

The magazine of Hitachi Construction Machinery (Europe) NV

GC

GROUND CONTROL

Issue 23 Spring 2017 www.hitachim.eu

HITACHI

Reliable solutions

SMOOTH OPERATOR

- New ZW-6 wheel loaders in Belgium, Germany and the UK
- Recycling, rental and road construction
- Zaxis-6 range in Poland and Portugal

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Ground Control is published twice a year and is circulated among 100,000 readers.
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Translation: UvA Talen, www.uvatalen.nl
Coordination, printing and circulation: Holzer Druck und Medien Druckerei und Zeitungsverlag GmbH + Co.KG, www.druckerei-holzer.de

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NEWS

Building a **strong** online presence



Hitachi Construction Machinery (Europe) NV (HCME) has launched a new corporate website offering the ultimate online construction machinery experience. The new user-friendly site, www.hitachicm.eu, offers quick and easy access to the Hitachi model range and associated services. It also has several new features such as a machine comparison tool, a used equipment page, and media library, as well as increased prominence for the dealer locator, careers and Support Chain sections.

"The driving force behind HCME's new-look website was to replicate the look and feel of HCM's (Hitachi Construction Machinery Co., Ltd.) global site," says HCME's President Makoto Yamazawa. "Having achieved this, our digital team has then focused on the needs of our European dealers and customers, such as the dynamic content, the creation of a one-stop information centre, and an easy viewing experience."

HCME's social media channels (Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, YouTube and Instagram) are also given greater prominence on the new website. They are continuing to go from strength to strength – Facebook now has over 258,000 fans, with many of these sharing photos, videos and feedback on the excellent performance and durability of their Hitachi machines.

The amazing photography and video on HCME's Instagram page has similarly proven to be a hit. Since the first photograph was posted in 2015, the account has grown significantly and now has more than 30,000 dedicated followers. Twitter, LinkedIn, and YouTube are also still popular ways to share updates and machinery images and movies. Collectively, more than 10,000 Hitachi enthusiasts, owners and operators are engaging with HCME's social media channels on a weekly basis.

ZX300LCN-6 **ticks** all the boxes

The freight depot area surrounding Heidelberg railway station in Germany has been undergoing transformation since 2008. Over a distance of four kilometres, buildings belonging to the former American garrison are being demolished to make way for new neighbourhoods.

Weinheim-based InduRec has been involved in selective demolition there since the work began. Aside from gradually dismantling buildings, all the materials must also be sorted, loaded and disposed of accordingly.

After working on the site for barely two months, a Hitachi ZX300LCN-6 medium excavator had proved its capabilities to Thomas Lück, Managing Director of InduRec and board member of the German Demolition Association. "We already had the previous model and were extremely satisfied with that. But the series 6 version offers much more power and performance, and therefore meets our requirements even better."

Based on their positive experiences, Lück has already ordered another ZX300-6 to expand his fleet of machinery. It's not just the technical specifications, such as performance data or a



fully hydraulic quick coupler for using the various attachments that are important to Lück. Owing to the tight deadlines, the reliability and cost-effectiveness of the machinery are also of vital importance. Factors such as noise emissions and operator comfort also play a role – the new ZX300LCN-6 ticks all of those boxes.

France welcomes new Hitachi -6 range



A wide variety of Hitachi machines was on display at Prowimat (left) and Teramat (right)



The new Hitachi -6 range of machines has been launched in France with several events held by authorised dealers across the country. Approximately 1,700 people attended the open days organised by Payen, Teramat and Prowimat last autumn.

Teramat held two successful events at its locations in Heyrieux, Rhône and St Girod, Savoie. It invited customers from the Auvergne Rhône-Alpes and Bourgogne regions to see the new Hitachi machines, including the ZX145W-6 wheeled excavator. They could also test their operating skills in a mini excavator competition.

Teramat showcased its facilities, including workshops, spare parts storage and demonstration areas. Its workshop at St Girod was transformed into a dinner dance venue on the final evening. Sales Director Pierre Mailland-Rosset said, "We are very satisfied with both of these events. We had a great response from potential and existing customers."

For the 12th consecutive year, Prowimat hosted a two-day event at its headquarters in St Martin de Crau, inviting customers from Marseille and the surrounding areas. A wide variety of Hitachi machines was on display and visitors had the chance to try the new ZX300LC-6 medium excavator. "We welcomed nearly 300 people over the two days," said General Manager Pascal Widmer.

Further north, Payen organised "Hitachi Days" in the picturesque location of Domaine du Parc in Pontcarré. The two-day event

showcased a variety of models, including mini, medium and wheeled excavators, as well as wheel loaders and special application machines.

Visitors were invited to try out the new ZW310-6 wheel loader and ZX225USRLC-6 medium excavator in the demonstration area. They also had the opportunity to see the ZX145W-6 short radius and ZX190W-6 wheeled excavators for the first time.

The new ZX135US-5 tunnelling machine also received much attention from visitors on both days. This special application machine is currently working on the construction of a subway as part of the high-profile Grand Paris project.

Payen President Claire Miquel said: "The launch of the Hitachi -6 excavators and wheel loaders offered us the best opportunity between Intermat and Bauma to gather our customers together from Paris, north and eastern France.

"Nearly 400 people travelled a long way to attend, and operators enjoyed the chance to test the new Hitachi machines in working conditions. Our sales, technical and parts experts were available to talk to customers, and their discussions were valuable in our search for constant improvement and close working relationships."

For more information on the new Hitachi -6 models, please see page 8.



Payen employees presented several Zaxis-6 excavators at "Hitachi Days"



NEWS

A winning team

A Norwegian contractor has invested in a range of new Hitachi equipment, including a ZW180-5 wheel loader, and three medium excavators – a ZX85US-5, a ZX225USRLC-5 and a ZX210LC-5. Bane og Entreprenørservice (Bane) specialises in the redevelopment of artificial sports fields, and is using the machinery to complete a project near Oslo.

The machines were delivered by Norway's authorised Hitachi dealer, Nasta, between August 2015 and February 2016. The entire fleet (apart from the ZX210LC-5) is being utilised on a project in the neighbourhood of Haugerud, in the northeast of the capital city. Bane was commissioned to remove the existing artificial grass and install a new playing surface.

The ZX85US-5 and ZX225USRLC-5 are being used for general earthmoving duties on site. This includes the removal of the existing turf, top soil and concrete. Careful extraction of the artificial surface was crucial as it needed to be returned to a supplier in Denmark. As such, the turf was meticulously uprooted in strips and rolled by the excavators for onward transportation. The ZW180-5 has been fitted with a fork attachment to load the used rolls of turf on to trucks.

Bane has regularly opted for Hitachi since 2008, when it purchased a ZX85US-3. Managing Director Johnny Steen believes that the combination of reliable construction machinery and service from Nasta made the purchase decision an easy one. "Ultimately, our Hitachi machinery is helping us to complete the project in a highly efficient way," he says. "For me, the key benefit is the excellent after-sales service provided by Hitachi and Nasta."



Perfect rental machines

The compact size of the ZW75-6 made it an ideal choice for Finnish public utility service company LinnanInfra. It is responsible for maintaining 430km of roads and streets, and 380km of pedestrian walkways and cycle paths, in the city of Hämeenlinna. It hired two of the compact wheel loaders for snow removal work last November.

The two ZW75-6 machines were fitted with widening snow ploughs, and supplied with dedicated operators and service agreements from Rotarent, a subsidiary of the official Hitachi dealer in Finland, Rotator. Operator Sami Niemi used one of them to maintain a pedestrian walkway and cycle path in the Tiirö area.

