

spirit

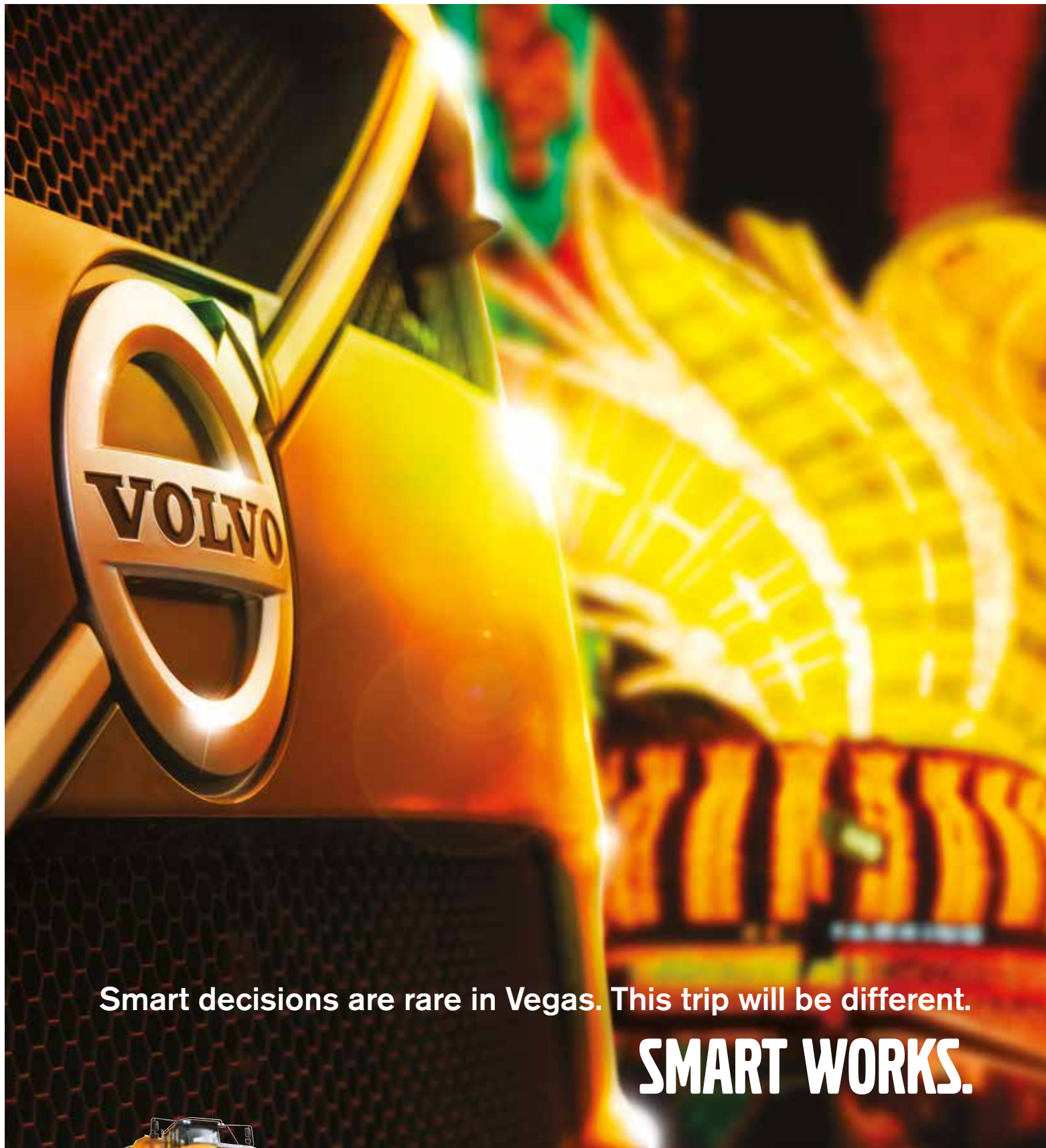
DRIVING FORCE

Volvo CE President
Martin Weissburg

**CONEXPO
2014**
Showcasing
Volvo machines

**HAPPY 60TH
BIRTHDAY**
to the Volvo
Wheel Loader





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Plan now to meet us in Las Vegas for CONEXPO/CON-AGG 2014. Talk with our experts about the latest industry trends, and get an up-close look at the smart innovations you expect from Volvo. Get a head start — download our app at volvoconexpo.com.

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Volvo Construction Equipment



The compact excavator of the future debuting at ConExpo 2014

spirit

This 50th anniversary issue celebrates the spirit of innovation at the heart of Volvo Construction Equipment

An interview with the company's new President Martin 'Marty' Weissburg leads the content of this 'new look' *Spirit*, in which he talks about the importance of strong dealers to the continued success of Volvo CE.

Dealers in plenty among more than 130,000 attendees at ConExpo 2014 in Las Vegas, featuring the latest Tier 4 Final/Stage IV engine technology from Volvo CE. The new engines in our latest models are not only cleaner than those they replace, reducing emissions, they are in most cases more powerful and energy efficient.

Held every three years, the Las Vegas show is one of the construction industry's biggest and most important events alongside those held in Munich and Shanghai. With Volvo CE among 2,400 exhibitors showcasing new products and technologies from every segment of the construction industry, a selection of the Volvo machines displayed at ConExpo is featured on pages 14-19.

It is now 60 years since Volvo's first wheel loader rolled off the production line and we have written about its history up to the present day and beyond on pages 30-31. Not only has LEGO® Technic launched a remote-controlled model of the L350F – read the story on page 10 – but *Spirit* is also commemorating the birthday of the wheel loader with a contest to find the best reader photograph of one. See page 45 for details.

Elsewhere the magazine is packed with stories and pictures about our customers and their Volvo machines, and you can tell us what you think on the *Spirit* Facebook fan page.

Those wanting more information about anything in the magazine, including events at ConExpo, will find it on *Spirit's* newly designed website www.volvospiritmagazine.com. Freshly updated with the latest news and information, the website also features video reports of stories to be found in these pages. And what could be simpler than downloading the free *Spirit* App to see the magazine come to life. 📱



THORSTEN POSZWA
Global Director
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Volvo Spirit Magazine

Photograph of Thorsten Poszwa: © Natalie Hill

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DRIVING FORCE

Several months into his new role as President of Volvo Construction Equipment, Martin 'Marty' Weissburg has long been of the opinion that strong dealers are key to the company's success

by Patricia Kelly

No stranger to the Volvo Group, having been at the helm of Volvo Financial Services before taking over at Volvo CE, Martin 'Marty' Weissburg has worked closely with Volvo CE dealers for many years.

"I respect their operational expertise, their professionalism and their entrepreneurship," he says. "Every day these dealers →



put their personal capital at risk – they are often running a company as well as owning the company and I have great respect for that. I will never lose sight of the fact that strong, stable distributors who do well are important to the ongoing success of Volvo CE.”

One of his main goals at Volvo CE, he says, is to interact with dealers and the distribution network. “That’s how I learn so much not just about customer needs, but exactly what is going on in the market.”

With a reputation within the Volvo Group for a leadership style that centers on developing ability, talent and boosting internal culture, his emphasis is on team work with a strongly focused commercial approach. Weissburg is determined that Volvo CE will continue on its path of profitable growth.

“We will maintain our focus on our dual brand strategy as we continue to perform well in mature markets, but also continue to grow and become an even bigger and stronger presence in many developing markets,” he says.

“I really look forward to working with the Volvo CE sales and marketing team to support how we work with the dealers. They are our interface with the customer and we have to work as a team.

“We have got the best product, we have got the best employees, we have got the best distribution network – that’s a three-legged stool, which is very strong. Add to that

WE HAVE THE BEST PRODUCT, THE BEST EMPLOYEES, THE BEST DISTRIBUTION

growing customer solutions and support, parts, services and financial services – we must make sure we are providing a complete customer offering to keep them coming back to the same Volvo CE dealer for all of their equipment purchases.”

His is a globetrotting existence, with months spent traveling every year: “I’m an American by passport, but I’m a student of all cultures and I’m actually happiest when I’m learning about different cultures and different parts of the world – it’s one of the best parts of my job.”

Within a few days of the announcement of his appointment last November, Weissburg was on the road visiting

key Volvo CE sites.

“As in my previous position, one of my jobs will involve getting out to see the different operations and experience different cultures, meet the Volvo CE team and learn about operations and aspects of the market.”

Coming from what he describes as a ‘soft’ part of the industry – financial services employees are almost all white collar – he is looking forward to working with a combination of blue collar and white collar colleagues at Volvo CE.

