

The magazine of Hitachi Construction Machinery (Europe) NV

GC

GROUND CONTROL

Issue 26 Autumn 2018 www.hitachicm.eu

HITACHI

Reliable solutions



Trusted partners

- Support Chain in Finland
- New developments at HCME factories
- Premium Used model makes its debut

GC

GROUND CONTROL

Issue 26 Autumn 2018 www.hitachicm.eu

CONTENTS

04 News

The new ZX210X-6 excavator, and dealer news from across Europe and beyond.

12 Factories for the future

Recent changes to the production process at the Amsterdam and Oosterhout factories are enhancing safety for employees and improving quality for customers.

16 Peace of mind with Premium Used

A demolition contractor opts for a Hitachi Premium Used excavator, the first of its kind in The Netherlands.

18 A relationship based on trust

Bulgarian quarry operator Persenk Invest explains why Hitachi is its first choice of construction equipment.

24 Saving time and money

The first Zaxis-6 super long front excavator in The Netherlands is bringing numerous benefits to Küper Transport.

26 Making a BIG difference

Exploring the impact of the Support Chain after-sales programme on the business of a contractor in Finland.

30 Making children's dreams come true

Ten ZX17U-5 minis are a popular attraction at a theme park in Germany, giving children the chance to experience a real Hitachi excavator.

34 An excellent match

Subcontractor Arco de Visser explains why he's stayed loyal to Hitachi for 15 years.



Hitachi Construction Machinery (Europe) NV, Siciliëweg 5, 1045 AT Amsterdam, The Netherlands
Telephone: +31 (0)20 44 76 700
E-mail/website: info@hitachicm.eu/www.hitachicm.eu
Editor: Hitachi Construction Machinery (Europe) NV: Ghislaine Jonker
Editorial and design: Red International Communication, www.redmarketingagency.com
Photography: Glenn Blackburn, www.glennblackburn.co.uk
Translation: UvA Talen, www.uvatalen.nl
Coordination, printing and circulation: Holzer Druck und Medien Druckerei und Zeitungsverlag GmbH + Co.KG, www.druckerei-holzer.de
Please note that images may include modifications/attachments, which were provided by the local dealer.

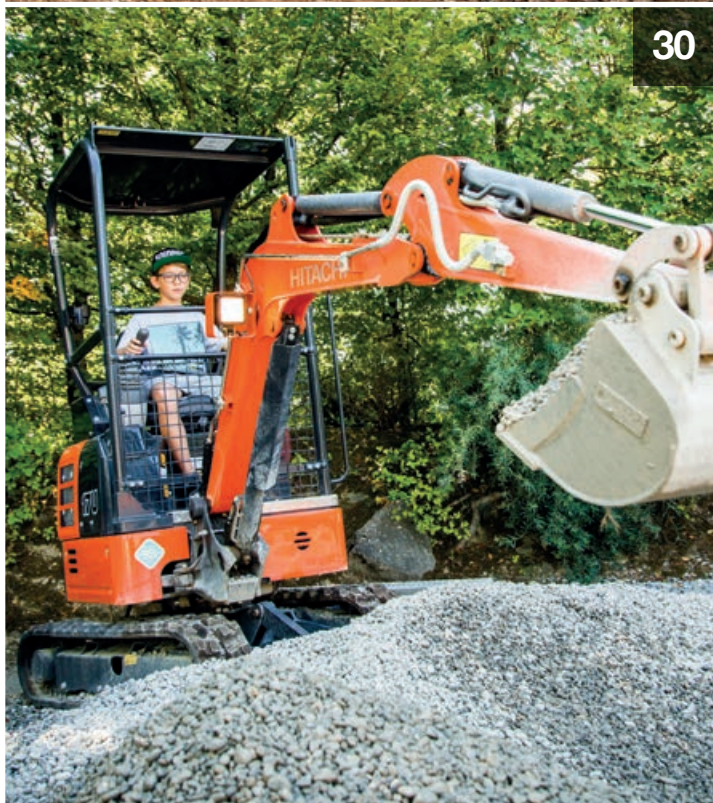
© Hitachi Construction Machinery (Europe) NV (HCME). All rights reserved. Reproduction in whole or in part is forbidden except with the written permission of HCME. While every effort is made to ensure the accuracy of information published in *Ground Control*, HCME is not responsible for inaccuracies or omissions. All views expressed are not necessarily those of HCME. The manufacturer is not responsible for non-compliance to industry-standard health and safety measures by third parties, nor for any damage or loss resulting from anyone's reliance on editorial and photography in *Ground Control*.



