to go beyond thinking in terms of achieving zero recordable incidents and implement proactive safety processes.

Great news! Your project achieved a safety milestone with zero OSHA-recordable injuries. Mission accomplished, right? Not entirely. Most safety practitioners insist that there is always room for improvement with safety practices and procedures.

While the OSHA Recordable Incidence Rate (RIR) is a common and important metric for many organizations, some industry groups rank this indicator too high. Avoiding OSHA-recordable injuries is always a good thing, but claiming victory based on that alone does not meet the true goal of safety. For example, how many close calls were there? As safety leaders, we should work to change the mind-set that milestones equal achievements and instead shift to a clearer understanding of overall safety performance.

To better grasp the evolution of safety-performance measurements, it is

important to appreciate why the OSHA RIR has become so prevalent. In 1982, the Business Roundtable issued the report "Improving Construction Safety Performance" to emphasize the importance of investing in safety programs and open dialogue between contractors and the workforce. The report also provided a relatively objective method to select safe contractors by suggesting the use of Experience Modification Rate (EMR) and OSHA RIR for safety evaluations.

Ultimately, the report's appendix gave business owners a tool to evaluate their contractors objectively. The intentions were noble, but some may have taken these guidelines as definitive metrics, placing too much emphasis on OSHA-recordable cases. In fact, many owners are still using variations of the original 1982 report appendix as a qualification document to help select contractors. This reporting can lead to inconsistencies. For example, one dose of a prescription pain medication qualifies as an OSHA-recordable injury, as does a fractured femur. Ideally, injury severity should be considered, because incidence rates alone may not paint the clearest picture.

Evaluators sometimes focus on the numbers and place too much emphasis on case management in achieving safety performance. Workers notice when management continually stresses achieving zero RIRs. If bonuses and promotions are tied to OSHA rates, employees and contractors may intentionally, or unintentionally, avoid reporting incidents.

It is important to build safety systems and processes to minimize the impact of human error. This also means we must think beyond achieving zero incidents, particularly with regard to OSHA rates. It is vital to implement proactive safety processes and take care of our people. ■



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013

ADAPTING TO YOUR NEEDS

Komatsu releases new maintenance programs, adapts to changing attitudes about machine ownership

QUESTION: What is the main role of the Parts Sales & Marketing department at Komatsu?

ANSWER: The role of our group is to focus on customers' parts support needs in order to maximize efficiency in their operations. By doing so, we demonstrate the quality of our parts, strengthen our customer relationships and drive loyalty for Komatsu machines, parts and service.

QUESTION: How has the market changed in regard to owning heavy equipment during the past few years?

ANSWER: It's become clear that equipment owners are looking for even more ways to maximize their investments in the machines they own. Customers are cautious with the money they spend to ensure it is used as efficiently as possible. They want to allocate their maintenance dollars where it makes the most sense. Komatsu builds technologically advanced, high-quality products that require the use of high-performance filters and engineered oils to maintain peak performance and component longevity. When customers buy revenue-generating, capital assets they expect a maintenance program that ensures only parts and fluids made for their specific Komatsu machines are used when serviced. This is why we developed Genuine Care. We're so confident in the benefits of our Genuine products that we stand behind each Genuine Care program with a 12,000-hour component life assurance and 100 percent core guarantee.

QUESTION: What should customers know about the new Genuine Care program and how do they benefit from it?

ANSWER: Our new Genuine Care program is an extension of our complimentary Komatsu CARE program for Tier 4 machines. Customers can purchase a Genuine Care program from their Komatsu dealers to pick up where the

Continued ...



**Paul Moore, Vice President,
Parts Sales & Marketing**

This is one of a series of articles based on interviews with key people at Komatsu discussing the company's commitment to its customers in the construction and mining industries – and their visions for the future.

