

# A CUSTOMER'S SUCCESS STORY

Volvo Construction Equipment

"We moved half a million cubic yards of snow last year. People say to me, 'How do you do all of this?' I point to these Volvo loaders."

Mark Bywalec



## NIGHT MOVES.

When blinding blizzards bury the greater Detroit area, a team of versatile Volvo Compact Wheel Loaders ensure the critical, safe passage for thousands.

It's 9:30 p.m. on a Friday. The Weather Channel says there's a bigger one on the way.

Mark Bywalec hears that the clouds which passed over frigid Lake Huron are getting ready to drop a few more feet of fresh snow. That's not to mention the snow drifts from this "nor'easter" that'll look like frozen waves on the road before dawn.

On this day, Mark and the guys at D&B Landscaping of Livonia, Michigan, just outside of Detroit, have already put in 10 hours. They uncovered over 50 miles of roads, driveways, parking lots and even an emergency helicopter pad with their team of Volvo Compact Wheel Loaders.

Mark, D&B Landscaping's Fleet Maintenance Manager, watches the swirling mass on TV and knows it'll soon be time to go out and battle the storm all over again.

"It looks so pretty," his wife says at the window.

"I know, honey," Mark quips. "But I may not be home again until Tuesday." He's probably right. D&B Landscaping is one of the largest companies of its kind in Michigan, with over 2,000 commercial and residential customers.



The Volvo L40 Wheel Loader gives operator Ryan Phimister all the power and night vision he needs to clear the lot at Bank of America in Livonia.

### That Isn't the Case.

All of the 25,000 people who, on average, go in and out of the Henry Ford Health System branches in the Detroit area may not know it, but they are counting on D&B Landscaping to maintain a safe passage and clear parking lot, no matter the time of day or severity of storm.

Once a Case equipment user, D&B Landscaping has been buying and leasing various types of Volvos for over 15 years of its 37 in business.



Why are Volvo Wheel Loaders better in the snow? Visibility, capacity, safety and tires that do not need to be replaced year after year.

Daniel Bywalec, President of D&B Landscaping, said the past two winters have been tough on the city.

"We've had record snowfalls. Some weeks we are bombarded. And with all of the hospitals and businesses we serve, we are a 24-hour, seven-day-a-week operation.

"Everything has to be cleared and ice free at the hospitals for all those patients, families, doctors, nurses, emergency vehicles, everyone. Those surfaces have to be clean."

Snow removal is 35% of D&B Landscaping's business (in addition to lawn maintenance, exterior illumination, irrigation, golf course care, residential support and other services) and is expected to grow along with changing weather patterns. According to the Michigan News, 2008 was the "snowiest" year in Detroit since 1880.

### The Work of Art.

Thanks to sales representative Art Montana of Wolverine Tractor & Equipment Company of Southfield, Michigan, D&B Landscaping has enhanced its profits and workload capacity by trading its Case skid steer loaders in 2007 for larger capacity Volvo Compact Wheel Loaders.

The landscaping firm now has two Volvo L20Bs, a Volvo L25B, and a Volvo L40B.

"We have increased our productivity by 30% with the Volvos," Daniel stated.

"And we're going to be leasing a few more of them this winter. The lease program for the Volvo machines is excellent. We couldn't get better service and if anything goes wrong, the units are under warranty, so Wolverine picks the machine up, services it for us and we don't pay a dime out of pocket."

But why, specifically, are Volvo Compact Wheel Loaders ideal for snow removal?

Art Montana answered, "These units have more capacity, horsepower, greater weight, more reach with the eight to 10-foot snow pusher and more clearance on the bottom between the machine and the road – that's the combination you need to move more snow more efficiently."



D&B Landscaping operator Froilan Sanchez clears the lot (down to the stripes) at the Henry Ford Hospital System's corporate headquarters.

### Hit the Skids.

It all comes down to tires, visibility, capacity and safety, Daniel explained. The tires and hydraulics on the Case skid steer loaders were an expense leader for D&B Landscaping for years.

"We were spending thousands each spring replacing the tires on the skid loaders. Running the skid loaders on the asphalt and concrete surfaces with that steering mechanism ate up sets of tires. Each tire cost \$250 to replace. We also had to replace the hydraulic pumps – at about \$2,000 each.

"The Volvos are now a few years old and we still have the original tires and pumps."

In the D&B Landscaping Fleet Maintenance Department, Mark Bywalec oversees three mechanics and a part-time assistant, 65 trucks, 28 trailers and 10 front end loaders. Mark and Daniel's brothers

# A CUSTOMER'S SUCCESS STORY



also help manage D&B Landscaping. Robert is Vice President of Sales and Ronald is Division Manager for Lawn Irrigation.