“I’m getting back into the area of operations and technology and that’s more where I come from. I really enjoy the hard product and its applications and the manufacturing side of the business,” he says.

Having worked on a construction site as a student in a summer job – when he learned how to operate a

backhoe loader – Weissburg was president of a medium-size manufacturing company prior to joining Volvo eight years ago. He started his professional career in the field of construction equipment by joining Caterpillar out of university as a marketing management trainee. Educated in the United States, with a Bachelor of Science from Purdue University and an MBA in international business from George Washington University, he has had years of global leadership experience tied to distribution and sales of heavy equipment.

“At Volvo CE I have inherited a strong, stable and well-established management team with whom I can work and from whom I can learn – it is a wonderful professional opportunity,” says Weissburg, who nevertheless is keen to correct a common misunderstanding about financial services.

“It’s not about finance as a function; financial services is a product, a customer solutions product. I am now running a different Volvo company that is a hard product combined with a soft product – construction equipment plus customer solutions,” he explains.

“One of the things I like about this industry is that we make and sell the products that help to drive infrastructure both in mature markets and in developing markets; we make and sell products that build roads or fix roads, and those roads allow people to transport goods to market;

we make the products that extract the commodities needed to advance societies; we make the products that help build housing and schools for people in both mature and developing nations and that is something for the entire Volvo CE team and their distributors to take pride in,” says Weissburg, adding: “And we do this with our core values in place – quality, safety and environmental care – we deliver all of it in a good way which is also good for our shareholders and profitable for our shareholders whose investments, in turn, we invest to help this company grow and drive our business forward.”

With a preference for the outdoor life, Weissburg says after a busy week he achieves peace and relaxation from physical labor in the garden with no distraction from mobile phones, television, computers and meetings.

“I love to work with my hands, to be outside, to experience nature; I love working in my yard.”

Weissburg says he is looking forward to the move from North Carolina in the United States to Brussels, in Belgium and to exploring the Belgian countryside. Two of his three daughters will attend high school in Belgium, while the third will go back and forth from university in the US.

“Where we settle in Belgium will be a place with green space. I am an environmentalist down to my core – I couldn’t do without fresh air.” ☞

I HAVE INHERITED A STRONG, STABLE AND WELL-ESTABLISHED MANAGEMENT TEAM

Photographs: © Juha Roininen / EUP & Images srl



Spot the difference: Volvo CE's global director of brand management Mats Bredborg and the new models pictured with the real machines

The LEGO models are not suitable for outdoor play

MODEL TEAM

When global brands Volvo CE and the LEGO® Group team up, the outcome is sure to be awesome. Not only is the new L350F wheel loader LEGO® Technic's star model of 2014, it is also likely to become a best seller for both brands

by Brian O'Sullivan

The Nuremberg Toy Fair in February saw global toy giant the LEGO Group unveil its latest flagship model from LEGO® Technic. With 1,600 individual pieces and the largest individual element ever created for the brand, the Volvo L350F wheel loader is not simply one of the company's 2014 star performers – it is just as impressive as the real-life machine it is based upon. The remote-controlled

wheel loader – which can be reconfigured into an equally impressive A25F articulated hauler – can lift more than 1kg in its bucket and drive over challenging terrain, just like the real thing. The first model will roll out of the factory in Billund, Denmark, in August. “The L350F is the pinnacle of the Technic range,” says Niels Henrik Horsted, head of marketing for LEGO® Technic. →



Design manager Jeppe Juul Jensen

LEGO® Technic is a 35-year-old sub-brand of the LEGO Group with a mission to create authentic vehicles that are both functional and challenging to build. They must also be fun and robust playthings. The brand's longevity is good for business, as children grow up loving it and handing down that endearment to their own children. Aimed largely at boys aged between 9 and 13, these robust and intricate models also attract an adult fan base, with a loyal following among those who appreciate the ingenuity of these complex models.

However, even successful brands need to constantly develop, so it was only logical that Volvo Construction Equipment and the toy company would team up at some point. In fact, they go back a long way. Having been involved in a proposed joint undertaking a decade ago, Volvo CE's global director of brand management Mats Bredborg was also instrumental in making the L350F project a reality in 2014. "We wanted to cooperate with a premium toy manufacturer, just as we are a premium player in the construction equipment sector," he says. "Volvo CE and the LEGO Group together create a perfect match, both culturally and in what we try to achieve in our products."

MINI MARVELS

"We looked very closely at the real machines, taking time out to visit a construction site and operate them ourselves," says design manager Jeppe Juul Jensen, who has the enviable job of leading the team designing these mini marvels. "We tried to make it as realistic as possible, so that it drives, steers and lifts the load just like the real thing. You can also remove the filters, the radiator swings out, pistons move and the engine is painted green ... just like the real thing. The bucket is the largest element we've ever had in Technic – we worked really hard to get the proportions just right."

Designing the L350F was time consuming, resulting in eight months' work for Uwe Wabra, the designer behind the model. "These machines cannot be designed by computer,"

says Jeppe Juul Jensen. "They must be created by hand, by people who love the brand and are passionate about getting it just right. We 'sketch' things out in two dimensions using bricks to start with, and then develop a prototype through trial and error. Getting it right is as much art as science – the combinations of elements are endless, so each prototype is built and rebuilt again and again until we get it absolutely perfect. That's not to say we don't have fun – the more enjoyment and play we have the better the end results."



VOLVO CE AND THE LEGO GROUP TOGETHER CREATE A PERFECT MATCH

PLAYING SAFE

It is clear that the end result has won the approval of both Volvo CE and the LEGO Group. "We are extremely happy with the outcome, both from a functional and a design point of view," enthuses Mats Bredborg. "LEGO® Technic has captured the profile, expression and power of the machines in an incredible way, as well as including lots of cool features like a heavy lift boom and high dump height. The LEGO Group also shares our core value of safety, and these

machines have been thoroughly tested."

"The cooperation and mutual understanding with Volvo has been great," Jeppe Juul Jensen agrees. "Our companies' cultures are similar, and the relationship was easy and enthusiastic. The Volvo team readily offered helpful suggestions and gave us greater insight into how the real machines are built and operated. Both parties are perfectionists who are keen to get it exactly right. It's been an enjoyable and positive experience."

Enthusiastic feedback from focus groups indicates that LEGO® Technic is on to a winner with its new star machine. "Over the last 35 years, our reputation has been built on yellow and black machines – and the Volvo L350F carries on that tradition in style, pushing the boundaries of creativity and functionality even further," Niels Henrik Horsted concludes.

"Not only will the L350F/A25F be our star machine for 2014 – it may even be our best seller ever." 🏆



IT DRIVES, STEERS AND LIFTS THE LOAD JUST LIKE THE REAL THING

The LEGO models are not suitable for outdoor play

VOLVO CE AT CONEXPO 2014

The year's largest construction exhibition in the US at the Las Vegas Convention Center saw the launch of Volvo CE's most innovative range of machines and services to date

Showing a new generation of E-Series excavators, G-Series articulated haulers and H-Series wheel loaders, Volvo CE also exhibited the latest in backhoe loaders, motor graders and skid- and tracked-steer loaders. With more than 17 innovative products on display, the latest Tier 4 Final/Stage IV engine technology took pride of place, demonstrating how the new engines are not only cleaner than the models they replace, but in most cases more powerful and energy efficient. Outdoors, visitors were able to try out a BL60B backhoe loader and an EC55C excavator. Committed

to being a total solutions provider, Volvo CE delivers a comprehensive range of products and services that carry each machine through a long and productive life. With company experts on hand to discuss the latest industry trends, customer support offers, and the best fit for financing, Volvo CE was able to demonstrate how its products are designed to work together, setting the standard for productivity efficiency, safety, environmental care, quality of the finished work and total cost of ownership. Here are some of the attractions featured on the Volvo stand.

TOP SECRET

Fully electric compact excavator of the future

A masterpiece of simplicity and sustainability, the new concept model (pictured) made its debut at the Las Vegas show and is expected to be operational by 2030, according to Sidney Levy, chief designer at Volvo Product Design. Operators of the future will still be able to sit on the excavator, but most applications will be carried out remotely using augmented reality technology on a computer tablet, allowing the operator to maintain a safe distance during potentially hazardous operations. "We envisage it being used in city environments, such as in the street or even inside buildings, where it would be easy to plug into a power source," says Sidney Levy.