Paul Moore joined Komatsu in 2006 and became the Vice President, Parts Sales & Marketing in 2015. His career path to that point included two continents and several jobs in the heavy-equipment field. He started as an apprentice technician in his native United Kingdom in 1984. In 1990, he joined a global agricultural-equipment manufacturer and then moved to the United States with that company in 2000, before joining Komatsu.

"My background and career path have provided me several opportunities to progress," said Moore. "I've held different product support positions, and I think that helps me understand the importance which customers place on parts support."

Moore joined Komatsu to focus on its remanufacturing business. From there, he progressed from Senior Product Manager, Reman; to Senior Marketing Manager, Spare Parts; to Director of Parts Marketing; and finally to his current position.

"The first thing that attracted me to Komatsu was the reputation of the product," Moore recalled. "Now that I've been involved with the company, I know why the reputation is so strong. We have great people who set the bar really high. It's a world-class organization."

Moore is married and has two children. In his free time, he enjoys riding motorcycles and spending time with his family.

Programs strengthen customer-distributor-brand relationship

... continued



To accommodate customers' changing attitudes regarding machine ownership, Komatsu offers new programs that encourage customers to meet with distributors and plan future maintenance. The programs ensure that Komatsu-certified technicians continue to perform maintenance on machines.

complimentary maintenance leaves off. As long as that Genuine Care program remains in place, we reward the Komatsu machine owner with the component assurance and core guarantee; both of which are fully transferrable when it's time to trade in or sell the machine. Our Komatsu distributors use KOMTRAX to monitor the machine and proactively schedule and perform maintenance at times that work best for the Komatsu machine owner. Factory-trained technicians perform the work, and all services include oil analysis of each component and a full machine inspection. This complete service history also ensures that the machine qualifies as Komatsu CARE Certified Equipment, our highest level of previously owned equipment and a serious driver of higher residual values when an owner decides to trade in or sell the machine.

QUESTION: What has Komatsu done to accommodate customers' changing attitudes about ownership?

ANSWER: We began planning programs that we believed could be of value to our customers and this new trend. Our new Firm Future Order program is a direct result of that. This long-term planning program is designed for the distributor to sit down with a customer and look at what machines the customer is running, the applications those machines are performing in, how hard the machines are working and what the machines will be doing in the future. Then, we schedule large maintenance projects three, six or 12 months in

In addition to service programs, Komatsu places an emphasis on getting more people in the field to meet with customers and work with the distributors. As a result, the customer-distributor-brand relationship has strengthened. "These programs give customers the opportunity to develop a relationship with someone from Komatsu, in addition to their dealers and sales reps," said Vice President, Parts Sales & Marketing Paul Moore.



advance, based on the information gathered. We let the customers lock in pricing and guarantee availability of parts. We also schedule the work at times that are convenient for the owners. This enables the owners to build those repair costs into their budgets.

The purpose of this program is to eliminate unexpected downtime through preventive maintenance. We want to help customers plan ahead and involve them in a proactive discussion. Having a plan in place is better than reacting to a surprise failure, and the plan can always be modified. For example, if a machine is scheduled for a transmission replacement, but it is outperforming our estimates, the customer can move the maintenance date but keep the guarantees. We will be ready and anticipate the service on the revised date.

QUESTION: How have customers received these programs?

ANSWER: Our distributors see a huge benefit in creating more face-to-face meetings with their customers, and the customers appreciate that we are looking out for them and handling the machine monitoring and the maintenance scheduling.

We've noticed that these programs have strengthened the bond between customers and their distributors and created a deeper sense of brand loyalty to Komatsu. The programs make our technicians more visible to customers because they are servicing the machines consistently and meeting with the customers. Customers can see that we are working to minimize downtime. The programs were put into place to help customers have a better experience with the Komatsu brand.

QUESTION: Were these programs the only changes made to accommodate customers?