"The dimensions of the machine were an important factor and this is low enough for the underpasses in the area," says Sami. "It is easily manoeuvrable even in the tightest spaces. You can quickly learn how to operate the machine, and visibility from the cab is good."

Since the Hitachi ZW-6 compact wheel loaders were introduced in Finland last spring, they have proved to be extremely popular models for the country's rental market. The degree of utilisation, and suitability and reliability of equipment are key factors for contractors, and renting is becoming a cost-effective alternative to owning machines.

Rotarent's Juha Myötämäki says: "Renting has been gaining popularity especially when machines are needed for peak demands, but also for seasonal needs, as is the case of LinnanInfra. Our Hitachi machines represent the latest in technology and are definitely reliable."



UK firm **extends** Hitachi fleet

London-based Lynch Plant Hire has invested in a Hitachi ZX350LC-5 clamshell telescopic excavator (CTA) as part of its fleet expansion programme. The purchase is set to be the first of many such excavators as part of the company's long-term involvement in the construction of the Thames Tideway Tunnel. The ZX350LC-5 will then be used on other high-profile projects around London.

The machine provides a maximum vertical digging depth of 25 metres, and is equipped with a TRIAS hydraulic system. This helps to boost efficiency by increasing the extension and retraction speed of the arm. In addition, its 1.3m³ bucket has a powerful pull-up force, and can load trucks quickly and efficiently.

Hitachi's Zaxis-5 CTAs have been designed to work on sites with limited load-bearing capacity as well as in confined spaces, where traditional extraction methods are less productive and pose a higher safety risk. The purchase takes Lynch's fleet of Hitachi machines to more than 100 units.

The family-owned rental company decided to buy the ZX350LC-5 based on Hitachi's strong reputation. "We hope this machine will serve our customers around the UK from our nationwide depots," says Director Merrill Lynch. "Hitachi's extensive capabilities are an ideal fit with our own, and we know we can depend on them no matter where our customers are based."

"Hitachi Construction Machinery (UK) is proud to continue delivering market-leading solutions to Lynch Plant Hire," says HCMUK's National Product Support Manager, Allan Blackstock. "We're delighted to help them increase their productivity and fleet diversity by providing such state-of-the-art technology."

Hitachi goes **green**

The official Hitachi dealer in Switzerland, Probst Maveg, has supplied four new Hitachi medium excavators and one ZW220-5 wheel loader to Anliker. The new models were painted green to match the colours of its corporate identity and were delivered in spring 2016. Anliker is based in Emmenbrücke and has 1,300 employees. It is one of the leading companies in the Swiss construction industry, specialising in general construction, road construction and utilities, infrastructure, and property development and management.

The new Hitachi excavators included two new Zaxis-6 machines, the ZX250LCN-6 and ZX300LC-6. Anliker invested in these models because they are equipped with the latest engine technology and the unique Hitachi hydraulic system, TRIAS II. This efficient system reduces total hydraulic loss, which helps to lower fuel consumption, and also ensures fast and precise control of the attachments.

In addition to the new Zaxis-6 models, Anliker took delivery of two short-tail swing ZX225USLC-5s. All four excavators are used for earthmoving on civil engineering, sewerage and demolition projects in central Switzerland, including the cities of Lucerne, Berne, Basel and Zurich.

The ZW220-5 wheel loader began work last July at the company's material handling site in Emmenbrücke. Equipped with a 3.5m³ bucket, it is used to transport gravel and sand, as well as recycling and demolition materials. Beat Renggli, Sales Consultant at Probst Maveg, says: "The ZW220-5 is perfect for Anliker in terms of its size, bucket capacity and manoeuvrability. The excellent visibility from the cab is essential when it is loading customers' trucks that often visit the site."



NEWS

No compromise

New -6 models now available

The latest phase of Hitachi Zaxis-6 and ZW-6 machines has been introduced to the European market. The medium, large and wheeled excavators, and medium-sized wheel loader, have been designed and engineered using market-leading Hitachi technology in Japan to meet the demands of European customers.

The new models share high-quality design elements and materials, reliable and durable components, and have been designed to offer outstanding versatility. They have been launched under HCME's "No compromise" marketing campaign – which emphasises how owners can "demand more" from the new Hitachi -6 products, including the lowest possible cost of ownership.

Low fuel consumption

The Zaxis-6 range of crawler excavators includes five new medium excavators, from the ZX130-6 to the ZX210LC-6, and two new large excavators, the ZX690LCH-6 and ZX890LCH-6. Also introduced are the new ZX240N-6 (a narrow undercarriage makes it easier to transport on smaller roads) and the short-tail swing models, ZX135US-6 and ZX225USLC/USRLC-6 (ideal for working in confined spaces).

These models incorporate more than 200 redesigned features and enhanced components. To comply with EU Stage IV regulations, they are highly efficient and have a smaller impact on the environment than previous versions. They are equipped with a unique Hitachi hydraulic system, which reduces total hydraulic loss and helps to lower fuel consumption by up to 12% (ZX190LC-6 in ECO mode).

They are fitted with an after-treatment device that results in fewer emissions. Noise levels are also reduced by the device, which consists of a DOC, SCR system and silencer. The SCR system injects urea through a mixing pipe into the exhaust gas to reduce nitrous oxide.

Other updates include the in-cab console, made of highly durable AES-grade resin that resists damage from UV rays, durable connections on the hydraulic return pipes to reduce oil leaks, wide opening engine covers for easy access, and reinforced covers on the platform walkway for safety.

Better performance

Hitachi has also launched four new Zaxis-6 wheeled excavators, including the new short-tail swing model, ZX145W-6. These machines



have been designed with more than 100 updates, from tiny seals and O-rings to the reinforcement of the upper structure, boom and arm, and new Stage IV technology engines. These improvements combine to provide better performance and increased efficiency.

They share an improved hydraulic system that helps to lower fuel consumption and proven after-treatment technology to comply with the latest emission regulation requirements. They also offer the same exceptional versatility as Zaxis-6 crawler excavators with an attachment support system for the easy fitting of different attachments. The solid and reliable undercarriages, modular in design, also enhance their flexibility. For greater durability, the Zaxis-6 wheeled excavators have reinforced, larger cylinder covers, and high ground clearance to reduce damage from obstacles.

Burkhard Janssen, General Manager, Product Management & Engineering at HCME, says: "We are proud to introduce the latest phase of -6 excavators to our customers. These models have been developed to perfection in Japan, using market-leading technology, to meet the needs of the European construction industry and offer the lowest possible cost of ownership."

Quiet and comfortable

The latest ZW-6 wheel loader to be presented is the ZW180-6. It has been designed to provide exceptional all-round visibility, thanks to the repositioned exhaust pipe and air intake and curved engine hood, and with a standard rear-view camera and monitor. Easy to use and smooth to operate, it offers a high level of comfort and is one of the quietest on the market.

With substantial loading capacity, powerful digging force and impressive travel speeds, it is also extremely fuel efficient. Its Stage IV-compliant engine contains a high-volume, cooled exhaust gas recirculation (EGR) system, a common rail-type fuel injection system, a diesel oxidation catalyst (DOC) and selective catalytic reduction (SCR) system. This helps to reduce maintenance requirements and results in cleaner emissions.