PRECISION PAVING

Paver is star attraction

Volvo's two new pavers — in a choice of the wheeled P7170 (pictured) or tracked P7110 — provide operators with maximum versatility to suit the needs of any job, delivering the power, precision, reliability and quality that highway paving contractors demand. Born from the Blaw-Knox legacy, these latest models are even more efficient than before. Starting the powerfully precise paver in cold weather is made easier, thanks to an available pump decoupler that disengages non-essential pumps for more consistent start-ups. Customer Service Agreements offer service and maintenance for maximum cost control, and minimum downtime. Volvo CE's extensive service network provides the peace of mind that comes with a worldwide network of experienced technicians, workshops and dealers.



NEW AND IMPROVED

Make light of heavy loads

The L250H is not only one of the most efficient heavy-duty wheel loaders on the market but also one of the most productive. It boasts heightened safety, up to 18% better fuel economy with OptiShift, and the best servicing access Volvo CE has ever offered. Built on decades of experience, operators will benefit from short cycle times, high breakout force and excellent controllability with this machine. With a variety of product options, Volvo customers can adapt their machine to access more applications such as block, rock and waste handling. Attachments are purpose-built to work in harmony with the L250H.



POWERFUL AND PRODUCTIVE

Excel in tough conditions

The heavy-duty EC380E crawler excavator is an exceptionally productive machine that lowers operating costs through reduced fuel consumption, combining superior efficiency, productivity and durability for maximum profitability in quarry and mass excavation applications. When the controls have been inactive for a pre-set amount of time, the excavator can be programmed to automatically reduce engine speed or even shut down to further reduce fuel consumption and noise. Designed for ease of operation as well as simple maintenance, the strong three-piece undercarriage and high tensile steel X-shaped frame have been reinforced to ensure a long service life. Additional superstructure cover plates prevent damage to the underside of the machine from rock and debris.




Download the free *Spirit* App for additional pictures and video of Volvo machines at ConExpo 2014 or go online www.volvospiritmagazine.com



NEXT GENERATION

Volvo CE sets the standard

Meet the new generation of articulated haulers – from engine to axles, the purpose-built, all-Volvo drivetrain ensures perfect harmony and optimized performance. The A40GFS hauler's unique, self-compensating, hydromechanical system provides precise steering, excellent maneuverability and a short turning radius. All Volvo haulers are equipped with oil-cooled wet multiple disc brakes on all wheels to ensure high braking performance and long service life in the worst conditions. The centrally positioned cab has all-round visibility with a wide front windshield, full-glass door, sloping hood and large rear-view mirrors. As with all Volvo machines, owners, operators and service technicians have access to a wealth of vital data that will improve productivity and save money. 

**AGGREGATES ARE THE MOST
CONSUMED PRODUCT BY
MANKIND AFTER WATER**

DEVELOPING INFRASTRUCTURE IN NEW ZEALAND

An award-winning aggregates producer in Auckland remains faithful to Volvo CE with a new order to replace an existing fleet of wheel loaders

by Nigel Griffiths

Bustling Auckland in New Zealand's North Island is the country's largest city. Known as the 'City of Sails', the lifestyle opportunities offered in terms of a warm and sunny climate, picturesque beaches and leisure activities such as yachting, as well as jobs, constantly attract new residents from other parts of New Zealand and overseas.

Continuous population growth in Auckland has helped the construction industry flourish. Feeding demand is Stevenson Resources, recognized as one of the largest and most modern quarry operators in the country, supplying millions of tonnes of aggregates of all types and qualities to underpin the construction boom.

No stranger to Volvo CE machinery, having run a fleet of the well-loved F-series wheel loaders since 2008, Stevenson Resources ordered a brand new fleet of Volvo G-series wheel loaders to help drive business, improve efficiency and reduce costs. The seven new L180Gs and one L250G are being used at the company's Drury and Huntly quarries, servicing the Auckland and Waikato regions.

LONG TRADITION

Founded in 1912, the award-winning family-run business has a long history of successful quarry management and

is recognized as being at the leading edge of technology developments as well as an environmentally and socially responsible company. Its quarries produce a wide range of hard-fill materials used in the infrastructure, commercial and residential construction markets.

"With over 60 years of experience in quarrying and mining industries – including bulk earthworks, mineral extraction and processing and distribution – we have a reputation for delivering competitive quality aggregates that consistently meet customer product requirements," says Steve Ellis, Minerals Executive at Stevenson Resources.

"We pride ourselves on our technical services and support.

We have a strong track record in research and product development for customers using our technical services and certified laboratory."

QUALITY

Stevenson's Drury quarry is one of the largest and most technically advanced in New Zealand, equipped with a laboratory to ensure the quality of the aggregate mixes it supplies, whether the standard product range, recycled aggregates, modified aggregates or made-to-order.

"Aggregates are essential to construction," Steve Ellis →



Stevenson's Drury quarry is one of the largest and most technically advanced in New Zealand



One of the new fleet of L180G loaders at Stevenson's Drury quarry



L-R Stevenson Resources Minerals Executive Steve Ellis, TransDiesel Sales Manager Stuart Bell, operator Shailen Sen

emphasizes, adding: "It is said they are the most consumed product by mankind after water."

One of the deciding factors in staying with Volvo machines was the quality of service the company received from Volvo Authorized Dealer, TransDiesel, Steve Ellis says. "Being a well-motivated private company they are always responsive to our requests for help. In a business when you cannot afford downtime, this is important."

TransDiesel has been in business in New Zealand since 1980 and knows what it takes to keep customers happy.

Recognized as the foremost diesel engine and transmission house in the country, the company has been awarded the distributorships for some of the most highly respected brands in those industries. In 2011, TransDiesel then became the authorized New Zealand distributor for Volvo Construction Equipment.

Mark Keatley, Marketing and Dealer Development Manager at TransDiesel, does not deny that competition is tough in this sector, but says that the benefits of Volvo CE products, particularly in terms of fuel economy and comfort, are well recognized in the marketplace.

ENERGETIC

TransDiesel has certainly been energetic in promoting its Volvo CE affiliation. In 2012, when high-performance yachts competing in the nine-month-long Volvo Ocean Race – the longest lasting professional sporting event in the world – made a stopover in Auckland, TransDiesel turned the event into an occasion to get closer to its customers. Stevenson Resources provided the perfect quarry venue for a range of new Volvo machines to be put through their paces. Customers from as far afield as Singapore were invited to the launch of the L250G wheel loader and EC480D excavator in New Zealand as well as a demonstration of an A40F articulated hauler. Guests were also taken aboard a boat in the harbour to experience the excitement of the In-Port race.

A KEY FACTOR IN THE CHOICE OF VOLVO MACHINES IS THE COST SAVINGS ON FUEL

FUEL SAVING

Despite the close relationship with TransDiesel, the decision by Stevenson Resources to give the dealer the order for the new fleet was not a foregone conclusion.

"We did a full search before deciding on Volvo machines," explains Steve Ellis. "The new Volvo G machines are compatible with much of our stock of accessories and while we were very happy with the F-Series machines, our experience with the first G-Series is that they are a big step above their predecessors."

A key factor in the choice of Volvo machines is the cost saving on fuel.

"I estimate we use about a half liter per hour less with each wheel loader." Over a five-year period, he predicts savings of NZ\$500,000-600,000 (US\$400,000-500,000).

"We are also able to fit the same-sized buckets on what is basically a smaller machine than before. The L180G has the same bucket capacity as the old L220F, but is a lot more fuel efficient."