ANSWER: No, continuous improvement is a core competency of Komatsu and led us to reorganize our field support staff. By increasing the number of staff members and reducing the size of their territories, we are able to spend more time with our distributors and in front of their customers. We've seen a great benefit to building, maintaining and strengthening those relationships at a jobsite level where the work is really being done. It truly helps us bring products and programs to the market to meet the ever-changing needs of our Komatsu machine owners. ■

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INNOVATIVE PRODUCTS AND SUPPORT

'JOBSITE OF THE FUTURE'

Komatsu showcases new *intelligent* Machine Control equipment and SMARTCONSTRUCTION

Komatsu unveiled new *intelligent* Machine Control dozers and excavators, as well as its SMARTCONSTRUCTION jobsite solutions, during the recent "Jobsite of the Future" event held at its Customer Center in Cartersville, Georgia. New excavators included the highly anticipated PC360LCi-11 and PC490LCi-11 models.

Komatsu introduced its first *intelligent* Machine Control products three years ago with the D61i-23 dozers, and this event showcased the second generation of that machine. The new D61i-24 model features a Tier 4 Final engine that reduces fuel consumption and operating costs. Additional new dozers included the D85i-18 and the D155AXi-8 RC (radio control) that is operated remotely via a radio transmitter.

"These new machines build on the success of our strong *intelligent* Machine Control family," said Jason Anetsberger, Komatsu Senior Product Manager. "When we introduced our first *intelligent* Machine Control excavator, customers asked us when additional, larger machines would be available – especially one in the popular 30-ton class size. We're pleased to introduce these new models, along with new dozers, and give the people in attendance a chance to operate them."

Attendees could also check out more *intelligent* Machine Control products, including D39i-24, D65i-18, D51i-22 and D155AXi-8 dozers. The world's first *intelligent* Machine Control excavator model, the PC210LCi-10, was also available for operation as was standard equipment such as the new WA600-8 wheel loader and haul trucks.

Komatsu personnel discussed the SMARTCONSTRUCTION program, which goes beyond *intelligent* Machine Control equipment with comprehensive jobsite solutions provided by Komatsu. In addition to training and support, offerings include: surveying/inspection, 3D

modeling, jobsite data solutions, jobsite setup and optimized operation consultation.

"Komatsu distributors offer customers more than just machines," Anetsberger explained. "They provide a total package solution delivered by the distributor's Technology Solutions Expert. Our aim is to meet customers' jobsite technology needs today and tomorrow, through innovative solutions that improve their bottom lines." ■



Jason Anetsberger, Komatsu Senior Product Manager



Among the machines featured was the popular 30-ton class size PC360LCi-11.



Komatsu introduced its second-generation *intelligent* Machine Control D61i-24 dozer, along with a new PC490LCi-11 excavator.



Attendees could operate all equipment, including the D155AXi-8 RC dozer, which is controlled remotely via a radio transmitter.



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WINNING TEAM

Komatsu partnership creates mutual benefits for Extreme Sandbox and local distributors

For Extreme Sandbox Founder and CEO Randy Stenger, 2016 has been a banner year. After appearing on ABC's "Shark Tank," business has been booming for the company. Extreme Sandbox formed an exclusive partnership with Komatsu and opened a second location north of Dallas, in addition to its original site in Hastings, Minnesota.

Through its partnership with Komatsu, Extreme Sandbox's two locations have developed a close relationship with local Komatsu distributors Road Machinery & Supplies Co. (RMS) and Kirby-Smith Machinery, Inc.

"Both distributors are first-class all around, and they were instrumental in helping us make the switch to Komatsu," said Stenger. "It's been great to have local partners."

In addition to providing machines and service for Extreme Sandbox, the relationship gives the distributors the opportunity to host events like product demonstrations and participate in High School Heavy Equipment Camps, which are designed to provide students with information about careers in the industry and give them hands-on experience with the equipment.

"We started these camps because we noticed a skills gap," said Stenger. "High schools don't have the resources to do things like this, so we came up with a way to help kids experience

various equipment. It's been a great way to get the students excited about the industry."