HCME Wheel Loader Product Manager Vasilis Drougkas says, "The all-round visibility and low-noise performance of Hitachi wheel loaders makes them stand out from the competition. They offer a comfortable working environment for operators, and a smooth and efficient operation for a variety of job sites."

NEWS

A refreshing change

An Irish quarrying company has opted to buy a large ZX670LCR-5 excavator from its local Hitachi dealer, McSharry Bros Plant Sales, assisted by Hitachi Construction Machinery (UK) and with the finance arranged by Hitachi Capital.

McKeon Stone, the supplier of "Europe's best blue limestone" to the domestic market and for export to Belgium, The Netherlands and Germany, found a suitable machine, finance package and business partner under the umbrella of the Hitachi brand. Founded in 1950, the company extracts 200,000 tonnes of the premium raw material per annum from its 18-acre limestone quarry in County Kilkenny.

The company's Managing Director Niall Kavanagh says, "We quickly decided that the ZX670LCR-5 was the machine for us, having had some previous experience working with Hitachi construction machinery. It is already saving us at least €1,000 per week in fuel costs. There has also been a significant reduction in terms of maintenance – the total saving more or less covers our monthly repayments!

"It's a refreshing change to deal with Hitachi. They were highly knowledgeable, enthusiastic, and had a strong interest in and understanding of our business needs. Dealing with them was a very positive experience."

Please note some modifications have been made by the local dealer.



McKeon Stone Managing Director Niall Kavanagh



New dealer for UAE

Hitachi Construction Machinery Middle East (HMEC) has appointed a new dealer in the UAE. Middle East Crane Equipment Trading (MECET) will have full responsibility for sales and after-sales of Hitachi construction machinery and Hitachi Sumitomo crawler cranes in the region.

MECET is a wholly owned subsidiary of the Luyckx Group. Established in 1952 in Brecht, Belgium, the Luyckx Group has gained the necessary knowledge and expertise over 60 years to become the market leader in Belgium, where it excels in supplying machines for projects around the world.

In 2004 MECET became service supplier for Jan De Nul during the construction of the palm island, Palm Jebel Ali. In 2012 it became the authorised Hitachi Sumitomo dealer in the UAE and received approval from the Abu Dhabi National Oil Company to work on artificial islands and oil fields. It is renowned for its outstanding after-sales support and has an impressive stock of spare parts that will be available across the UAE to serve its customers around the clock.

The company is scheduled to open a 10,000m² facility in the Dubai investment centre near Al Maktoum International Airport by the end of 2017. HMEC General Manager Piet van Bakergem says, "We are confident the union with MECET will reinforce our joint position in the construction machinery and crawler crane market for the UAE territory. We are committed to improving the service for both local customers and international contractors operating in the region."

First Hitachi for Alaskan mine

A Hitachi EX1900-6 large excavator has been delivered to the Usibelli Coal Mine (UCM) in Alaska, where it is already making a positive impact. Located near Healy, the 142km² site is a family-owned business, and the only operational coal mine in the state.



It produces around 1.5 million tonnes of coal annually, which is transported by rail to five regional power plants.

The purchase was the result of an intense search for a suitable machine by UCM's management team, which was keen to make a significant addition to its mining fleet. UCM cooperated closely with Hitachi's authorised dealer, Construction Machinery Industrial LLC., in transferring the EX1900-6 from the city of Nome on the Baltic Sea to its new home.

This was a monumental logistic achievement for both parties, beginning with the disassembly of the excavator, and its subsequent transport across Alaska via barge and truck. Once on site, a three-day rebuild was completed by four technicians. A number of adjustments were made to the machine, including the addition of a fire system, a winter package, and a new bucket to suit the conditions.

"We had been actively looking for a large machine when we heard about the EX1900-6 and saw it as an opportunity," says UCM's VP of Operations and General Manager Alan Renshaw. "A number of things could have gone wrong during the transport, but we got it here successfully. It's a similar size to the machine we had been using, but faster and more cost-effective. Even when it gets below -40°C, we can keep running."

Strong presence at MINExpo



Hitachi Construction Machinery (North America) showcased a wide range of innovative equipment and technology at MINExpo 2016. The exhibition, which was staged last September at the Las Vegas Convention Center in Nevada, is held every four years to promote new mining products and services to the industry.

The 6,700m² booth used 'Hitachi to the core' as its theme, and gave visitors an ideal opportunity to meet the company's global product experts and see its machinery up close. This included the EH4000AC-3 rigid dump truck that features an advanced AC-drive system, which delivers higher torque and reduces operating costs.

In addition, Hitachi displayed the EX5600-6 mining excavator, which combines a proven design with technological advances to facilitate a reliable and efficient operation. A number of other



innovations designed to help mines become more productive were on display. These included the company's Aerial Angle peripheral display system and trolley assist technologies.

"MINExpo is the perfect international stage to showcase Hitachi's equipment," says Hitachi Mining Division (Americas) Manager, Craig Lamarque. "Customers around the world are striving to enhance the efficiency of the entire mining supply chain, and we develop technologies and solutions that are integrated into the equipment. This allows us to deliver an unmatched proposition to them."

"Hitachi's breadth of expertise gives us the ability to provide products and services that are more efficient, reliable and durable. Our approach makes it easier for mine operations to succeed in such a challenging environment, which is our ultimate goal in serving our customers."



On the right track

Following positive experiences with its extensive fleet of Hitachi excavators, a UK company invested in its first Hitachi wheel loader last year for use in its busy recycling facilities. And when a unique opportunity presented itself, the Keyway Group was more than happy for its new ZW310-6 to spend a few days at the beach in Weston-super-Mare...

Buckets are often found at the beach, but the bucket of a new Hitachi ZW-6 wheel loader is something of a rarity at the seaside. And it was required for something on a much grander scale than sandcastles at Weston-super-Mare, south-west England, last autumn.

The ZW310-6 was supplied by Keyway to help with preparation for the Weston Beach Race, the biggest event in the UK's off-road motorcycle racing calendar. Over the course of the weekend, approximately 100,000 people flock to the seafront to watch professional and amateur riders race each other on the toughest sand track in the world.

Constructing the approximately 15km-long track requires moving and shaping 200,000 tonnes of sand. The ZW310-6 was one of several machines in action, building numerous four-metre obstacles, which were then shaped by dozers and excavators.

Shifting sand is a world away from the wheel loader's day job at Keyway's recycling sites in Durnford, Avonmouth and Gloucester.

The company crushes, screens and turns demolition waste, namely concrete and residue, into different sizes of aggregates. The ZW310-6 is used for transporting material from the crusher, stockpiling and loading up to 100 trucks a day.

Expanding Hitachi fleet

Supplied by Hitachi Construction Machinery (UK) Ltd (HCMUK), it was delivered in July 2016 following its appearance at the Hillhead exhibition in northern England. It is fitted with a standard 4.3m³ bucket and L5 tyres, which are suitable for quarrying and recycling. It was the first machine of its kind to be sold in the UK and is the first wheel loader in Keyway's vast Hitachi fleet. The company ordered 112 new models last year, including mini and medium, short-tail swing, and wheeled excavators, and its first Zaxis-6 medium excavator.

In addition to earthmoving, demolition, recycling and the supply of aggregates, Keyway specialises in operated and self-drive plant hire, and offers transport and waste removal services. The



family-run business, established in 1966, operates nationwide yet focuses mainly on the south-west of England.

Founder Eamonn F McGurk regards the Hitachi brand as a perfect match for his company's own philosophy. "The machines are high-quality products that are sustainable and are built to last," he says. "Their productivity and reliability are unquestionable. The environmental benefits resulting from the fuel economy of the Zaxis-5 and Zaxis-6 excavators are evident."