The operators are really enjoying the machines, Steve notes. "They work a long day from 6.00-17.30 but are leaving work almost as fresh as when they started," he says. "They can breathe and work at ease in a clean, quiet environment which is an important factor for them. A lot of the operating features, such as the reverse by brake function which gives more deceleration comfort, and the electro-hydraulic servo controls in the cab which allow consistent positioning, have met with their approval and genuinely make their job easier. The machines are so well sound-proofed you can stand right next to them and still hold a conversation." ☺

Photographs: © Mark Keatley; © Stuart Bell

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143-700 HP

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**VOLVO
PENTA**

HUB OF ACTIVITY

A supply chain hub in Belgium is providing the template for a series of similar centers worldwide that aim to capture a bigger share of the global loose attachments business →

by John Bayliss

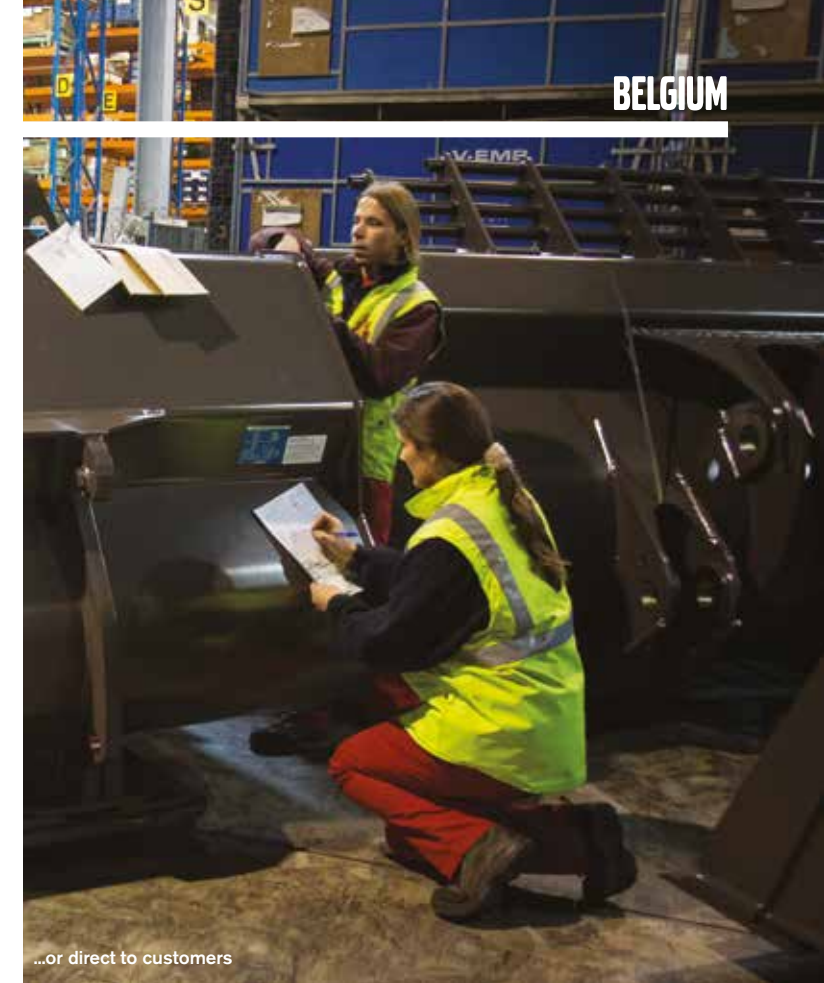


AN EFFICIENT LOOSE ATTACHMENT SUPPLY CHAIN CAN REALLY MAKE A DIFFERENCE

Karl Serneberg,
Global Director Attachments



Deliveries are shipped to regional dealers...



...or direct to customers

BELGIUM

The beautiful mediaeval Belgian city of Ghent sits at the meeting point of two rivers: the Lys and the Scheldt. It takes its name from a Celtic word meaning ‘confluence’ and has a rich history of trade dating back to around the year 650.

Now, nearly 1400 years later, Ghent is becoming internationally renowned once again as a meeting place but this time as a 21st century hub lying at the center of a new Volvo Construction Equipment supply chain.

The dedicated Volvo CE loose attachments hub is in Desteldonk, on the outskirts of Ghent. It has been developed as part of the company’s Attachment Processes and Systems (APS) project and has resulted in a considerable reduction in lead times for customers.

Karl Serneberg, Global Director Attachments, says there are key improvements areas for Volvo CE customers. “First of all, the ease of doing business – we have a simplified order process for loose attachments here. Secondly, with the hub system, we give our customers shorter lead times and good availability of attachments. And thirdly, this system gives us a cost-efficient hub set-up and cost-efficient transportation of attachments.”

TIME IS MONEY

Before the hub became operational, customers who ordered individually supplied attachments faced delivery times ranging from eight weeks to three months. Now, for large wheel-loader attachments, there is a maximum four-week wait between order and delivery. Customers ordering loose attachments for compact wheel loaders or excavators have

seen their lead times cut to two or three weeks – and that drops to just one week for those with compact machines for the majority of loose attachment orders.

Developing a complementary supply chain that works to the customers’ advantage has a critical role to play in future business growth for Volvo CE and its dealers alike. A supply chain solution has been found that rationalizes operations and is easy to use for those placing orders.

Capturing the loose attachment business is something that is important to Volvo CE, continues Karl Serneberg. Traditionally, attachments were supplied with machines direct from Volvo CE production facilities, but now, he says, there is a need to look beyond that to the broader market.

“Machines that are in stock with our dealers sometimes need new attachments. Or there are customers who say, ‘Hey, my attachment has worn out’ or ‘I’m going to do something new with my machine – a new application – so I need a new attachment.’” Karl says it is in cases like these that an efficient loose attachment supply chain can really make a difference.

IN GOOD ORDER

Orders are placed electronically. The availability of a specific loose attachment is determined immediately in the ordering system and the Volvo CE dealer receives information on the delivery lead time. As soon as the order reaches the hub, the loose attachment is taken from stock and packed. Non-stock items that are ordered are despatched from the supplier before being consolidated at the hub and delivered to the dealer.

By consolidating and coordinating orders, trucks can optimize their loads. These deliveries are made either to regional dealers or directly to customers. This dedicated transportation system is a complementary delivery service to that of parts or machines.

Suppliers from various parts of the world ship loose attachments to the Ghent hub where some 1,800 different items can be ordered and almost 900 units are in stock. Since the attachment hub in Ghent became operational in April 2012, more than 4,000 attachments have been delivered to dealers and end customers.

THREE-PRONGED APPROACH

An efficient transport hub, serving the whole of Europe, is one of the three cornerstones that underpin the new supply chain. The second is the cost efficiency which comes from having a dedicated loose attachments hub that shortens delivery lead times, while the third is the improved functionality now built into the ordering system. The dealer portal has been modified and the entire ordering process simplified and shortened.

The Ghent hub shows both the efficiencies and improved customer satisfaction as having a direct and positive impact on Volvo CE business. Karl Serneberg says that Europe is just the beginning. “Here in Belgium the first hub was opened in April 2012. Now we’ve opened a second hub in North America, just outside Chicago. And in 2014 we want to place at least one hub in Asia.”

Visit www.volvospiritmagazine.com to watch the video report of this story



Almost 900 units are in stock

Photographs: © Erik Lumtang-Jensen



THERE IS A CONSIDERABLE MARKET FOR WEAR PARTS SUCH AS TEETH

POSITIVE PERFORMANCE

A favorable reception for a new range of wear parts

Following the 2012 launch of the powerful Volvo L105 wheel loader, designed with the needs of customers in China in mind, a new range of parts has been developed to service machines in every sector from road construction to mining and quarrying.

In August 2013, two new types of teeth were launched for the buckets of the EC360 and EC460 excavators. A range of small, medium and large teeth has since been developed for the entire excavator bucket range. Furthermore, a selection of economically priced ground-engaging tools, such as teeth and adapters, is also available alongside a totally new range of undercarriage replacement parts.

COST SENSITIVE

"Considering the volume of excavators in China there is a considerable market for teeth and undercarriage parts," explains Volvo CE Global Director Parts Kerstin Enochsson. "Our new products for medium- to light-duty applications

generally offer lower initial purchase costs and adapted wear-life specifications."

Volvo CE is intent on ensuring that the right products are available at the right price to compete in the growing market in China.

"Customers in China are cost-sensitive so we have been engaged in a paradigm shift in our thinking about redesign so that certain products are engineered for affordable strength."

STEADY SALES

After significant market research, feedback from the launch of the first teeth (pictured) has been positive and sales are growing steadily, according to Kerstin. "Standing in front of us is a potentially massive market segment with enormous untapped potential for our products."

As part of Volvo CE's development strategy, a dedicated team has been set up in Shanghai to help ensure rapid product development of other wear parts. It is also



Left: Rock Chisel type;
right: Tiger Long




Kerstin Enochsson,
Global Director Parts

Photograph of Kerstin Enochsson: © Steve Skinner

A DEDICATED TEAM HAS BEEN SET UP IN SHANGHAI TO HELP ENSURE RAPID PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT OF OTHER WEAR PARTS

geographically close to important Asia markets as well as the excavator technology team in Korea.

The project team is looking at the possibility of launching the new teeth in other markets across the Asia-Pacific region and Latin America. Market potential in mature markets for older, less intensely used machines is also under review. 



July 2010: Evald Mörtzell reunited with the original H-10 as his son (right) looks on

Photograph: © Anders Nilsson/Eskilstuna-Kuriren

of 35hp and a 5-speed mechanical gearbox. When it first appeared, the success of the H-10 paved the way for further development of construction machinery by Volvo. From humble beginnings, the wheel loader became a company signature product.