24



30



12



26



16

NEWS



Tonny Engels and Robert de Jong at the equipment handover

Investing in technical education for the future

Students at Hanze College in Oosterhout, The Netherlands, are working with a range of machinery, tools and materials donated by locally based Hitachi Construction Machinery (Europe) NV (HCME). The donation is just one of the ways in which HCME supports technical education at the college, as an active member of its foundation, *Vrienden van het Hanze College* (Friends of Hanze College).

Among the items presented to its technical department are a column drill with several new drill bits, welding equipment, a drying cabinet for welding electrodes and steel profiles. These items will be used for classes relating to production, installation and energy.

Two diesel engines (on stands) were also donated, and will be used for classes on mobility and transport. All of the equipment and components were transported free of charge from HCME's manufacturing and storage facility in Oosterhout to the college by Martens Transport.

Tonny Engels (Production and Procurement) handed over the equipment on behalf of HCME to Robert de Jong from the college's technical department, who said: "We are delighted with the donation and would like to thank Tonny, HCME and Martens Transport for this injection of 'raw materials' for technical education!"

A first for HCME's Amsterdam factory

The first special application machine to be assembled at the Hitachi Construction Machinery (Europe) NV (HCME) factory in Amsterdam has been delivered to a construction company in France. The ZX300-6 straight boom front excavator has a significantly higher working range over a standard machine, which makes it ideal for infrastructure and low-level demolition tasks.

Production of special application machines, which are factory-modified for specific industry solutions – such as demolition, forestry or material handling – moved from Oosterhout in the south of The Netherlands as part of a factory restructure in 2017. The aim of this move was to enhance efficiency in response to growing demand.

Toru Nabeshima, Manager of the HCME Special Application department, says: "Moving the production of the special application machines to Amsterdam has increased efficiency in several ways. It means that the base machine no longer has to be transported from Amsterdam to Oosterhout before it is modified, for example. Our new facility also has more space for testing the latest models."

The HCME factory in Oosterhout now focuses entirely on mini and compact excavators, ranging from one to eight tonnes. Production of these models is expected to increase significantly due to the factory restructure.



The straight boom excavator in Amsterdam before delivery

Hitachi looks to the future with the **ZX210X-6**



Hitachi has introduced its first excavator with machine control, the ZX210X-6, to the European market. This much-anticipated model will have a huge impact on construction and civil engineering projects, increasing efficiency considerably (by an estimated 30-50%), enhancing safety and supporting the skills of less experienced operators.

Developed at the Tsuchiura Works facility in Japan, the ZX210X-6 ICT hydraulic excavator incorporates the latest technological advancements from Hitachi Construction Machinery Co., Ltd. (HCM). It is the result of the cooperation between teams in the Design Centre, Research and Development Department, and the Control System Division (responsible for software and ICT equipment).

Semi-automatic operation

Tsuyoshi Nakamura, HCM General Manager, Design Centre (Advanced Products) was involved in the development of the machine: "HCM started working on this excavator in 2015 in response to the demand for machines that could work more safely and with higher levels of efficiency.

"In addition, looking to the future, in some countries there will be a decline in the number of professional operators due to an ageing population. This means there will be a growing need for machines that are easy to operate."

The development of semi-automatic machines represents a significant step forward for the construction industry. Hitachi has developed its machine in cooperation with one of the global leaders of machine guidance devices, Trimble.

Smooth and precise

"The front of the ZX210X-6 is controlled semi-automatically and can follow 3D or 2D design data," explains Mr Nakamura. "The data – or plan of the site – is sent to the excavator via the internet or

downloaded via USB. This is displayed on a 10.1-inch touchscreen in the cab, which can be easily operated like a smartphone."

The semi-automatic operation enables the excavator to work smoothly and precisely, without over-digging. The edge of the bucket is controlled, and the angle maintained, to ensure slopes or trenches are finished faster and in fewer movements.

Safety and efficiency

The high accuracy of the ZX210X-6 reduces the amount of repetitive work on a construction project. Some staking is required for measuring on site when using the 2D system, whereas this is significantly reduced using 3D. This means fewer people are required on site, enhancing safety and reducing personnel costs. The overall process is more efficient, with less time needed to complete projects, which also means lower running costs and fewer emissions.