Following such positive experiences of Hitachi excavators over the years, and strong support and service from HCMUK, Eamonn had been following the development of Hitachi wheel loaders with interest. "I knew that Hitachi would bring out a strong product," he adds.

"The ZW310-6 is reliable and follows in the same pedigree as Hitachi Zaxis excavators. The operator has also been very impressed. It's a vast improvement in terms of fuel economy and cycle times on the previous model supplied by another manufacturer."

Proven technology

During a visit to the Hitachi factories in Japan, he saw first-hand how the latest Hitachi ZW-6 wheel loaders had been designed and built using market-leading technology. "I saw the attention to detail and levels of quality involved. It was clear that the engineering comes first and foremost. The technology is well proven before it's implemented – Hitachi doesn't use its customers as guinea pigs, its technology is already out in the field."

He was also impressed by the people behind the products: "I saw the work ethic of the employees in Japan, and the productive yet calm working environment. The people we met were proud of their products and of their contribution to the Hitachi brand."

"This resonates throughout the entire workforce, even back to HCMUK. Everyone has extensive knowledge and experience – we've always had great support from Operations Director Andy Baker and Sales Executive Louis Woodward. People make the difference."

The experience of customers such as Keyway highlights the potential for the new ZW-6 wheel loader range in Europe, building on the successful reputation of Hitachi Zaxis-6 excavators. Andy Baker agrees: "Success is building with the Hitachi wheel loaders in the UK. Like the -6 range of excavators, they're becoming renowned for performance, reliability, operator comfort and safety."

According to Mark Turnham, Mines & Quarries Manager at HCMUK, Hitachi wheel loaders are opening up new opportunities. "Customers realise they have the same quality as Hitachi excavators, and they are looking for alternatives to the traditional mainstream wheel loader suppliers, often due to reliability issues. As a result, we're receiving more enquiries from customers new to the Hitachi brand."

"It's a vast improvement in terms of fuel economy and cycle times on the previous model supplied by another manufacturer"

Eamonn F McGurk,
Owner, Keyway Group



HCMUK's Andy Baker (left) and Eamonn F McGurk



ZX300LCN-6 takes SIRO to new heights

Recycling company Leal & Soares SA, owner of the SIRO brand, has introduced a new Hitachi medium excavator into its unique production process. *Ground Control* visited the west of Portugal to see the ZX300LCN-6 in action and to investigate if it is having the desired effect on productivity.

SIRO (Sistemas Integrados de Reciclagem Orgânica – Integrated Systems for Organic Recycling) specialises in plant nutrition and protection. Certified by the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC), the company is committed to sustainability and biodiversity.

It develops compost from forest residue – mainly from pine bark – to be used in organic substrate and compost production. SIRO's broad product range includes substrates and fertilisers, as well as decorative pine bark and ornamental stones for reservoirs and lakes.

With production facilities in Mira (Portugal) and Galicia (Spain), SIRO is one of the main pine bark exporters in Europe. Its products result from traditional techniques, which have been technologically and scientifically enhanced over the past 25 years. These combine a selection of balanced ingredients with strict quality control implemented throughout the process.

"One of our secrets is knowing the exact quantity of materials used in the mixtures – as well as how to mix them – to create superb blends," says SIRO Director/Chairman Carlos Soares. "In this way, we always have homogeneous and unique products."

Quality control

The control of the raw materials and substrates is supported by the company's own laboratory, which has been certified to the RAL quality assurance system since 1997. SIRO's Research Centre supports the development of new and existing substrates by complying with the most demanding criteria.

Two types of bark are sourced from local and Spanish suppliers: pine is suitable for nurseries, gardening, landscaping, horticulture and domestic compost; and eucalyptus is mixed with manure for fertilisers. Initially the bark is screened, with the larger pieces sold for example to The Netherlands for growing orchids, while the smaller segments are retained for production.

The most visible sign of the recycling process on the 12-hectare Portuguese site is the numerous piles of materials stacked in the yard. Each sits for 12 months and a new Hitachi medium excavator has been purchased to turn the materials over three times in this period. This helps the air and moisture to circulate, so that the bacteria can thrive and enable each pile to mature.



Higher capacity

The ZX300LCN-6 was delivered in April 2016 by the Portuguese dealer Moviter with a larger than standard 3m³ bucket. This is due to the light density of the materials on site. SIRO's first new Hitachi machine is an extension to the fleet as the maintenance of the piles was previously carried out by one of its wheel loaders.

"We considered other brands, but after testing the Hitachi for a week, we were convinced that this was the best machine," explains Carlos. "We have also had a positive experience with a used Hitachi excavator, which has given us many years of reliable service."

"We selected the ZX300LCN-6, as we felt that the volume of work was suitable for this size of machine. After using a wheel loader for the same job, this was a natural and important step for us to take."

"The most important criterion was the capacity and the new machine will be more productive and fuel efficient. We are happy with our investment – it is doing exactly what it is supposed to and helping us to meet our objectives."

The Zaxis-6 excavator moves 100,000m³ of materials per week

(five eight-hour days) under the control of operator Vitor Santos. "I find that it is a very comfortable machine and easy to operate," he says. "We can go higher up the pile with the excavator than we did with the wheel loader, as it is stable and therefore feels safe. I now spend more time on top of the piles than anywhere else and this enables me to move larger volumes from one side to the other."

"We needed a machine that was fast, precise and offered excellent visibility for this job. It has already satisfied all of these requirements and without doubt the high swing speed is its most impressive feature."



To see a movie of the Hitachi ZX300LCN-6 medium excavator in Portugal, please visit www.youtube.com/user/HitachiConstruction.

To receive a digital version of *Ground Control* with new movies, please register online at www.hitachicm.eu/iground-control



Precision performance

The Hitachi ZX19-5 has been primarily designed to provide the ultimate in operator comfort and optimise performance in confined spaces. *Ground Control* pays a visit to a Polish holiday camp to find out how one company is utilising this Zaxis mini excavator.

For visitors to the Odra river valley, it is easy to see why this picturesque corner of Poland has long been an attractive destination for tourists and an inspiration to many European artists. Nestling strategically near the border with the Czech Republic, the village of Olza and the surrounding area boast an impressive heritage. It is here that the Moravian Gate mountain pass begins, long an important trade route between southern Europe and the Baltic Sea.

On the idyllic banks of the Odra, the Olza holiday camp continues to uphold the region's capacity to attract visitors. The site regularly welcomes a steady influx of holidaymakers looking to fish for carp, pike and perch, and it can accommodate up to 3,000 tourists during the high season. However, to keep up with demand, the site management team instigated a project to upgrade its provision of electricity meters.

Based in the nearby village of Skrzyszów, FHU Elkop was selected to remove the outmoded meters and install a new network of electric cables. Established in 2006 (originally as Markop) by

owner Zbigniew Jedlina, the company specialises in electric utilities projects in the region. Before the change of name and direction, Zbigniew initially used Markop to sell excavators.

Strong recommendation

Zbigniew was alerted to the potential advantages of the Hitachi ZX19-5 mini excavator by a close associate, who made a persuasive case for the machine: "I made the decision to buy Hitachi based on positive feedback from one of my acquaintances, who recommended the reliability of the ZX19-5."

The process on site begins with the disconnection of the electricity supply to the old meters and the excavation of narrow trenches to replace the cabling. Due to the maze of underground obstacles, high levels of communication are necessary between the operator and his co-workers to reduce the risk of any potential damage.