Excellent facilities

One of the major bonuses for distributors is having a top-notch facility so close that can be utilized for product demonstrations.

"To give customers a definite address to a product demonstration is amazing," remarked Dave Johnson, Chief Operating Officer at Road Machinery & Supplies Co., the Komatsu distributor in Minnesota. "The 10-acre site is specially designed for using heavy equipment; we can do everything we want to do there. Plus, if the weather is bad, we are able to move inside to their 6,000 square-foot facility that has three garage bays and a classroom. This is a far better alternative to standing in an open field with a tent."

Kirby-Smith Machinery Dallas Branch Manager David Cooper echoed those comments. "The site is great for us, as it's in the middle of our company's service area. The location features a restaurant, golf course, hotels, fishing and a pool. It's first-class."

For Extreme Sandbox and the distributors, it's a win-win relationship.

"The benefits extend beyond a dealer-customer one," explained Johnson. "We are proud to work with Randy and Extreme Sandbox, and we are very excited to see how the relationship continues to grow in the future." ■



▶ VIDEO
Randy Stenger,
Extreme Sandbox
Founder/CEO



Extreme Sandbox officially opened its Dallas location in April by stringing the ceremonial ribbon between two Komatsu WA270 wheel loaders and cutting it with a Komatsu PC360LC excavator.

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PROVEN VALUE

KOMTRAX helps Jackson Plumbing locate stolen PC35MR excavator

A recent global fraud report showed that more than a third of construction, engineering and infrastructure companies experienced theft during a one-year period. Count Jackson Plumbing among the unlucky few. The Sulphur, Louisiana, company had a Komatsu PC35MR compact excavator stolen from a jobsite.

“At some point during a weekend, someone came along, hooked onto the trailer the machine was on and drove off with both of them,” said Jackson Plumbing Owner Jeremy Jackson. “We discovered them missing on Monday morning, and contacted the owner of the project to see if he had taken the machine to a different jobsite. That wasn’t the case, so we quickly contacted our Komatsu distributor to locate it.”

The distributor pulled up the excavator on KOMTRAX, Komatsu’s remote machine-monitoring system. The PC35MR appeared to be about four hours away.

Within ten minutes, KOMTRAX pinpointed the location of the missing machine to the backyard of a new house under construction, and it transferred the coordinates to Google Maps. Because it was new construction, Google Maps couldn’t provide an address, but it was able to give a description of the building.

The distributor then provided the description to local law enforcement, who contacted the Sheriff.

“They confirmed the machine was there, and the next day we had someone drive over and pick it up,” said Jackson. “Now that I see what KOMTRAX can do, I think I’ll get a little more involved with it. It definitely proved its value to us.”

KOMTRAX was designed for more than locating a stolen machine. Customers can also call their distributors with service codes to find out what needs to be fixed. The service technicians know what the codes mean, so they can take the needed parts with them in one trip, which saves time and lowers costs. KOMTRAX also tracks machines for services due under Komatsu CARE. Customers can check equipment locations, hours, idle time and other valuable information.

For more details on Komatsu’s KOMTRAX machine-monitoring system, contact your local distributor. ■



Jackson Plumbing Owner Jeremy Jackson stands next to the company’s PC35MR excavator that was recovered after being stolen. KOMTRAX, Komatsu’s remote machine-monitoring system, quickly pinpointed the machine’s location. “Now that I see what KOMTRAX can do, I think I’ll get a little more involved with it. It definitely proved its value to us,” said Jackson.

RISING PRICES

Construction index shows costs up due to increased activity, lack of skilled labor

Turner Construction's recent building-cost index showed that increases in construction costs are being driven by a rising level of activity and limited availability of skilled labor in busier markets. The index measures costs in the U.S. nonresidential building construction market.

Turner Construction's recent building-cost index showed that increases in construction costs are being driven by a rising level of construction activity and limited availability of skilled labor in busier markets. A National Association of Homebuilders' report noted that the number of available construction positions rose to 193,000 in February, a post-recession high.