Accuracy sets the ZX210X-6 apart from other machine control excavators currently available on the European market. "Its tolerance for slope finishing has proven it to be more accurate than our competitors' machines," says Mr Nakamura.

Another distinctive aspect is the ZX210X-6's control system, which has been developed using unique HCM technology and includes an electro-magnetic valve unit. "It works in perfect harmony with the machine's hydraulic system, which has already proved to be successful in our standard models."

Demand for the ZX210X-6 already exists in the European construction market and is set to continue, believes Mr Nakamura: "ICT machines are already used 50% of the time in the Nordic countries, and around 20% of the time in the UK and Germany, for example, but this will increase to 30 or 40% in five years. For civil engineering projects, 50 to 80% of machines used will be ICT models – they have a long future ahead of them."



HCME redesigns demonstration area

Hitachi Construction Machinery (Europe) NV (HCME) has redesigned the demonstration area at its headquarters in Amsterdam to showcase a wider variety of machines in a more attractive and technologically advanced environment. It was officially opened on 27 September 2018 to coincide with the introduction of the ZX210X-6 ICT hydraulic excavator with machine control to the European market.

The area has been extended by ten metres either side to give an additional 1,500m² of space at the front of the building and enhance the experience of customers visiting HCME. From the comfort of their seat in the auditorium, visitors will be able to hear the operator in the cab during product demonstrations and see exactly what they are doing, thanks to the installation of a new microphone and camera system.

Work on the expanded area took six months to prepare and was completed within six weeks. The project was led by Frank van Neste, the Demonstrator for the Product Management and Engineering department at HCME, with support from HCME General Manager Product Management and Engineering Burkhard Janssen and Product Manager Wilbert Blom.

“The original demonstration area was built in 2002 and it was only possible to show four or five machines,” says Frank. “We wanted to make it more attractive to visitors, and to update it with new technology. It was ready for the launch of the ZX210X-6, so that we could better demonstrate Hitachi’s ICT construction solutions.”

Reducing fuel costs in Finland

Finnish construction company Hervannan Kaivin Oy relies on its fleet of Hitachi excavators for a wide range of projects. Working primarily within the region of Pirkanmaa, the Tampere-based contractor’s services cover residential building, excavation and groundworks, road construction and civil engineering, landscaping and drainage projects.

Managing Director Matti Grönfors has been doing business with authorised Hitachi dealer Rotator for 30 years. His company’s fleet currently includes six Hitachi models: a ZX180W wheeled excavator; ZX225USRLC, ZX350-3 and ZX500 crawler excavators; and two new machines – the ZX300LC-6 and ZX350LC-6.

The fuel economy of the Zaxis-6 machines has been a pleasant surprise to Grönfors and is proving to be advantageous. “The new ZX300LC-6 consumes only half as much fuel as its predecessor, the ZX280LC-3. This is a big difference, and important for an entrepreneur.”

He is also satisfied with Hitachi’s remote monitoring system, Global e-Service. “There’s a connection from the machine to Hitachi, which sends alerts if something is wrong – and it really works,” he explains. “We receive a message if there is an issue with one of our machines and a part needs to be replaced. Rotator then replaces the part and we avoid any unnecessary downtime.”



In safe hands

Earlier this year, Hitachi Construction Machinery (Europe) NV (HCME) announced a change in leadership at its subsidiary, Hitachi Construction Machinery (UK) Ltd (HCMUK), due to the retirement of John Jones. His successor, David Roberts, took on the role of CEO on 1 April, with more than 25 years' experience in the construction and agriculture markets. *Ground Control* spoke to David about his experiences in the job so far and asked him about the current situation in the British market.

What have been your first impressions of working at HCMUK?

I have received a very warm welcome from all of the people I've met. They have a passion for the product and brand, and there is a strong "Kenkijin Spirit". Everyone is customer-focused and shares the same goals.

What have been your main priorities?

Market demand is high and HCMUK is in a strong position, so the main priority has been "business as usual", allowing everyone to get on with daily business.

Another priority is to gain a thorough understanding of the business, so I can support the team and add value. I have a sales and marketing background, and I have always felt that to believe in the brand you need to understand the products and, more importantly, the customers. Joining Hitachi has introduced me to some new market sectors, such as quarrying and mining, and so getting to grips with these is also a priority for me.