This is made easier due to the design of the ZX19-5's front window, which can be fully opened as and when required.



Safety is also upheld by the redesigned cab, which offers greater all-round visibility.

Confined space

Due to the small distance between the cottages at the camp, and the delicate nature of the extraction process, Zbigniew was keen to identify a suitable machine to help him complete the project on schedule. "One of the biggest challenges is the confined space," he says. "In addition, we don't have a layout of the existing network of pipes or cables. This means we needed a machine that could be relied upon for precision – above all else."

The investment in the ZX19-5 is a significant one in Elkop's history, as its first-ever Hitachi, and one that has not disappointed Zbigniew: "The machine is performing to a high standard, and I have been hugely satisfied with the assistance from the Hitachi dealer Tona. They really understood what I was looking for in a new excavator, and I receive fantastic support from them."

The introduction of the ZX19-5 has pleased its operator,

Andrzej Durczont, who says, "This is my first time in a Hitachi mini excavator, and I've been very impressed by how well it operates in tight spaces. The engine's low noise levels are ideal on a site like this, and this means that it is also quiet in the cab. It is even easy to communicate with people outside the machine."

"Not only is the cab extremely spacious, but the visibility is excellent, and nothing gets in the way of my view. Overall, the Hitachi mini excavator is performing really well, it is easy to manoeuvre and we can completely rely on it. I used to work with other excavators, but I'm extremely satisfied with the ZX19-5. It is a superb machine."



To see a movie of the Hitachi ZX19-5 mini excavator in Poland, please visit www.youtube.com/user/HitachiConstruction. To receive a digital version of *Ground Control* with new movies, please register online at www.hitachicm.eu/iground-control



A powerful partnership

Hitachi has long been committed to providing high-quality machinery to meet the needs of the European construction industry. At all times, it has never lost sight of the strength of its dealership network. *Ground Control* visits Belgium to see how a new ZW310-6 wheel loader is reinforcing the ties between one of the country's leading companies and Hitachi's authorised dealer, Luyckx.



Jan De Nul is one of the largest contractors in the Benelux region, specialising in dredging and marine construction activities. It is also active in the offshore industry, notably in oil, gas and renewable energy. The family-owned company has a rich history, stretching back to the early 20th Century. Since then, it has grown impressively, and now has over 7,000 employees worldwide.

The company selects its partners carefully and in 1996, Envisan joined Jan De Nul as a subsidiary, having been established only four years earlier. This move extended Jan De Nul's interests in soil remediation, environmental dredging and groundwater redevelopment. With Envisan, Jan De Nul not only enhanced its green credentials, but was also in a position to offer recycling activities to its customers.

A proud heritage

The relationship between Jan De Nul and Luyckx goes even further back to 1985 when an initial purchase of five crawler cranes was made (some of which are still in operation). Since then, Jan De Nul has consistently embraced the latest technology, moving through Hitachi's distinguished line-up of excavators, from the original Zaxis series up to the most recent -6 models.

Over the past three decades, the company has invested significantly in the full range of Hitachi machinery, including medium excavators such as the ZX85US, of which it now owns six machines. Jan De Nul is also utilising a high volume of other machines including the ZX210 (27 units), ZX350 (22 units), and a comprehensive selection of large excavators, including ZX470s (15), ZX870s (46) and EX1200-6s (11).

In addition, it is relying on 22 Hitachi Sumitomo crawler cranes, eight Zaxis wheeled excavators, and an amphibious excavator to complete various projects. More than 50% of Jan De Nul's Hitachi fleet is engaged in operations around the world, on offshore port expansions, earthmoving works and breakwater constructions.

Jan De Nul is not a company that selects its equipment lightly. Every new machine is subjected to an intensive assessment process: "We actively listen to the feedback from a number of parties, scrutinise brochures and liaise with suppliers about the best possible technology for each job site," says Pieterjan Versteede, Jan De Nul's Operations Manager for the Technical Dept. Civil and Environmental Works.

"The main advantage of owning Hitachi machinery is the invaluable support we receive from Luyckx. The Belgian construction market is extremely competitive, and we need to continually invest in reliable machines that help us to achieve maximum effectiveness.

"As a result, there are many factors we need to consider when buying our machinery. The relationship we have with Luyckx is built entirely on trust and they actively listen to our requirements. We have open lines of communication, and as a result, it is a win-win situation for both parties."

An environmental concern

The ZW310-6 represents a landmark purchase for Jan De Nul, as its first-ever Hitachi wheel loader. Delivered in October 2016, the machine was selected for material handling duties at a demanding soil treatment centre in Liège, Belgium. The facility – operated and maintained by Envisan – is located on the Ile Monsin, adjacent to the river Meuse. Its proximity to Liège's waterways makes it ideal for receiving goods and shipping.

Work began on the four-hectare site in May 2016, and over 150,000 tonnes of material will be treated on site annually. Envisan operates two similar sites in Mons and Ghent. The process begins when polluted sediment from Jan De Nul's dredging activities arrive, and are subjected to an underwater screening procedure that divides the sediment into small or large particles.

These are then dewatered and treated through a variety of techniques, most commonly biological or physicochemical separation. Biological treatment of dredged materials involves encouraging the growth of naturally occurring micro-organisms to ensure organic pollutants in the sediment are fully decomposed.

For sediment that cannot be treated biologically, the physicochemical method is applied. This sees the sediment processed several times to separate it into either strongly polluted residue, or a clean, recycled form. The former is transferred to a licensed waste-handling site, while the reclaimed deposits are shipped for reuse.

These treatment techniques are chiefly applied to materials Jan De Nul has dredged from harbours and rivers, and to any other excavated spoil. Both processes are complex, and Envisan uses a third-party laboratory to continually assess the quality of the refined sediments. The final product – around 50,000 tonnes per year – is predominantly used for general construction and the base layers required for road construction projects.



“We have really chosen well with the wheel loader. Not only is it precise, but it offers an incredible breakout force”

Christophe Warnier,
Operator, Jan De Nul

Excellent support

The ZW310-6 is at the heart of the activity on site, and mainly used for moving piles of decontaminated particulate in a central warehouse. Each pile is separated by density (up to 1.8m³), quality, and per customer. The wheel loader is also tasked with loading trucks for onward transportation, either by barge or road. Envisan routinely facilitates incoming and outgoing deliveries.

In addition, the wheel loader is being used to further divide the materials, which helps to speed up the biological separation process. A Hitachi ZX210LC-3 medium excavator is also on site for general loading activities, for example when the piles are nearing their maximum height limit.

Due to the constant flow of deliveries and departures on site, the ZW310-6 works continuously, and in confined spaces. Its precision and power have impressed Kris De Backer, Jan De Nul's Technical Inspector for Dry Equipment: “One of the biggest challenges we face on site is the tight space in which the wheel loader operates. This calls for the driver to be precise when using such a powerful machine.”

Kris is also keen to comment on the first-rate service provided by Hitachi's authorised Belgian dealer: “The main reason we chose the Hitachi wheel loader is due to the excellent support we receive from Luyckx. Quality is important to us, but the overall service is most important. Thanks to the positive contact we have with them, we benefit from invaluable support and can account for fixed costs.”

Once again, Jan De Nul's attention to detail during the machine selection process was in evidence. Three other wheel loaders were rigorously tested, but the combination of innovative technology and dealer support convinced Kris to opt for Hitachi.

