

# A CUSTOMER'S SUCCESS STORY

Volvo Construction Equipment



## A ROUGH ROAD — EXPANDING INTO ASPHALT PAVING IN A TOUGH ECONOMY

In spring 2008, when the housing decline stagnated the construction industry, one contractor saw his glass as half full. Ty Trulove saw an opportunity to expand his excavating business and move into asphalt paving.

Trulove Excavating is a successful site prep and earthmoving company in the Aspen / Glenwood Springs, Colo., area. Trulove has enjoyed steady work over the years; however, the company began to experience a considerable slowdown in work. In March 2008, Ty Trulove made the decision to venture into asphalt paving to offset the loss of excavation and site prep project work.



Ty Trulove of Glenwood Springs, Colo., started Rocky Mountain Paving in 2008 to handle smaller paving jobs.

Trulove was motivated to make the jump into paving when he noticed that the largest asphalt company in the valley area was turning away smaller jobs. Trulove considered the potential for his business and made initial inquiries to see if there would be enough paving work on smaller jobs to justify growing his business. The potential was there, and Trulove started Rocky Mountain Paving.

Once Trulove decided his idea had roots, he went looking for an equipment dealer. Trulove's dealer at the time didn't take the same interest in his new venture, so he looked for a dealer that specialized in asphalt paving in Colorado. Trulove quickly found Faris Machinery and called Eric Poulson.

"From the beginning, Eric was very positive about our business expansion," said Trulove. "He was extremely knowledgeable about the industry and what we would need, and this was the key factor for deciding to partner with Faris Machinery."

Faris Machinery has been serving the construction industry in Colorado for more than 50 years and is a leader in paving equipment. Much of Faris Machinery's success can be attributed to the investment the dealership makes with its customers, focusing on longtime partnerships instead of point of sale.

"Ty recognized our reputation in the paving equipment marketplace," said Poulson. "Faris Machinery has the expertise for the training Rocky Mountain Paving needed to get into the paving business."

Poulson said they had sold equipment to Trulove in the past, but this was the first opportunity they had with Trulove on a large capital purchase. Poulson discussed with Trulove the types of paving and the terrain the company would be working in to recommend the best paver for their operations. Much of the paving work Trulove expected would be trails, golf courses, driveways and some road work.

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Trulove purchased a Volvo PF4410 tracked paver and an Ultimat screed from Faris Machinery.

"Rocky Mountain Paving wouldn't be doing any mainline highway paving, but they would need a machine large enough to do county roads and intersections," said Poulson.

The recommendation from Poulson was the Volvo PF4410 asphalt paver with a Volvo Ultimat screed. The PF4410 is an 8-foot commercial tracked paver that can accommodate the steep and rough terrain typical in the valley area. Trulove paired the paver with a Volvo DD31HF double drum asphalt compactor rental.

"For the work we'd be doing, it made the most sense to use a tracked paver," explains Trulove.

The Volvo PF4410 is a mid-size tracked paver designed as a durable and efficient paving machine. The PF4410 has a hydrostatic direct traction drive that makes the paver very efficient on the job and keeps maintenance of the drivetrain to a minimum. The high traction and low ground pressure of the track system, along with a

158-horsepower Cummins engine, give the PF4410 the power to stay level while pushing the material truck uphill and the power to keep the screed level to lay a smooth mat. The counter-rotating tracks allow for tight maneuverability, which is ideal for the steep grades that Poulson and Trulove discussed.

"Wheels can slip and get stuck in this area," said Poulson. "The PF4410 definitely has the power for the pull needed for these types of paving jobs."

Once Trulove obtained the right equipment, it was time to go back to school to learn how to operate it. Faris Machinery

Trulove's crew paves a golf course trail in Aspen.



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teamed up with Volvo and its renowned Road Institute to provide training to the Rocky Mountain Paving crew.

Road Institute has provided service- and operation-based training to Volvo customers and industry personnel for more than 40 years. Volvo has two Road Institute locations in operation, one in Shippensburg, Pa., and the other in Phoenix, Ariz. Because the paving season was already upon them, it wasn't feasible for the crew to travel to either location for training, so Faris Machinery and Steve Passmore, regional product manager for the road machinery division of Volvo Construction Equipment, teamed up to mirror the Road Institute curriculum especially for Rocky Mountain Paving in Glenwood Springs.

"Training has always been a top priority with Volvo along with quality and safety," said Passmore. "That is why we stay involved with the customer after the sale."

Passmore explains that Volvo conducts customer-based training regularly to teach basic paving principles and paver operations and maintenance.

"The paving crew needs to have a good understanding of paving principles to maximize their profitability with the machine," he said.

Passmore, along with Poulson and the service team at Faris Machinery, conducted a day-long training seminar for Rocky Mountain Paving. The first half of the day was conducted as classroom-style instruction on the operation, service and maintenance of the paver, screed and compactor. The afternoon session focused on hands-on application basics of asphalt paving.

"Because Ty and his team were new to paving, we looked at this opportunity as a clean-sheet approach," said Poulson. "We started at square one talking about best practices and the process of paving."

For Rocky Mountain Paving's final exam, Trulove and his crew took the new equipment out on an actual paving job. Trulove arranged with a local business owner to pave a 24-foot-wide driveway into a commercial

office complex at no charge. The result was a successful first-time paving operation.

"They did an excellent job," said Passmore. "Ty and his crew really focused on best practices and safety. They understood the machine and how it works in the paving operation."

Poulson agreed. "This training process has allowed them to have a lot of success in the quality of their paving."



Adding asphalt paving services in addition to excavation gives Trulove a competitive edge.

The business owner was pleased too. As a true testament to client satisfaction, the business owner ended up reimbursing Trulove for the cost of the asphalt and fuel.

With a trained crew and a complete fleet, Rocky Mountain Paving was ready to roll out more asphalt. Trulove said the company stayed busy that first summer, even with an asphalt shortage in Colorado in 2008.

"There were two weeks where we couldn't get asphalt," said Trulove. "I was in the

middle of a project and had to truck in oil to my asphalt supplier to mix with the aggregate already on hand. I was lucky because the owner understood the situation and agreed to pay the additional costs."

For what started as a risky move in a weak economy, Trulove sees this business venture as a complete success. Even with the challenging economy, he doesn't regret the expansion. Trulove has found that adding

asphalt paving to his business has benefited the excavation side because customers like that he can provide both services.

"Having asphalt paving services in addition to excavating services definitely has given us a competitive edge," he said.

"I have always loved the paving part of a project because it signals its completion. I'm proud to now have a part in that process. Once something is paved, people can start using it."