HCMUK already has solid foundations, with a strong team and product line-up in place, and we're delivering a high-quality service. So it's more a case of aiming to optimise our business by working smarter, but it's a matter of tweaking rather than fundamentally changing anything.

What have you enjoyed most about your role so far?

I've really enjoyed the learning process, which has brought me out of my comfort zone at times. I've had great support in getting up to speed. I've also appreciated meeting many new colleagues and customers, and finding out why they love Hitachi.

What do you see as the main trends in the current construction market?

Firstly, ICT is an important and rapidly growing trend – eg in terms of machine control – and Hitachi is, as you would expect, already advancing with this technology. The key benefits include efficiency and precision, resulting in leaner cost management.

Secondly, fleet management, such as Hitachi's Global e-Service system. Hitachi is at the forefront of this technology and an increasing number of customers are utilising it to optimise their machines. I believe that Hitachi is ahead of the game in terms of satisfying customer needs in the market.

We've got the most reliable equipment, but you cannot overstate the importance of a good maintenance regime to get the best from your machine – and Hitachi is very proactive with its product



David Roberts, CEO of HCMUK

support programme. We see an increasing number of our customers signing up to service contracts, as well as utilising Hitachi's ConSite solutions. When combined with our ability to react swiftly to any on-site problems, this delivers maximum availability and the lowest cost of ownership, which are key drivers for all of our customers.

What feedback have you had from your existing Hitachi customers?

There is clearly a passion for the product and strong brand loyalty in the UK. Many customers buy Hitachi time after time, with some buying and using Hitachi machines for over 30 years now. When I ask why, they tell me that they're incredibly reliable, their operators are happy, and we provide them with good service because they know and like our people. So, we have an excellent product and the right people – a strong formula for success.

What is your message to Hitachi customers in the UK and Ireland?

We value your business. You're in safe hands with people who you have dealt with for a long time, so you can continue to trust and rely on Hitachi. The business isn't run just by me, but by the entire team, and we will all continue to work hard for you.



Maximum availability

Since its launch in 2007, 35 Hitachi EX8000-6 excavators have been delivered to various parts of the world, from the extreme cold of Arctic Canada to the sun-scorched ground of Western Australia. Equipped with a bucket over 40m³ in size, this 800-tonne machine is built on the design philosophy of Hitachi Global Mining, and is renowned for its exceptional performance.

It lives up to expectations at Stanwell's Meandu Mine in Queensland, Australia, where the world's first backhoe EX8000-6 was introduced in September 2013. "With the proper service and maintenance strategy, the EX8000-6 is consistently achieving over 93% availability," says Ross Klibbe, the mine's Hitachi Customer Support Representative.

Local modifications and upgrades for Meandu's specific operating conditions have been carefully trialled and applied by Klibbe's support team. With their efforts, Meandu's EX8000-6 continues to operate for more than 21 hours per day with an engine load factor averaging 75%.

Col Bartram, a Hitachi site technician at Meandu, said, "The machine is already reliable, we just fine-tune parts to better suit our operating conditions." The excavator underwent a major overhaul when it hit 32,000 hours of operation in June, which was essential for the team to maintain such high levels of operating availability.

Rock-solid durability

Located near the Appalachian Mountains and the George Washington National Forest in Virginia, Rich Patch Quarry is more picturesque than a typical limestone quarry. Owned by Boxley Materials Company, it produces materials for use in concrete, asphalt and road construction with the help of a ZX350LC-6 medium excavator.

It is the primary workhorse on site, breaking down huge rocks for nine months of the year before they are sent to the crusher. In the winter, it is used for stripping and removing overburden. As the machine is equipped with a quick coupler, operators can easily switch from the breaker to a bucket.

Boxley Materials has owned and operated Hitachi equipment since 1996 and continues to add to its fleet. Superintendent Steve Robertson says: "The reason we continue to use Hitachi machinery is that the excavators are cost-effective. The ZX350LC-6 has been fuel efficient, smooth to operate and the service has been great."

Even the local wildlife seems to be a fan of the latest Hitachi excavator at the quarry. "We're in bear country and we found a footprint on the Hitachi where a bear crawled up on it!" says Steve. "I guess he was curious and wanted to check it out."





Ultimate reliability and support

One of the largest mining companies in Egypt has taken delivery of two EX1200-6 ultra-large excavators. Supplied last December by the local Hitachi dealer, Orascom Trading, they are used primarily for the extraction of phosphate at the Etfu-El Mahameed site.