The ideal machine

The ZW310-6 is part of Hitachi's new ZW-6 range of wheel loaders. Jan De Nul's decision to invest in this latest series has certainly proved popular with operator Christophe Warnier. “We have really chosen well with the wheel loader. Not only is it precise, but it offers an incredible breakout force.

“It is the perfect-sized machine for this site, and ideally suited for the material handling activities we carry out. In my opinion, the cab is particularly spacious and the visibility is excellent. I was pleasantly



surprised by the Hitachi wheel loader, and didn't expect such a high level of quality.”

Due to Jan De Nul's continuous assessment of its equipment, the decision to invest in a ZW310-6 has been a significant move. “We are currently working with 1,500 machines globally, and looking at increasingly specialist projects,” concludes Pieterjan. “Therefore, the support we receive from Luyckx is an important factor in helping us meet our business challenges, and a unique advantage of owning Hitachi machinery.”



To see a movie of the Hitachi ZW310-6 wheel loader in Belgium, please visit www.youtube.com/user/HitachiConstruction.

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For hire: quality and reliability

The signs are that Portugal is coming out of recession as its construction industry reawakens and the demand for rental machines increases. Machrent has succeeded in riding out the financial storm and has opted for a new fleet of Hitachi short-tail excavators to drive its recovery programme.

Having originated in December 2007, Machrent had to fight to stay alive through some of the worst possible financial circumstances. After surviving the crisis of 2008, the company needed a change of fortune.

This came from an unlikely source – the purchase of an aerial platform company in 2010 – which helped the company to more than double its turnover to €9 million that year. Then, the construction industry collapsed in Portugal, Machrent's sales tumbled by almost 50% in 2011-12 and it was forced to reduce its fleet from around 1.000 to 750 units.

By 2013, there was little confidence in the Portuguese market, but the company had taken the appropriate strategic measures to further downsize and considered entering new markets. This may be evidenced by the gradual 10% growth per annum that it has enjoyed since that time. Now Machrent has over 50 employees, moved its headquarters to spacious new premises two years ago, and focuses on the utilities, maintenance and renovation markets.

Strategic approach

“Our shareholders have continued to believe in us for quite some time thanks to the return on their investments,” says CEO Paulo Marques Martins. “We have gradually been conquering the market, with a series of decisions that we all have had the courage and resilience to make. These have often been countercyclical to the market and in anticipation of its needs, including the past and current renewal and diversification of our fleet of machinery.

“As we are enjoying moderate growth, the mid- to long-term market outlook appears optimistic. Therefore, we have decided to invest in new Hitachi excavators, as our customers demand high-quality products and they are the reason we exist.”

In 2016, the Portuguese Hitachi construction machinery dealer, Moviter, won a competitive tender issued by Machrent for the acquisition of 24 mini and medium excavators. This represented the largest order of its kind in the country last year, and consisted of two ZX17U-5s, nine ZX26U-5s, three ZX33U-5s, five ZX55U-5s and five ZX85USB-5s.



From left to right: Paulo Marques Martins (Machrent), Rui Faustino (Moviter) and Salvador Posser de Andrade (Machrent)

The distinctive Hitachi Zaxis-5 machines were supplied with a quick coupler and three buckets each, and painted in Machrent's corporate green colour by Moviter. "Although we only started using green in early 2016, it has already helped us to develop a strong brand image," adds Paulo.

An unbeatable combination

Moviter has been in direct contact with Machrent since its foundation. "We were approached by one of Moviter's directors prior to the tender," says Machrent shareholder Salvador Posser de Andrade. "He explained that as a supplier of Hitachi construction machinery, they were interested in a partnership with a rental company and therefore keen to offer their services in any way possible.

"The timing was right and they joined the process with other mini excavators suppliers. From the outset, Moviter was proactive in terms of its solution and how it could optimise its proposal. Along with Hitachi and Hitachi Capital, this proved to be an unbeatable

combination of dealer, manufacturer and finance company."

There was a wide range of factors involved in the decision. "We looked at the reliability associated with each brand," adds Salvador, "as well as the importance of durability and quality to our customers. Hitachi also produces larger excavators – as well as minis – and so this gives us the opportunity to expand into other product categories."

Another important factor was Moviter's Hitachi Support Chain after-sales programme. Machrent has invested heavily in the maintenance of its machines since 2009, which has enabled it to forge a competitive advantage in this field. It also offers a 24-hour, 365-day technical assistance service.

An additional element of support offered by Machrent is practical training for earthmoving machines and all the other product categories available in the fleet. This leads to CIFESP and IPAF certifications for its customers' operators, and a further value-added service not offered by the competition.

"Speed was the critical factor for the parts and service items," highlights Salvador. "We were looking for a partner with the infrastructure to deliver to the required standards over the four-year contract. This included the availability of fast-moving parts on a pay-as-we-use basis."

The dedicated project managers from Moviter and Machrent, Luís Bretão and José Machado respectively, are the main points of contact for after-sales, training, parts and maintenance. They oversee the consignment of recommended spare parts and the implementation of the required service standard – a three-colour coded status: red for 24 hours (very urgent), yellow for 48 hours (urgent) and green for one week (normal service).

Future direction

"We are selling and marketing the Hitachi fleet based on the fact that we have such new and reliable, mobile and productive excavators for hire," says Paulo. "Low fuel consumption is also something we are promoting for these machines.

"If this strategy goes well, we intend to buy more mini excavators and possibly other products in the Hitachi lineup. We expect the market to continue growing and our aim is to be in a strong position to take advantage of this forecast."

As a result of the analysis of new markets and opportunities, Machrent started operations in Mozambique in 2012 – a country where Moviter has an existing presence. "We entered the African market slowly, in a gradual and sustained way, so that we could understand it better," adds Paulo. "Today we already have teams working in Maputo (in the south) and Pemba (north) to improve our ability to respond to the needs of this country. In addition, our office in the Maputo province is only two kilometres away from Moviter's branch."

Having seen off the after-effects of global economic unrest, the collapse of the country's construction industry and its competitors in the rental market, Machrent has never lost sight of its customers. The latest investment in a fleet of Hitachi construction machinery bears testimony to this strategic goal and is already coming to fruition on the streets of the capital, Lisbon.



To see a movie of the Hitachi ZX26U-5 and the ZX85USB-5 in Portugal, please visit www.youtube.com/user/HitachiConstruction. To receive a digital version of *Ground Control* with new movies, please register online at www.hitachicm.eu/iground-control



Contractor: Resolveparalelo – Construção Civil, Lda.

Machine: Hitachi ZX26U-5

Operator: João Paulo

Experience: 28 years

Job: to excavate and replace materials to create a wider pavement in a small side street

Location: Rua das Chagas, Lisbon, close to Praça Luis de Camões

Impressions: “This is a strong and fast machine for its size. It is good to work with in every respect.”

Best feature: “The short-tail swing is perfect for working in urban areas. The excellent visibility is also important for this site in particular.”





Contractor: Neto Santos & Lopes, Lda.

Machine: Hitachi ZX85USB-5

Operator: João Pedro Baptista

Experience: 20 years

Job: to excavate and replace materials to create a wider pavement at the side of 5km of main road

Location: Avenida da República, Lisbon

Impressions: "This is a precise and stable machine, which works quickly and therefore productively in confined spaces."

Best feature: "The cab is comfortable and spacious, and it offers a high level of visibility from the operator's seat."