FIRST MODEL

Once owned by Evald Mörtzell, who bought it second-hand, the first model stands in the Volvo CE Munktell Museum in Eskilstuna, Sweden. In July 2010, the retired gravel-pit owner made the 800km journey to the museum from his home in northern Sweden to cast a nostalgic eye over his old H-10 as part of his 90th birthday celebrations. He told museum curators that the machine was loading trucks non-stop nearly 24 hours a day during the summer months and, until he traded it in for a new Volvo model, moved an estimated 150,000 cubic meters of gravel over a period of ten years.

“It needed strength to hold the gear lever in place when

VOLVO'S FIRST WHEEL LOADER WAS BASICALLY A MODIFIED FARM TRACTOR



Future: the Gryphin

going backwards,” he commented – a far cry from today’s models which are designed with optimum operator comfort in mind.

Bought new or used, Volvo wheel loaders are now employed all over the world in quarrying, aggregates, block and material handling, civil engineering and building construction, recycling, waste handling, lumber yards and agriculture.

STYLISH

Larger wheel loaders with articulated steering, a new type of lift-arm system and comfortable cabs with high safety features were introduced in the early 70s. A few wheel loader generations later saw the introduction in 1991 of operator-friendly Care Cab and Volvo’s patented Torque Parallel (TP) linkage. The D-series arrived in 2000, revolutionary in terms of performance, safety, productivity and lower environmental impact, and noted for style. Apart from an even higher standard of comfort, operators enjoyed greater all-round visibility and a lower level of noise.

The G-series of wheel loaders, first introduced in 2011, offers a number of new features coupled with higher productivity, lower fuel consumption and optimum operator comfort.

The evolution of the wheel loader continues: Volvo designers have come up with Gryphin, the wheel loader of the future. It has a zero-emission electric hybrid engine, noiseless electric wheel motors and intelligent cab glass that automatically heats up in cold weather and darkens in bright sunlight. It is estimated that the Gryphin would provide energy savings of up to 50%. While still referred to as a concept model, much of the Gryphin technology is currently under development and some is already being tested – and likely to become a familiar sight on-site within the next 20 years. ☒

STILL GOING STRONG AT SIXTY

Volvo Construction Equipment is the world’s largest manufacturer of wheel loaders and this year marks the 60th anniversary of the first one made by the company

Demand for farm tractors and construction equipment of all kinds increased after WWII and, when it came out in 1954, Volvo’s first wheel loader was basically a modified farm tractor with an attachment bracket. The parallel movement made changing attachments easier. The rear-wheel steer machine was modelled on a reversed tractor, powered by a three-cylinder diesel engine with an output



Present: G-series

See page 45 for details of *Spirit's* competition to find the best reader photograph of a Volvo wheel loader



TUNNEL UNDER THE SEA

The development of Singapore's Marina Coastal Expressway is the city state's first undersea road tunnel. Volvo pavers were chosen for part of the project to ensure compliance with strict International Roughness Index requirements →

by John Bayliss

The Singapore government has placed great emphasis on the development of infrastructure, seeing it as a cornerstone in strengthening the economy. As such, road transport plays a key role.

Construction of the Marina Coastal Expressway (MCE) tunnels began in the first quarter of 2010. Work was completed in the second half of 2013 with the expressway opening to traffic on December 29. The dual five-lane, 5km-long project provides a vital link between eastern and western Singapore. It replaces part of the East Coast Parkway (ECP), creating an additional high-speed connection with the New Downtown development. This section of the ECP and its access roads are now being realigned to form a significant arterial route to serve the Marina Bay district.

CHALLENGES

Constructing the 420m-long tunnel, Singapore's first undersea expressway of its kind, presented considerable challenges. Passing through the seabed of the Marina Bay Channel, a barrage had to be constructed to allow the work to take place. Consequently, large volumes of water had to be discharged into the surrounding sea and regulated to minimize disruption to the vessels coming in and out of the bay.

Complicating excavations was a stretch of old sea wall buried some 12m underground that had been left behind during land reclamation work more than 30 years ago. It also had to be removed.

Most of the construction was carried out in soft clay conditions some 20m below mean sea level and 14m beneath the seabed. In total, the building work covered an area of 13.1 hectares and produced 3 million cubic meters of excavated material, equivalent in volume to 1,200 Olympic swimming pools.

HIGH-PRECISION

Due to the enormous scale of the S\$4.1 billion (US\$3.27 billion) project a large number of contractors were involved in the construction. They included Samwoh Premix Pte. Ltd. which was given the role of paving the concrete surface of the roads in the MCE tunnels with asphalt. The requirements were strict, having to meet an International Roughness Index (IRI) of 2mm per metre for the final layer. Faced with such high-precision work, Samwoh called on its



Singapore: Volvo paver in action

COMPLICATING EXCAVATIONS WAS A STRETCH OF OLD SEA WALL BURIED SOME 12M UNDERGROUND

fleet of Volvo pavers. The company has eight in total: three ABG5770s, three ABG5820s and two ABG6820s.

TRAINING

Technical specifications were not the only factor in Samwoh's decision to turn to Volvo for the MCE project, according to David Choo, Business Director for Volvo CE, Singapore. "Samwoh chose Volvo not only for the quality of our pavers but also

for our Road Competency Training, which is our unique added value."

That view is supported by Lo Chee Seng, Samwoh's Operations Manager, who says he expected the training in Germany organised by Volvo for his company's team would be classroom based with some practical lessons in the yard. However, that proved not to be the case. "What Volvo did was very impressive. They gave us the opportunity to experience German teams paving at high German standards."

Although the formal training sessions were completed in 2012, Lo Chee Seng says that the process did not end there, with ongoing email and telephone exchanges extending the training relationship.

Volvo pavers are also used in a number of other road maintenance and improvement projects initiated by Singapore's Land Transport Authority.

"Road paving is a unique and specialized business that requires quality products, excellent service and competency training," says Volvo's David Choo. "That is why we must be there to partner and support our customers all the way." ☞

Visit www.volvospiritmagazine.com to watch video of the pavers at work in the MCE tunnel as it was being built

Photographs: previous page © lwansntu/Dreamstime.com

MAKE YOUR MARK

Discover the Identity Collection



Discover the new merchandise collection for Volvo Construction Equipment.

AVAILABLE AT VOLVOMERCHANDISE.COM

Volvo Merchandise Corporation





Bantle chief Georg Bantle (right) on-site with Tomas Kuta, Volvo CE President of EMEA sales region

ROAD TO SUCCESS

Having landed a rare road-building contract in the Black Forest, a family-run construction firm has taken delivery of the first new-generation Volvo motor grader in Germany

New building projects in Germany's picturesque Black Forest region are few and far between and why engineer Georg Bantle considers it a stroke of good luck that his road construction and civil engineering company has been assigned to work on a new ring road on home turf.

Close to the Bantle company's premises in rural Böisingen, the new road, with nine bridges and several access roads, will divert the 12,000 vehicles per day currently using the busy B462 that runs through the town of Dunningen to connect the A5 and A81 highways.

CHALLENGE

Charged with the civil engineering and road-building work for the 6.4km stretch, providing manpower, machines and material, it is a bigger project than usual for Gebrüder Bantle GmbH, which is typically involved in smaller residential building projects such as sewage, civil engineering, asphalt and paving work. But the company, founded in 1956 by the parents and uncle of the current owner, is certainly equipped to rise to the challenge. Within a 50km radius from base, Bantle employs a permanent workforce of 120 people on up to 20 parallel construction sites. It also produces gravel in two of its own quarries, mines raw gypsum for cement production at two other sites and co-owns an asphalt mixing plant.


Volvo construction machinery is an integral part of the 65-strong Bantle fleet, which boasts seven wheel loaders including models L180E and L250G, one A40E articulated hauler, two EW160D wheeled excavators, one EC290C crawler excavator and six compact wheel loaders.

Georg Bantle says he appreciates the high degree of vertical integration, reliability and durability of the Volvo machines and attributes the fact they have been a permanent feature of his fleet since 2002 to a good personal relationship with Tobias Keppler, Managing Director at the authorized dealership Robert Aebi GmbH.


"We can quickly add suitable equipment to our machinery as necessary, or simply cover order spikes," he says. "For example, we were able to equip ourselves with two Volvo articulated dumpers to transport soil for the Dunningen ring road."

GERMAN PREMIERE

With a large stock of demonstration and rental machines, the dealer was also able to help Bantle acquire a new G946B motor grader to cope with extensive earth-moving work on the Dunningen project. With all-wheel drive and 11-speed transmission plus six reverse gears, the triple-axle machine is the first new-generation Volvo motor grader in Germany.