You can hear the pride and enthusiasm in Mark's voice: he truly enjoys this family business, likes his workers, the machines and the team at Wolverine.

Mark explained, "We'd always been with Case, but then after our partner Wolverine dealership was purchased by Volvo (in 2004), Art Montana said, 'Try the Volvos. The difference will be an improvement!'

"And, wow, what a difference. The Volvo loaders are more fuel efficient and we are saving a lot of money in the short- and long-run."

D&B Landscaping officially began its Volvo experience in 1989 with the purchase of a new, Brazilian-built "Michigan L30" loader. "We consider this to be one of the first Volvos that we owned, and we still use it for snow removal and yard work," Daniel said.

During the winter season, much of D&B Landscaping's work is after normal business hours, under the night lights of Detroit. So Wolverine is also on call.

"While it's rare, we do have a Volvo break down and we've got to have that machine," Mark said.

"We needed a starter one night and (parts rep) Sylvester Garcia went right over and opened the Wolverine store for us, got the starter, installed it and we were up and running. They have the technical knowledge so we rely heavily on those guys."

When the 5,000 employees at Henry Ford Health System in Detroit, Michigan, fill the parking lot with almost as many vehicles, the lots need to be snow-free.

"It's a different animal during the winter," Mark said. "You don't get most of the work done and then leave at the end of the day to come back tomorrow. We stay with that storm until it passes and it nearly always happens at night. That could mean an 18-hour shift.

"We moved half a million cubic yards of snow last year. People say to me, 'How do you do all of this?' I point to these Volvo loaders."

## Cleaned Out.

Steve Pfaffenberger, Facilities Systems Director at the Henry Ford Health System, has been in health facility management for 30 years.

"The health care business is unique as it relates to specific issues," he noted. "Right-now-24/7-response is necessary when sleet and snow show up at our doors.

"Emergency room access and the safety of our patients, visitors and staff is of the highest priority. D&B Landscaping is the best company for all these services that I have come across."

Robert Léger, Director of Support Services for Health Alliance Plan of Detroit, tells the story of an executive, trying to get home through the snow and traffic-clogged streets of downtown.

"After 45 minutes, she had only traveled two blocks," Robert said. "Tired and needing relief from the white



Gathered before a Volvo Wheel Loader "high five," the team at D&B Landscaping is well-rested and ready for another snowy season.

knuckles experience, she returned to the company parking lot.

"She was surprised – the lot was so clear, down to the pavement, that she could see parking stripes. She repeats the story to this day about how comforting it was to return here. D&B Landscaping has shined through like this time and again."

Art Montana said that seeing the parking stripes in the clear lot is the result of another one of the Volvo Compact Wheel Loader's benefits. "Wear and tear on the lots and driveways at businesses and residences is reduced with the Volvos. The Case Skid Steers tend to leave tire marks and dig in," he said.

Flexibility is also key, according to Wolverine Marketing Manager Dave Twombly.

"D&B does all kinds of work year-round: landscaping, grounds maintenance, snow removal, you name it. Volvo loaders switch easily among these applications.

"And Volvos are well made to not let D&B down. That's a big deal during Michigan winters when customers are counting on safe roadways and parking lots."

## The View from Here.

Mark Bywalec praised Volvo Construction Equipment's ingenuity for optimal all-around visibility for the operator from the Volvo L20B, Volvo L25B and Volvo L40B cabs' panoramic windows; the easy switch out of the forks (to remove ice) with the buckets (for snow); the ability of the machines to squeeze into tight spaces and around fire hydrants, and more.

"The machines are so flexible. And safe. You can see almost any angle out of the cab. They are up so high; much higher than the Case. And all the vehicle traffic can see you.

"Volvo has clearly thought of everything. Operators are really comfortable in there for a long time. A drink holder, a plug the operator can charge a cell phone in, all of it. There's even Volvo touch up paint so we can keep the loaders looking nice. That's a reflection of our company, after all."

As Daniel Bywalec says, D&B Landscaping is different from its competitors because of Volvo Compact Wheel Loaders and because of its reputation, reinforced every season. "Every client trusts us to be there and we excel at providing reliable service."

Henry Ford himself would be proud. After all, it was Ford who proclaimed: "A business absolutely devoted to service will have only one worry about profits. They will be embarrassingly large."

And don't worry Mrs. Bywalec. All the lots are clear and he's on his way home.



Daniel Bywalec

**NOTE:** Alta Equipment Company, a material-handling solutions provider based in Wixom, MI, acquired certain assets of Wolverine Tractor and Equipment Company to become the authorized Volvo Construction Equipment dealer for Michigan. Alta is now estimated to be one of Michigan's largest equipment suppliers with 11 locations in the state and more than 350 employees. Daniel and Mark Bywalec look forward to working with Alta Equipment Company.