The index indicated the market has increased to a value score of 970, a 1.15 percent increase from the fourth quarter of 2015 and a 4.64 percent yearly increase from the first quarter of 2015.

"The shortage of skilled labor is outweighing the impact of declining material prices," said Atillio Rivetti, Turner Vice President. "As the volume of work remains relatively high, we expect subcontractors to continue to be strategic in their pursuits, ultimately resulting in upward cost pressures."

Job openings hit post-recession high

The index was released about the same time as the National Association of Homebuilders' (NAHB) analysis of the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics' Job Openings and Labor Turnover Survey that showed the number of available construction positions rose to 193,000 in February, a post-recession high.

NAHB noted that the number of open positions has increased for several years following the Great Recession. The organization reported that the number of residential construction workers has reached more than 2.5 million, with homebuilders and remodelers adding nearly 600,000 to payrolls since the recession. However, the number of unfilled jobs in construction persists and is causing concern.

Hiring is expected to continue as the homebuilding industry grows, according to NAHB. Multifamily construction spending – the value of property placed in service – reached an annual pace of \$59.7 billion in February, up 24.4 percent on a year-over-year basis. Single-family spending came in at an annual rate of \$235 billion. ■

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GUILD PROGRAM HONOREES

Kirby-Smith recognizes parts and service employees for continued education

Kirby-Smith Machinery's Guild Program recorded a banner year in 2015, as 52 winners were recognized from six branch locations. Both of these numbers are records in the program's 12-year history. This also marked the first time that the Abilene branch featured a Guild awardee, as Randy Dennis earned recognition.

The Guild Program is an internal awards program created to help ensure that Kirby-Smith's parts and service employees are consistently among the best and brightest in the business. To earn membership in the Guild, each participant is required to attend more than 40 hours of technical training annually and score 100 percent on quarterly exams.

Tom Montgomery, Vice President of Customer Care, spoke about the importance of the program, "The Guild Program honors our parts and service technicians who work to grow their knowledge and experience so that Kirby-Smith can continue its great tradition of providing exceptional customer service."

Kirby-Smith Product Trainer Jay VanDuzer manages the Guild Program and praised the dedication of its employee members.

"The Guild Program is a win-win-win," said VanDuzer. "Customers win by receiving knowledgeable technicians who are able to accurately diagnose and repair equipment the first time. Kirby-Smith wins by providing the best service and parts support for its customers. Finally, our technicians win by increasing their knowledge, as well as receiving a modest monetary recognition for their efforts. Kirby-Smith truly has high-quality employees, and our Guild members represent the best of the best."

Kirby-Smith held awards banquets in Oklahoma City, Tulsa, Dallas, Abilene, Amarillo and St. Louis, and it distributed cash prizes and awards during these events. ■

The 2015 Guild Excellence Award Winners

Service - Construction:	First place – Ron Hagood, OKC Second place – Paul Cheek, Dallas
Service - Crane:	First place – Gary Cox, OKC Second place – Dale Schmidt, St. Louis
Parts:	First place – Mark Foster, OKC Second place – Bob Weaver, OKC Third place – Ben Stoner, Tulsa

Ron Hagood (center) was one of 52 employees honored as part of Kirby-Smith Machinery's Guild Program. Pictured (L-R) are Executive VP & Chief Operating Officer Jeff Weller; Senior VP and OKC Branch Manager David Baker; Product Service Manager Darrin Gourley; Hagood; Product Trainer Jay VanDuzer; Director of Safety, Environmental and Technical Training James Lincoln; and OKC Service Manager John Martin.