The new Bantle machine is equipped with a grader control unit using a combined Global Navigation Satellite System (GNSS) and tachymeter to bring millimeter precision to earth-moving operations. Georg Bantle explains that an experienced operator using data displayed on the monitor in the cab no longer needs the assistance of someone on the ground to measure areas and quantities. "We are able to achieve perfect compaction values, saving a great deal of valuable mixing materials when creating individual asphalt layers," comments the Bantle Managing Director. 

HE APPRECIATES THE HIGH DEGREE OF VERTICAL INTEGRATION, RELIABILITY AND DURABILITY OF THE VOLVO MACHINES



MOUNTAIN IS NO MATCH FOR MACHINE

The international steel company Voestalpine has chosen Volvo machinery to help move a mountain of limestone

With headquarters in Linz, Austria, the Voestalpine Group has been quarrying high-quality limestone from its fully owned Steyrling mine at the center of the Kremsmauer mountain in Upper Austria since 1948. The quarried rock is fed to the company's steel works in Linz, Kapfenberg and Donawitz, and used to process iron ore into steel. Since last October, a massive 70-tonne Volvo EC700CL hydraulic excavator has been at the heart of this operation. Its role: to move the mountain under the Steyrling lime works.

It is a job for life, as plant manager Björn Kirchner explains: "We have resources here for more than 80 years to come and more than 80 million tonnes of material to excavate. From this perspective we do not need to worry about the future of this site."

OPERATOR ROTATION

The Steyrling site, one of two mines operated by the Voestalpine Group, employs 49 people and has an annual production capacity of 1.2 million tonnes. The EC700CL is expected to move around half of that. Limestone is blasted and excavated underground and brought to the surface by conveyor belts. The huge 4m³ rock bucket on the EC700CL shifts some 3,600 tonnes of material every day on to Volvo articulated dumper trucks. Uninterrupted production is ensured by a rotation of up to six operators handling the excavator, with daily maintenance performed by Voestalpine's own specialized technicians.

From April this year some changes are expected in production logistics. A new 250m-long underground double-band conveyor belt will be introduced with a capacity of →



Voestalpine's Volvo fleet at work in the shadow of the Kremsmauer mountain

500 tonnes per hour, and the EC700CL will be relocated to the top of the Kremsmauer mountain to support a mobile crushing plant.

STEYRLING FLEET

The first Volvo construction equipment was introduced by Voestalpine at the beginning of the 1990s, starting with an EC210 hydraulic excavator and L180 and L220 wheel loaders. Early last year, Austria's first Volvo L250G wheel loader was brought into service at the Steyrling site. The machine is the second largest wheel loader made by Volvo and the top model in the 35-tonne class. Its 13-liter V-ACT diesel engine with six turbocharged cylinders guarantees high torque at low speed – nearly 400hp.

In conjunction with a new drive train, powerful lift linkage with Z-kinematics and a bucket capacity of up to 10.2m³, the machine is an impressive performer. With cooled exhaust gas recirculation and a particulate filter with active regeneration, the engine meets EU Stage IIIB emission standards, a prerequisite of the customer.

STRATEGY

It was a change in mining strategy that led to Voestalpine's decision to invest further in a large excavator. The company decided to switch from pure wall or floor excavation – front to back – to slice mining – layer by layer from top to bottom. Following inspection of the first EC700L in Austria, in service at a mine near Styria's Lake Grundlsee since 2006,

UNINTERRUPTED PRODUCTION IS ENSURED BY A ROTATION OF UP TO SIX OPERATORS



New underground double-band conveyor belt

the decision was made by senior Voestalpine personnel – plant manager Björn Kirchner, purchasing manager Erwin Lungenschmid, excavation manager Wilfried Peyfuss, and workshops manager Herwig Pimminger – to invest in a Volvo excavator for Steyrling lime works.

The EC700CL has a 16.1-liter Stage IIIA emission-compliant Volvo D16E engine and consumes on average 47-48 liters of diesel per hour. It was ordered with extra equipment to suit the application: an additional floor plate, a windscreen guard for the cab, as well as protective devices for lift and bucket cylinders. Additional features were also specified for the comfort of drivers and maintenance personnel, among them a remote-controlled CD and MP3 player, air-conditioning, reversing camera, central lubrication system, and numerous LED spotlights. ☒

Photographs: © Hans Grand/Ascendum
Baumaschinen Österreich GmbH

DEALER WINS AWARD

A new dealer warranty review process aims to help dealers better understand and follow the Volvo CE warranty procedure

The machines and equipment made by Volvo CE are covered by a factory warranty which is valid for 12 months or 2,500 operating hours. The warranty review procedure provides an opportunity to identify competence gaps and training needs related to the warranty process, and helps identify and share best practice with other dealers. The first winner of a new award to recognize excellence in dealer performance in this area is the Suchita Millenium Projects dealership based in East India.

QUALITY PROCEDURES

"It is important that our dealers fully understand the warranty process and what is required from them as distributors," says Volvo CE's Lynn Edberg, Director Global Warranty. "The warranty is only valid provided the Volvo machines or parts have been correctly operated and maintained in accordance with our instructions and recommendations. The warranty serves both to protect our brand value and meet customers' quality expectations. It also provides us with critical information," she adds. "It is important to quickly identify a quality problem and then rapidly correct it, so we can ensure the next machine delivered to a customer does not have the same quality issue."

The dealer review process identifies any gaps in the Volvo CE warranty process and then creates an action plan to meet any shortcomings. For example, the warranty conditions require proper maintenance of machines while in storage. During the review, all machine documentation is checked to ensure maintenance requirements are fulfilled.

The dealer review process seeks to identify gaps, as well as sharing best practice. For example, it is important that replaced components are scrapped correctly and a full record kept. Some dealers maintain good documentation on scrapped warranty material and their methods have been used as examples for dealers who need to improve.

Sathish Kumar,
Warranty Administration

TOP RATINGS

During 2013, Volvo CE undertook 71 dealer reviews across the global



Left to right: Amita Bhuwalka, Director; Koushik Rana, Field Service Supervisor; Pratik Mukhopadhyay, Warranty Administrator; Souren Bhattacharjee, CST Manager; Suvasish Mukherjee, Service Manager; Arindam Kundu, CareTrack Administrator

dealer network. They were rated on a scale of 0-100 and those with a low score have been helped to improve through a customized training program. "So far we have undertaken three follow-up reviews which show that significant improvements have been made in the dealer warranty process for all of them," says Lynn Edberg.

With the best warranty performance in 2013, Suchita Millenium Projects, based in Kolkata (formerly Calcutta), covers the extensive territory of West Bengal.

The company has been audited three times since 2011, improving on each occasion to reach a score of more than 91 in 2013, according to Sathish Kumar, Deputy Warranty Manager, India. "Suchita Millenium Projects impressed us by their good warranty management, particularly in terms of documentation and process control," he says. "Their claim submission performance was impressively fast."

A Volvo CE dealer for three years, the company has happily embraced the warranty process. "We have a young team of motivated and passionate people who have had no problem in adapting to good processes," explains Amita Bhuwalka, Director of Suchita Millenium Projects. "We are delighted and very proud to receive this award. We have worked hard to achieve this and it is a great boost to morale.

"Dealers should not be afraid of this or feel it is like an exam," she says. "The Volvo warranty review process benefits everyone." ☒



The L350F wheel loaders at Saqr Port work 22 hours every day

BULK HANDLING ON A GLOBAL SCALE

With a growing global reputation for fast, efficient handling and reliable distribution, Saqr Port in the northern United Arab Emirate of Ras Al Khaimah is the biggest bulk handling port in the Middle East. The acquisition of Volvo L350F wheel loaders is helping make light work of heavy loads

Unique in the world in its handling of a huge variety of commodities, such as clinker, silica, sand, coal, cement, aggregates and limestone, throughput at Saqr has increased by 100% in just two years. Handling vessels of up to 260 meters long, the port boasts an occupancy rate of 85% of its 12 berths over a year-round 24/7 operation.

Neighboring Qatar, with a lack of usable aggregate quarries due to its geological profile, is one of the major destinations for vessels leaving Saqr Port. “With the growth of infrastructure development in Qatar we have witnessed a real upsurge in demand for aggregates from here in the UAE,” explains the port’s General Manager

Captain Colin Crookshank. India is a key destination for vessels leaving Saqr Port. “Limestone in the northern Emirates is of extraordinarily high purity and a much sought after commodity, particularly in steel manufacturing. Consequently, much of the Indian steel industry’s limestone comes through this facility.”