Corridors of Europe

The highways of Europe are often defined as its lifeblood. Constructing and maintaining these essential road networks are high on the agenda of many European nations, and an important factor in enhancing transport links across the continent. A new Hitachi ZX350LC-6 excavator is supporting one project in Poland to bridge a vital gap in this chain.

Europe's E-road network is a truly colossal system. It is so comprehensive that it even extends into central Asia, and Kyrgyzstan in particular. The A1 'autostrada' highway through central Poland forms an important part of route E75, which begins in Norway and ends 5,600km (3,500 miles) later on the island of Crete. Due to its location, this is a crucial road that links the northernmost part of Europe to the Mediterranean Sea.

Beginning in the Polish city of Gdańsk on the Baltic Sea, the A1 concludes 565km (350 miles) later in the village of Gorzyczki, on the border with the Czech Republic. However, before motorists can fully utilise this fast-flowing highway, one final piece of the jigsaw needs to be slotted into place. Preparations are under way just north of Katowice to ensure a 50km stretch of the road is completed on schedule.

Initial work began in October 2015, and the A1 highway is expected to be finished by June 2018. Construction company JawTrans is overseeing the development, which is taking place between Częstochowa and Pyrzowice. Founded in July 2001 by – a then 19-year-old – owner Krzysztof Jawor, JawTrans specialises in aggregates, construction, groundworks and demolition projects.

The contractor now employs over 100 members of staff, and utilises more than 30 units of construction equipment. It is operating the site on behalf of Austrian-based technology group Strabag SE, a company that has been highly involved in construction and civil engineering projects around Europe in recent decades. Its regional subsidiary – Strabag Sp. z o. o. – has had an active presence in Poland since 1987.

“I find the total cost of ownership on the Hitachi machines to be excellent”

Krzysztof Jawor,
Owner, JawTrans



“We have a very positive relationship with Tona,” says Krzysztof. “I have had dealings with them for around seven years, and they are a great contact to have. I find the total cost of ownership on the Hitachi machines to be excellent. I discussed this aspect with Tona in great detail before the purchase of the ZX350LC-6 and reached a satisfactory agreement with them.”

Krzysztof was confident that selecting Hitachi once more would be the ideal choice for the project: “I have long experience in operating excavators. My initial impressions of the ZX350LC-6 were that it moved quickly and was highly responsive. One of our biggest challenges is maintaining high levels of productivity. Due to the long line of trucks present on site, it is crucial that we avoid any downtime.”

Operator friendly

The final decision has been received positively by operator Damian Mucha, who has exacting standards when it comes to excavators. “I have previous experience operating the ZX250LC-3, so I know how satisfying Hitachi machines are to work with,” he says. “For me, its excavators are manufactured to a high standard, offer perfect manoeuvrability and provide an incredible view from the cab.”

Damian also notes further benefits: “There are high levels of comfort inside the ZX350LC-6, the music system sounds fantastic, and I have easy access to the controls. The attachment has a light and easy movement, and responds rapidly and precisely. However, the number one feature is the power it provides – this allows me to finish my work quickly and smoothly, which is crucial.”

To further optimise the performance of its new addition to the fleet, JawTrans asked Tona to cover the ZX350LC-6 with an extended warranty provision. This is part of the Hitachi Extended Life Program (HELP) and includes service and maintenance activities. The company also monitors the machine’s performance via Global e-Service.

Above all, Krzysztof is clear on the main advantage of Hitachi ownership: “In my opinion, the best feature is the low fuel consumption. I’ve been incredibly satisfied with the performance of the older machines, and they still provide high levels of uptime. We also receive excellent after-sales and maintenance support from Tona.”

Fast and responsive

On the demanding site, the ZX350LC-6 was delivered in September 2016 and immediately put to effective use. The Hitachi medium excavator is being utilised for earthmoving activities, chiefly to level the surrounding hillside and clear a path for the next stage of the road construction process. The machine is also loading a continuous stream of trucks that remove any surplus material. Over 3,500m³ of soil is taken from the site each day.

JawTrans has bought Hitachi machines in the past, including a ZX250LC-3 excavator (delivered March 2011) and a ZX210W-3 wheeled excavator (delivered December 2012). The ZX250LC-3 was still in operation at the time of *Ground Control*’s visit. JawTrans has long been supported by Hitachi’s authorised local dealer, Tona, whose input helped in the decision to invest in Hitachi’s new Zaxis-6 series.



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MinERALiX puts ZW310-6 to the test

Last summer, MinERALiX decided to buy a large-capacity wheel loader for one of its waste recycling facilities in southern Germany. To help it decide on the best model, it held a comparison test between five different brands. *Ground Control* visited the site a few months later to meet the winning machine.



Founded in 2009, MinERALiX is based in Gaggenau, a town located within the district of Rastatt, in Baden-Württemberg. The company offers a wide range of services for the removal and supply of materials to construction and industrial companies in south Germany.

An important factor in the company's activities is the operation of its own installations and storage areas in the Karlsruhe and Rastatt areas. Thanks to these invaluable facilities, materials can be moved efficiently for processing and storage until they need to be supplied for construction projects.

One of the company's strategically placed sites is a recycling and demolition waste facility located to the west of Weingarten (Baden). In addition to the recycling operation, it also acts as a municipal green waste collection point for the area.

The demolition, road construction and groundworks waste operation is mainly utilised by small to mid-sized contractors within a 30km radius of the site. They see the value of either disposing of their demolished materials in a responsible way or sourcing recycled aggregates for their projects.

Once the waste has been received, it is loaded for processing into crushing and screening equipment. Any metal is removed automatically while the concrete, stone, bricks and other materials are processed into three different sizes: 0/32 for smaller general construction sites; 0/45 for road construction and building sites; and >45 for muddy and difficult working conditions. Other sand- and soil-based products are reclaimed from the green waste and supplied for landscaping projects.

"This site is relatively old and was previously a waste disposal site for the municipality of Weingarten when MinERALiX took it

"It's a really harsh environment and the machine has to move, often fully loaded with blocks of concrete, up and downhill on to different levels"

Thorsten Fredrich,
Site Manager, MinERALiX



over 13 years ago,” says Site Manager Thorsten Fredrich. “I first came to work here seven years ago and my tasks were to develop the site’s infrastructure and operations. When these were in place, it was time to invest in new equipment.”

In 2011, MinERALiX bought a medium Hitachi wheel loader from Germany’s authorised dealer, Kiesel. The ZW220 was commissioned to maintain the various stockpiles around the compact site and load the steady stream of trucks that visit the facility each day.

High-quality and durable

“The ZW220 did a challenging job here, where the conditions are tough all-year round,” explains Thorsten. “It’s a really harsh environment and the machine has to move, often fully loaded with blocks of concrete, up and downhill on to different levels.

“That’s why the ZW220 is such a high-quality and durable product – it’s absolutely amazing and has never let us down. The reliability of the machine has been of great benefit to our business.”

It has accumulated almost 9,000 hours over the past five years and is being relocated to a new recycling operation in nearby Mannheim. “We felt that our trusted ZW220 would be more suited to the new facility at this stage of its life cycle,” adds Thorsten. “The workload there is unknown and it will be the perfect tool as the site emerges and develops.



“It’s very stable and performs well when carrying materials, even when travelling up and down the steep slopes on this site”

Milanko Milivojević,
Operator, MinERALiX

“In addition, a new larger capacity machine is required here to meet our requirements. With a bigger bucket, our aim is to reduce the distance travelled around the site by the wheel loader, and a larger engine with more power would be better suited to travelling up and down our undulating landscape.”