Founded in 1960, and based in Aswan, El Nasr Mining Company produces approximately eight million tonnes of phosphate per year. The company selected the two Hitachi excavators because of their reliability and the support provided by Orascom Trading.

Eng. Hamed, General Manager of Mining Machine Maintenance, says: "The machine specifications were in line with our requirements. The after-sales service and support that we can expect from Orascom give us confidence that we selected the right brand."

Head of Excavators and Mining Machine Maintenance Sector Eng. Mohamed Ibrahim added: "We export a large quantity of products throughout the world and in order to meet the demands of our customers, we must ensure that the machines we use have the maximum amount of uptime."

Hitachi at Mining Indaba

The most influential stakeholders in African mining gathered together in Cape Town in February for the annual Mining Indaba exhibition. Hitachi had a significant presence at the event, which was attended by representatives of global mining and exploration companies, international investors, national governments, mining services providers, and engineering and research services, among others.

Several Hitachi group companies, including Hitachi, Ltd and Bradken, were exhibiting at the event. Hitachi Construction Machinery Co., Ltd. was represented by several subsidiaries, including HCME, HMEC and HCSA. The stand was shared with Wenco, due to the high demand for fleet management systems.

Also in attendance were the authorised Hitachi dealers for the African market, Moviter and DEM Group. They benefitted from the Hitachi presence and received numerous enquiries during the exhibition.

HCME's Technical Sales Manager Mining & Quarrying, Wayne Partridge, says: "It's important for us to exhibit at Mining Indaba, and to be represented by our sales companies responsible for the African mining market. The inclusion of Wenco is vital as it brings current and potential customers into contact with our Hitachi dealers."



Wenco and Hitachi representatives at Mining Indaba



Powerful machine for Danish port

A Hitachi ZX890LCR-6 is working on the expansion of the port of Frederikshavn in Denmark. The large excavator is owned by VG Entreprenør, which specialises in marine construction and coastal protection. The company, established in 2001, has 45 employees and is now part of the Aarsleff Group.

In Frederikshavn, VG Entreprenør is responsible for the stonework involved in the development of the project. The expanded port areas behind the new piers will be filled with 950,000m³ of sand. The first phase of the work involves removing 1,500m of the old stone pier, and then sorting and recycling the demolished materials.

The ZX890LCR-6 is one of eight Hitachi excavators in VG Entreprenør's fleet. Many are custom-built by the local Hitachi dealer for Denmark to handle heavy stone in coastal areas. This particular model has an extended arm and boom, and an additional counterweight. With its 22m reach, it is used to lift stone lying in deep water at the port, which is being expanded by 160,000m².

Operator Jørgen T Andersen says: "This task requires a precise hydraulic system with plenty of power. The machine is easy to operate, as it has the stability to handle all materials in perfect balance. Before delivery, it was given a special coating to protect it against saltwater. Inside the cab, I enjoy many comfortable features – and find that the level of noise is surprisingly low."

Reducing emissions in Milan

A Hitachi ZX170W-6 wheeled excavator demonstrated its versatility on a project near the Meazza (San Siro) football stadium in Milan. It was used by RM Scavi, a company in Zinasco (PV), which was commissioned by Tagliabue Spa to lay a network of pre-insulated pipes for a district heating system.

The pipes were 710mm in diameter and the track was approximately 1,000m long. The final part of the project was to connect two lines of pre-existing pipelines, which lay on opposite sides of the stadium.

These would then be linked to the feeder, with the main pipe connected directly to a waste-to-energy plant. The heating system will reduce carbon dioxide emissions by 250,000 tonnes per year and provide significant economic benefits for residents.

The stability, power and strong lifting capacity of the ZX170W-6 were highlighted by RM Scavi as being particularly advantageous for this project. The power boost function provides increased capacity compared to previous versions, which increases the digging capabilities and lifting power of the wheeled excavator.





Increasing efficiency

Three Hitachi ZX350LC-6 medium excavators are proving vital to the activities of Kopalnie Dolomitu SA, based in Sandomierz, south-eastern Poland. The company extracts limestone and dolomite from four quarries in the area, and is one of the largest suppliers of aggregates in the country. The materials are widely used in road construction, as well as residential and industrial construction projects.