OPERATOR-FRIENDLY

Handling 50 million tonnes of material a year is a massive undertaking but one made possible in part thanks to efficient, powerful and operator-friendly wheel loaders from Volvo CE.

Capt. Crookshank explains: “Historically, Saqr Port had Volvo L150 wheel loaders in its fleet – purchased around 1992/1993 and still running today with over 50,000 hours on the clock – but in recent decades bigger machines from other manufacturers took hold.”

That was until 2012 when the port trialed a Volvo L350F for a month. With what Capt. Crookshank describes as “excellent support” from FAMCO, the Volvo CE dealer in the UAE, a second L350F was followed by a third in June last year.

Equipped with 6.8m³ rock buckets, the L350F wheel

loaders are now working 22 hours each and every day.

“I am extremely impressed with the performance and the rate of work,” continues Capt. Crookshank. “Essentially, each L350F replaces two other machines so are kinder to the environment while making the site even safer, thanks in part to less vehicle movement and also to the enhanced safety features that are standard on Volvo CE machines. Furthermore, our operators think the machines are fantastic and that too aids productivity.”

“Another key element that we’ve noticed with the Volvo wheel loaders is that there’s less degradation of the material than we’ve experienced with other wheel loaders. This is critical for a business such as ours where we should strive every day to reduce, and ideally eradicate, any damage to the materials we’re handling.”

CONFIDENCE

While Saqr Port has good in-house maintenance, Capt. Crookshank says that FAMCO – part of the Al-Futtaim Group, one of the largest privately owned businesses in the Gulf – has proved itself an excellent partner, providing operator and technical training as well as all the reassurances that come with the Volvo Customer Support Agreements →

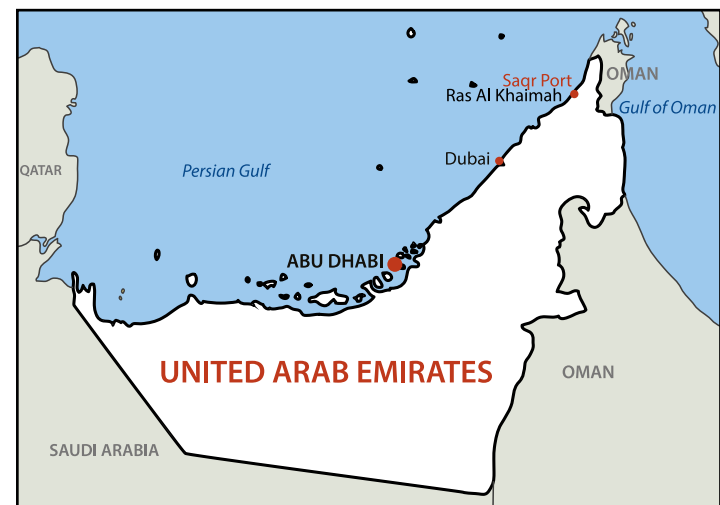
OUR OPERATORS THINK THE MACHINES ARE FANTASTIC AND THAT AIDS PRODUCTIVITY

(CSAs) and extended warranties.

“With the Volvo CareTrack system monitoring the machines and the CSAs in place to take the strain, we are absolutely confident that we will be able to turn to FAMCO should anything go wrong with the loaders,” says Capt. Crookshank. “That said, so far all three L350Fs have run like clockwork and we’ve had no problems whatsoever, despite them always being in use, either loading cargo or clearing berths.

Capt. Crookshank is justifiably proud of the port’s ISO accreditation for quality management. “Our success to date and in the future is based on a high standard of operations without affecting the rate of return. I know the Volvo DNA has safety and quality at its core, and we have already seen this with the L350F wheel loaders and the stance taken by staff from FAMCO. I certainly believe you’ll see more Volvo machines at Saqr Port.”

A final word about the L350F goes to operator Sukhcharan Sing who spends 12 hours a day at the controls: “This machine is very good and powerful. It is comfortable, there’s great all-round visibility and the controls are easy to use. Compared to other makes of machine, this is definitely the most powerful and easy to use for piling. It’s the machine I want to use when I come to work.”



Saqr Port General Manager Captain Colin Crookshank (left) and operator Sukhcharan Sing

SPEC SHEET



VOLVO L350F WHEEL LOADER

- Engine: Volvo D16E LA E3
- Max power at: 28,3-30,0 r/s (1700-1800 rpm)
- SAE J1995 gross: 397 kW (540 mhp)
- ISO 9249, SAEJ1349 net: 394 kW (536 mhp)
- Breakout force: 472,8 kN*
- Static tipping load at full turn: 34,290 kg*
- Buckets: 6,2-12,7 m³
- Log grapples: 5,5-6,3 m²
- Operating weight: 50,0-56,0 t
- Tires: 35/65 R33, 875/65 R33

*Bucket 6,9 m³ straight and with segments; tires 875/65 R33; standard boom

More information about this machine is available online at www.volvoce.com

Photographs: © Steve Skinner

Corkboard photograph: © Sándor Bayraktar

GIVE IT YOUR BEST SHOT

Your chance to be published in a future issue of *Spirit* magazine and win a prize

Help us celebrate 60 years of the Volvo wheel loader by sending us your best photograph of a wheel loader in action. The winning entry will be published in Issue 53 of *Spirit* due out in November. A selection of entries will also be published on the *Spirit* website and Facebook fan page. The winner will receive a scale model (1:50) of Volvo’s futuristic concept Gryphin wheel loader.

All entries must be received by June 20, 2014 and should be accompanied by the photographer’s name and age, the location of where the photograph was taken and the date.

Photographs must be in digital format. Be sure to use the highest possible resolution – this means 300 dpi and a large size picture of at least 20cm x 14cm. Any people in the photograph must give their permission to be photographed and for the result to be published. When photographing people at work, please make sure they wear the appropriate safety equipment. The contest is open to residents of all countries. Visit www.volvospiritmagazine.com for full terms and conditions and how to enter. If you are under 18, you must have your parent or legal guardian’s consent to enter.

EYE OF THE STORM

Meet the man responsible for analysing all meteorological data before and during the Volvo Ocean Race

by Julia Brandon

Experience is overrated," states Gonzalo Infante, meteorology expert for the Volvo Ocean Race. "Sailors are chosen for the teams based on their experience, but ten years of bad experience is not good. We should leave it up to the young guys to do the winning, and use the experience for coaching instead." That would be Gonzalo's dream scenario, if he could ever change anything about the race as it stands — "to have more young sailors taking part".

Gonzalo is responsible for analysing all meteorological data before and during the nine-month-long Volvo Ocean Race. In the three-year lead-up to each race cycle he is busy →

Aboard PUMA Ocean Racing powered by BERG in heavy Southern Ocean weather, during leg 5 of the Volvo Ocean Race 2011-12, from Auckland, New Zealand to Itajai, Brazil

assessing the intensity of different legs, identifying potential weather hazards, and manipulating large volumes of meteorological information into statistics to be used by the rest of the organization. Working with a range of weather conditions sourced from data that captures climatic changes over the course of eight years, he simulates how each weather type will impact the race, and compiles his statistics from those findings.

PEOPLE'S LIVES DEPEND ON HIM GETTING IT RIGHT



Gonzalo Infante

PIVOTAL ROLE

During the event itself – the 2014-15 race begins in October – he is in charge of safety, running the race control and proof tracking. This means overseeing the smooth running of the race, and predicting what lies ahead as competitors sail, explaining what is likely to happen on the water. In the event of a breakdown or mishap, Gonzalo is an active member of the crisis response team.

In short, his is a pivotal role. People's lives depend on him getting it right every time. The operations team rely on his data to make critical decisions, such as the duration of stopovers, the visibility forecast for the various legs, and even the best time to start the race. There is little margin for error, and he does it all by himself, relying solely on his own expertise, software and, of course, years of experience.

But Gonzalo has earned the right to feel confident about his own abilities. A passionate sailor himself, not to mention enthusiastic cyclist and triathlete, he grew up in Alicante in Spain with the Volvo Ocean Race in his blood. "It's been deep in my heart since I was a child. It has everything that I like – not only my interest in the technical side of sailing, but also my love of nature. It pushes your body and mind to their limits."

Gonzalo spent his university years studying electrical engineering while sailing professionally in the summer. Upon graduation, he landed a navigational role with the America's Cup team Desafío Español, which gave him four years of solid professional inshore sailing experience, working with the latest technology. Not content with his lot, however, he realized that in order to improve his offshore sailing he needed a better understanding of the weather, and opted to go back to university to specialize in meteorology.