To ensure that MinERALiX would invest in the product best suited to its specific needs, the company decided to hold a test for five different brands of wheel loader, including the Hitachi ZW310-6. In the summer of 2016, each machine was tested for three to four days by the regular operators under normal operating conditions.

“It was important to test the machines at our facility and carry out all of our regular tasks,” adds Thorsten. “By listing all of the plus and minus points for each model, we were able to quickly establish the decision criteria – such as quality, service and price – and ultimately the machine that we really needed.

“The overall conclusion from the operators was that no other



machine was better than the Hitachi ZW310-6. They described it as more comfortable and powerful than the other brands.

“As an example, the hydraulic system is vital for us when it comes to dumping our wet and ‘sticky’ materials out of the bucket. For the majority of the models, the soil stuck to the base and sides of the bucket, but the speed of the Hitachi hydraulic system meant that it didn’t have this issue.”

MinERALiX clearly values its employees’ opinions when it comes to important business decisions. “Our operators are excellent,” continues Thorsten. “They have a hard job, and we want them to look forward to their work and enjoy operating our machinery. They have to be content.”

A matter of service

Service was also an important consideration for the company and it has enjoyed a positive experience with Kiesel and the Hitachi ZW220 since 2011. “It was also a matter of service,”



Thorsten confirms. “We want peace of mind and to know that if we do have a problem, then we can call Kiesel and they will take care of any issues – including the supply of a replacement machine if it was ever required.

“I’ve also been aware of Kiesel’s high service standards since I started my career 18 years ago. We have worked together in some capacity since then and in my experience Kiesel is a completely reliable partner. If there’s ever a problem, they solve it and really take care of their customer’s needs.”

Operator Milanko Milivojević has 20 years’ experience and played a leading role in the wheel loader test. “The ZW220 is an excellent machine and I was very happy to work with it since joining the company in 2014,” he explains. “It is easy to drive and has never had any breakdowns.”

He also passed on his positive feedback about the ZW310-6 after the test: “There was only one other machine that came close to the Hitachi. The others weren’t even considered due to their

capacities and hydraulic systems. The Hitachi was very comfortable and powerful, as well as the best to drive.

“The joystick steering is easy to use and allows for a smooth operation. It’s very stable and performs well when carrying materials, even when travelling up and down the steep slopes on this site. It also feels safe and stable when loading trucks with excellent visibility.

“It’s quieter and offers a more comfortable working environment in the cab. The rear visibility is also better than the other machines and the convenient access points mean that it is easy to check the fuel and lubricant levels.”

MinERALIX’s experience confirms the importance of a high-quality product, combined with a high-quality service. “I would have no hesitation in recommending both Hitachi and Kiesel,” concludes Thorsten. “The experience of working with them has been entirely positive and I am very happy to have their personnel at our disposal, so that I can concentrate on my own job.”



A quality package

Richard Schulz Tiefbau GmbH has invested in two new Hitachi medium excavators to add to its fleet of construction machinery. *Ground Control* visits one of the machines at work on the outskirts of Nuremberg in Germany to discover that it's not just the quality of the machine that the contractor relies on.

With its head office in Neuburg an der Donau in Bavaria, Richard Schulz Tiefbau GmbH is steeped in history. Founded in 1898 in Poland, the company relocated to Germany in 1921 and has expanded significantly over the decades, building a reputation for reliability and performance. Today, it has 12 branches across southern Germany and employs approximately 1,200 people.

Its current range of activities includes road construction, earthmoving, civil engineering and utilities – and it is the latter that is employing the company's new Hitachi ZX300LCN-6 excavator on a rural site near its Buttenheim branch.

The machine is demonstrating its versatility by lifting pipes off delivery trucks and digging trenches for the 1,000m of sewage and water pipelines. Once in place, the pipes are covered up in

readiness for the next stage of the house-building project.

Richard Schulz Tiefbau is preparing the way for 37 new housing sites on behalf of the local authority in the metropolitan area of Nuremberg. It has also been contracted to construct the road that will go through the centre of the development.

Superior hydraulic system

The company bought its first Hitachi, a ZX170W-3 wheeled excavator, in 2012. "We have been 'testing' this machine over the years and there have been no problems – it has passed with distinction," says Richard Schulz Tiefbau's Workshop Manager, Markus Winkler.

This impressive level of performance led to Hitachi's inclusion in a back-to-back test of four different brands of 20-tonne short-tail



“As far as the Hitachi excavators are concerned, they are completely reliable and I believe that the price/quality ratio is excellent”

Markus Winkler,
Workshop Manager,
Richard Schulz Tiefbau GmbH



“I’ve been particularly impressed by the low fuel consumption – this is the best machine that I’ve operated in the past 20 years!”

Andreas Maul,
Operator, Richard Schulz Tiefbau GmbH



swing models. “We rented the machines so there was no bias and assessed the opinions of our operators,” adds Markus. “They liked the precision of the Hitachi hydraulic system and that led to the purchase of two new Zaxis machines.”

A ZX225USLC-5 and ZX300LCN-6 were ordered from and delivered by the German authorised Hitachi dealer, Kiesel, in July 2016. Both machines are covered by full-service contracts and this is indicative of the emphasis placed on dealer support by Richard Schulz Tiefbau.

Quality of service

“Our mentality is to test the quality of the supplier as well as the machine,” adds Markus. “So, it’s not an overnight decision – the whole package has to be right. As far as the Hitachi excavators are concerned, they are completely reliable and I believe that the price/quality ratio is excellent.



“Our main point of contact is based at the local Kiesel branch at Himmelkron. They are always quick to help and I am very happy with the quality of service. We have a close working relationship, which means that we can call them at any time.”

Andreas Maul, an operator with more than two decades’ experience, is enthusiastic about the addition of this new ZX300LCN-6 to the fleet: “It’s a top machine! I mainly use it for earthmoving jobs and loading trucks, although sometimes I change the bucket for an attachment to spread chalk.

“I like the ergonomic design of the operating controls and it is really precise for removing top soil. The power and capacity are strong points, and it is also fast and easy to operate. The seat is very comfortable and there is ample legroom. I’ve been particularly impressed by the low fuel consumption – this is the best machine that I’ve operated in the past 20 years!”



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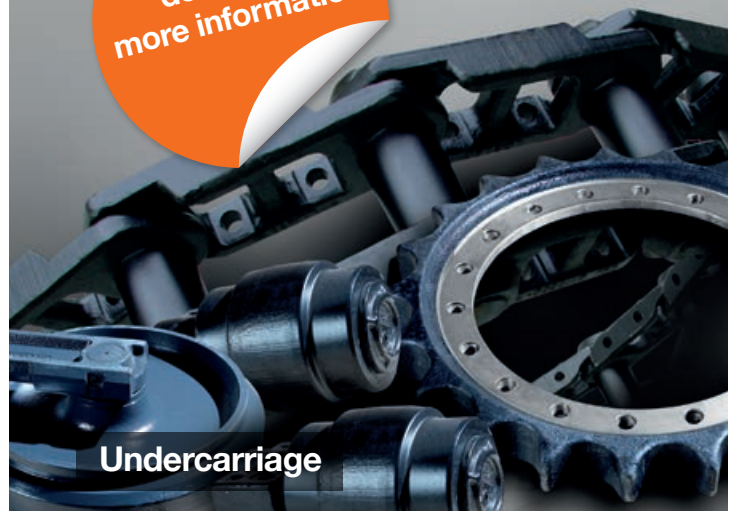


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