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 3,524 hrs.....\$112,000



2011 JLG 400S, JL11498,
 826 hrs.....\$41,900

Year	Make/Model	Unit #	Hrs.	Price
CRAWLER DOZERS				
2011	Komatsu D31EX-22	KM11574D	3,180	\$59,750
2011	Komatsu D51EX-22	KM11649D	4,352	\$81,450
2012	Komatsu D61EX-15E0	KM12788D	2,487	\$136,650
2008	Komatsu D61EX-15E0	KM08720D	5,740	\$96,450
2012	Komatsu D65EX-17	KM12027D	3,118	\$146,900
2008	Komatsu D85EX-15E0	KM08882	5,933	\$140,990

Year	Make/Model	Unit #	Hrs.	Price
PAVING & COMPACTION				
2010	Hamm HD+140VO	HA10044	2,025	\$69,200
2009	Hamm HD140VO	HA09001	2,826	\$61,900

Year	Make/Model	Unit #	Hrs.	Price
RECYCLERS				
2009	Wirtgen WR2000	WR09003	2,799	\$181,250
2010	Wirtgen WR2000	WR10017	2,657	\$211,500

Year	Make/Model	Unit #	Hrs.	Price
MOTOR GRADERS				
2007	Komatsu GD655-3E0	KMU07509	4,101	\$83,500
2008	Komatsu GD655-3E0	KM08824D	5,714	\$91,900
2010	Komatsu GD655-3	KM10528X	3,524	\$112,000

Year	Make/Model	Unit #	Hrs.	Price
MANLIFTS				
2007	JLG 450A II	JL07430	1,697	\$29,900
2011	JLG 400S	JL011498	826	\$41,900

Year	Make/Model	Unit #	Hrs.	Price
REACH FORKLIFTS				
2011	Manitou MT6034T	MT11007	1,900	\$35,500
2011	Manitou MT8044XT	MT11002	2,818	\$41,000
2012	Manitou MT12042	MT12043	3,400	\$56,000
2010	Sky Trak 10042	TI10494	960	\$46,600

Year	Make/Model	Unit #	Hrs.	Price
ARTIC TRUCKS				
2011	Komatsu HM300-2	KM11551	5,918	\$146,550
2010	Komatsu HM400-2	KM10485D	8,167	\$142,750

Year	Make/Model	Unit #	Hrs.	Price
EXCAVATORS				
2012	Komatsu PC130-8	KM12399D	2,708	\$62,000
2011	Komatsu PC138USLC-8	KM11527D	4,083	\$71,000
2011	Komatsu PC160LC-8	KM11798D	2,947	\$71,000
2012	Komatsu PC200LC-8	KM12304D	3,888	\$87,900
2010	Komatsu PC200LC-8	KM10457D	4,584	\$71,500
2011	Komatsu PC200LC-8	KM11804D	3,305	\$82,900
2010	Komatsu PC220LC-8	KM10999X	4,925	\$71,700
2011	Komatsu PC228USLC-8	KM11813D	3,890	\$80,950
2010	Komatsu PC270LC-8	KM10410D	3,148	\$81,800
2012	Komatsu PC490LC-10	KM12086X	6,144	\$178,900
2013	Komatsu PC490LC-10	Q0029494	4,627	\$211,400

Year	Make/Model	Unit #	Hrs.	Price
WHEEL LOADERS				
2008	Komatsu WA250-6	KM08726	6,468	\$48,500
2011	Komatsu WA320-6	KM11372D	3,781	\$80,900
2011	Komatsu WA380-6	KM11525D	4,835	\$93,700

Year	Make/Model	Unit #	Hrs.	Price
WATER TRUCKS				
2008	Rosco DS4000	RS08057	3,222	\$61,750
2012	Ledwell 2000 WATER TRK	WT12063	7,410	\$43,900

Year	Make/Model	Unit #	Hrs.	Price
SCREEN				
2012	Kleeman MS16Z	KL12016X	2,060	\$137,000



2011 Komatsu D51EX-22, KM11649D,
 4,352 hrs.....\$81,450



2012 Komatsu PC130-8, KM12399D,
 2,708 hrs.....\$62,000



2012 Ledwell 2000 Water Truck, WT12063,
 7,410 hrs.....\$43,900

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