"I'm analytical and like to understand everything I face,

and that only comes from knowledge and science," says Gonzalo. The decision soon paid off when a friend secured sponsorship to compete in a round-the-world race, and Gonzalo ended up coaching him on how to navigate to a podium finish.

THRILL-SEEKER

There are times, however, when even the best navigator is at a loss. During the 2011-12 race and only 48 hours after the first leg in Alicante, two boats dropped out due to an unprecedented cyclone-strength storm in the Mediterranean. "We had expected it," says Gonzalo, "but it proved to be much stronger than we thought."

Of course, his role is to track and predict the weather conditions. Only in extreme circumstances, such as being presented with large blocks of moving ice or a tropical cyclone would an alternative course for the race be devised. But this is not done lightly due to the risk of unfair advantage, nor is it something Gonzalo believes the skippers would pay much heed to. And that is one of his key characteristics – he clearly loves his job, but first and foremost he is a thrill-seeking sailor.

"What I do isn't just about deciphering information, but putting yourself in the skin of the sailor and visualizing what they face, and the implications of what they feel. Good experience in sailing is relevant, and good meteorology skills are relevant – but you can't do one without understanding the other." ☞

Photographs: previous page: © Amory Ross/PUMA Ocean Racing/Volvo Ocean Race; this page: © Pedro Freitas/Volvo Ocean Race

Photograph: © Image Photo Professional

CHAMPION CHAP

An Austrian operator is current holder of the Volvo Construction Equipment Operators Club European title



Johannes Unger with the winner's trophy

As a first-time entrant, 29-year-old Johannes Unger says he had no real expectation of winning the most challenging and hard-fought contest in the Volvo CE Operators Club's history. Competition was intense with just 22 finalists from 11 countries making it to the final out of more than 2,000 entrants from across Europe.

Working against the clock, the first challenge was a slalom course on a DD22 asphalt compactor, with the fastest time claiming the final starting position for the actual competition. Two challenges for all 22 finalists followed with the best ten going through to the third and final challenge – the combined time from the three deciding the overall winner.

PRECISION

The first round involved digging a hole of at least 50cm x 50cm to a depth of exactly 30cm using an ECR88D short radius compact excavator. The excavated material had to be heaped directly behind the hole and neither the material,

the excavator bucket nor the operator were allowed to touch a guiding wire less than 40cm away. With penalties for touching the wire or digging the hole too small or to the wrong depth, concentration, precision digging and an experienced eye were key.

Finalists were then confronted by a swinging tire as they took to the controls of an L70G wheel loader to lift a truck tire from a platform using a tire insert hanging from a chain mounted on a fork attachment. Once the tire was lifted they had to reverse back through a gate and then forward to place the tire back on a second platform. Both platforms were surrounded by four columns, each supporting a tennis ball, with penalties for each displaced ball.

SECONDS AHEAD

The final challenge saw competitors from six countries still in the running with the outcome far from a foregone conclusion as operators were asked to build a breeze block (cinder block) tower using an ECRI45D short swing radius →



The 22 finalists

JOHANNES UNGER SNATCHED THE TITLE IN SPECTACULAR STYLE



The ECR145D short swing radius excavator in action



Asphalt compactor slalom



Precision digging with the ECR88D excavator

excavator. The blocks had to be moved and placed using the teeth of the bucket and then a pail of sand had to be successfully placed on top of the tower.

Johannes Unger snatched the title in spectacular style ahead of Swiss nine-time finalist Ueli Hunziker by just 19 seconds; Germany's Michael Rosendahl took third place, 22 seconds clear of Austria's Martin Moser in fourth place.

Clutching his trophy, a thrilled Johannes said: "To be standing on the podium with the winner's trophy is really good. It's been a perfect day!"

Johannes, who lives in Münster and works for Gubert General Contracting operating a Volvo EC210C excavator added: "Now I've won the European final I hope I'll get a new D-Series Volvo at work!"

Vice President Marketing for Volvo CE Sales Region

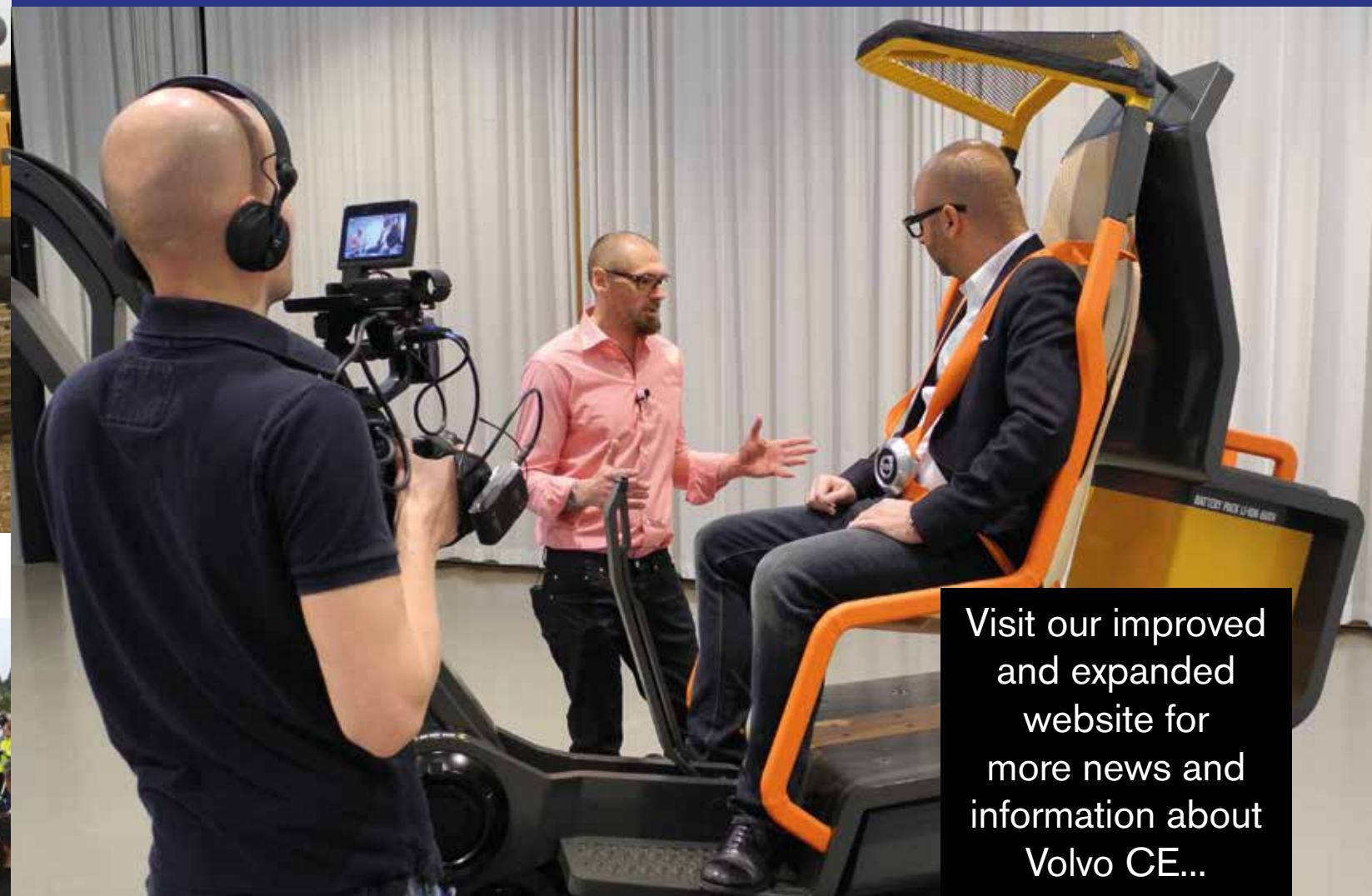
EMEA (Europe-Middle East-Africa) Mike Humphrey commented: "I am delighted that the Volvo CE Operators Club is giving machine operators both recognition and the chance to socialize and compete against each other. We at Volvo CE are extremely proud of the Club and I am delighted to announce that it will be even bigger in 2014 as Russia will be joining."

The Volvo CE Operators Club is growing and is open to all those who operate construction equipment of any size and make. To join, simply go to www.volvoce.com, select your country and click on the tab for Operators Club. 🇩🇪

If you know a Volvo machine operator you would like to see featured on this page please contact us by email at volvospirit@volvo.com

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