

A CUSTOMER'S SUCCESS STORY

Volvo Construction Equipment

... BY THE NUMBERS

"Our numbers indicate that Volvo is a winner!"

Frankie Lafontaine, Directeur général. Les Excavations Lafontaine Inc.



Frankie Lafontaine checking the daily performance of his Volvo equipment.



The historic eastern townships of Quebec are dotted with small municipalities, many with aging infrastructure. In Ste. Marguerite a Volvo EC460CL works in tandem with a Volvo EC210CL installing new sanitary sewers.

Some would claim that everything we do these days is controlled by 'the numbers'. They would argue that the area where this is most evident in our day-to-day lives is sports.

True sports fans know all 'the numbers' about their favorite team or player. Baseball fans track home runs, runs batted in, on base percentage, slugging percentage... to name just a few. Football, hockey and auto racing fans respectively have their own seemingly endless sets of numbers... in football the list starts with wins, points, passing yards, rushing yards, sacks; with hockey it's goals, assists, minutes played, goals for and against, and continues ad infinitum. In racing it's starts, wins, total laps, top five finishes, etc. No doubt your favorite sport will have its own set of numbers.

Company fans

Based in the Quebec, Canada town of Lévis is a highly successful construction company

where everyone from the president to the latest hire knows the company's numbers. They literally know everything... from what jobs are happening today, what needs to be completed, what wasn't completed yesterday, where every piece of equipment is working, what equipment is needed, all of the administrative, operational and maintenance costs, everything, right down to a running inventory of parts, from the largest to the smallest. This amount of minute detail may sound onerous to many people, but like true sports fans, the team at Les Excavations Lafontaine Inc. truly enjoy the stats! And like sports fans, they feel very much involved with the team and therefore are quite loyal.

Premier team

From very humble beginnings in 1975 in the small eastern townships town of Saint-Malachie, where today the first dozer the company purchased sits proudly in the front yard of the family homestead, Frankie Lafontaine has built Les Excavations Lafontaine Inc. to the revered position in the province's construction hierarchy that it holds

today. With contracts exceeding sixty-two million dollars last year, Excavations Lafontaine is one of the premier municipal infrastructure, road and commercial construction companies in the dynamic Canadian province of Quebec. Currently, the company has over one hundred and sixty employees and over ninety-seven pieces of heavy-duty road building, road maintenance and construction equipment.

While touring the almost six hundred thousand square foot Lafontaine facility in Lévis, one could not help but be impressed with the organization of the maintenance area and storage yard where everything had a referenced storage space. A place for everything and everything has a place. Upon entering the company's recently completed indoor maintenance garage and paint shop, here again organization and cleanliness were the order-of-the-day.

The Lafontaine way

Frankie Lafontaine spoke very proudly of his people and his facility, "We couldn't find a system to keep track of everything the way



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The gentle touch of a Volvo EC210CL is ideal for fine finishing and working in confined spaces. It also has the brute strength needed for the heavy jobs.



Frankie Lafontaine works very closely with his two sons Francois & Mathieu and is anxious to pass on the legacy of a successful company.

that I wished it to be, so our people created our own." The computer-based Lafontaine system allows for the detailed tracking of every job, every person, every piece of equipment, how much work was done, how much fuel and lubricants were used right down to the smallest of replacement parts. There is no detail left out. Frankie went on to explain, "By 5:30 p.m. each day I have a report on the company's activities during the day. I know what worked and what didn't and I know what we need to do tomorrow to remain a viable and profitable company. It's a completely buttoned-up system. It's the winning Lafontaine way."

Does VCE stack up

As with sports, there are many players out there for construction teams to choose from. In addition, it would appear that there is a new construction equipment manufacturer entering the arena on a regular basis. So how does Volvo Construction Equipment stack up under the close scrutiny of the Lafontaine team?

"I am very pleased with Volvo, I like the Swedish quality and Swedish way of thinking," states Frankie. "Both Volvo and their dealer group (Strongco) have worked with us over the years and the benefits have been mutual." When asked, "why Volvo," Lafontaine was emphatic, "I have the detailed cost and performance analysis for every piece of construction equipment that we own. I know how much it costs to purchase, finance, maintain and the daily operating costs including fuel and labour. I know how it works... and what works and what doesn't. Over the years we have been able to work

with both Volvo and Strongco to improve the performance of both the machines and the companies. Our numbers indicate that Volvo is a winner." Then with an Irish/Quebecois twinkle in his eye Frankie went on, "And in the end I look at the color." (Editor's note: The corporate colors for Les Excavations Lafontaine Inc. are yellow and black.)

The Volvo stat sheet

With that being said, let's have a look at the Lafontaine rolling stock stat sheet. Currently, Lafontaine owns ten Volvo crawler excavators ranging in size from the versatile Volvo EC210C to the powerful Volvo EC460C; sixteen Volvo wheel loaders including one L70, nine L90's, four L120's, one L150 and one L180 model; one Volvo motor grader and three Volvo A25C articulated haulers. In addition, the company owns ten Volvo/Mack trucks ranging in size from ten-wheel dump units to large tractor-trailer models as well as a Mack truck-mounted sweeper. Mack Trucks Inc. is a member of the Volvo Group.

So for those who are keeping score, total number of Lafontaine rolling stock pieces ninety-seven. Total pieces of Volvo/Mack rolling stock thirty-seven. For a Volvo/Mack ownership percentage of thirty-eight. The areas of the Lafontaine lineup where currently there are no Volvo players are the ones where to date, Volvo Construction Equipment has not invested in development and production, areas such as dozers and loader-prompters.

Volvo Construction Equipment consistently offers the best products for the job. From design to production to sales to service,

Volvo Construction Equipment is totally committed to your satisfaction, day after day, year after year. At Volvo, we follow your team's numbers because our success depends on your success.

Rules for success

"But it has not been easy for us," Lafontaine stated. "We have worked very hard. Success does not come without much effort. Today I am proud to be working with my two sons and I am looking forward to passing on this Legacy Of Numbers to them." Certainly the numbers along with the support of Volvo Construction Equipment as well as Serge Bergeron and his Strongco team are working for the Lafontaine team.

Once again with that twinkle in his eye, Frankie went on, "I tell my sons and all my staff. For the game of life, God gave us three things. One head and two hands. Use them correctly and you will have success. If you make a mistake, don't worry. Stop. Think about it... and do better the next time." Words we should all live by... and don't forget to always check the numbers!



Back-filling with the nimble Volvo L90F.