The company bought its first Hitachi excavator in July 2016 from authorised Hitachi dealer, Kiesel Poland. Since then, it has ordered a further two ZX350LC-6s to significantly contribute to increasing efficiency at its quarry sites and maintain the high quality of aggregates.

The latest model was delivered in May 2018 and is fitted with a central lubrication system, full chassis guards and a protective grille for the cab to enhance operator safety. It was also supplied with a long-term service contract, supported by the Kiesel Poland team in Piekary Śląskie.

Nasta's interactive display

An impressive range of Hitachi construction equipment was on display at Vei og Anlegg in Norway, which attracted 22,200 visitors in May. The official Hitachi dealer in Norway, Nasta AS, exhibited seven Zaxis-6 medium crawler excavators, three wheeled excavators, six Zaxis-5 mini excavators, and eight ZW-6 wheel loaders at the five-day event.



In addition, several specially modified machines were presented to visitors, including an electric ZX160-6, a ZX300-6 that had been rebuilt to enable easy access for wheelchair users, and a ZX350-6 with an extended undercarriage.

The theme of the 2,600m² stand was "Nasta – where everyone is welcome". A total of 70 Nasta personnel were in attendance, from sales and after-sales, as well as finance and rental departments.

Marketing Manager Jannike Hansen commented on the success of the event, which is held in Oslo every three years: "People were attracted to our stand by the special machines, many competitions and the new webshop. The Norwegian construction market is doing exceptionally well, with a big focus on electric machinery, and Nasta is one of the main players in the market."



Factories for the future

Recent renovations and developments at the factories in Amsterdam and Oosterhout have enhanced efficiency, and further strengthened HCME's commitments to safety and quality. The changes at both locations bring numerous benefits to employees, as well its authorised dealer network and Hitachi owners throughout Europe.



Employees develop their own ideas in the Kaizen Area

Since opening in 2003, the factory in Amsterdam has become one of the leading Hitachi Construction Machinery (HCM) facilities in the world. To help it maintain this position, it has undergone significant changes in recent years. Some have been implemented to enhance the safe working environment of employees, while others improve the efficiency of operations, and ensure the consistently high quality of Hitachi machines.

The 50,000m² facility, which is split between Factory A (assembly) and Factory B (components), manufactures medium crawler (from ZX130 to ZX490) and wheeled excavators, medium wheel loaders (ZW150 to ZW310) and all special application machines. Every model is produced to order as part of a lean production process.

"For excavators, the front attachment, undercarriage and various options are all completed here," says Jacob Slooff, Manager, Production Engineering. "We can make whatever we need, increasing our flexibility and reducing stock. Modifications to the hydraulics, undercarriage and cab, such as additional lights, mirrors



and the seat, are now added in the assembly line to increase efficiency.”

The upper machine is supplied from HCM in Japan. After any requested options have been added, the seat is installed into the cab. “The seat weighs approximately 30kg, so it’s a physically demanding job to lift it into position,” says Jacob. “We have created a dedicated area and ergonomic tool for this task, so it’s easier and less strenuous for our colleagues to complete it. Using the tool also ensures accurate positioning for a high-quality result.”

“We have made a big investment in items such as stairs, working platforms and chairs with wheels beneath them, to enable our employees to work comfortably on and around the machines at the correct height,” says Rein Pijnenburg, General Manager, Amsterdam Factory. “This also includes lifting tables at the components unpacking area.”

Another example of specialist equipment has been introduced at a later stage of production. After the upper structure has been

attached to the undercarriage, the bolts of the outer swing bearing must be tightened. “Previously, this was done manually, but now the equipment used to tighten bolts means there is less need for physical exertion, the torque setting is fail-proof, and quality is guaranteed,” explains Jacob.

Cleaner environment

Further changes in the factory have enhanced the working environment for employees. To improve the air quality, for example, hoses are attached to the machines to extract diesel fumes during testing.

Two new robotic welding systems in Factory B are more advanced and accurate, and have suction systems and hoods to remove the smoke from the welding process as much as possible. Suction systems are also used to remove much of the dust created during sanding. In addition, a wall is positioned to prevent dust from entering the machine’s hydraulics.



While some changes are in response to industry regulations, others have been developed by factory employees. “We actively encourage workers to think of ways to continually improve our processes,” says Rein, “and the Kaizen area in the factory is dedicated to the development of their ideas.”

The Kaizen area has specialist equipment, including a 3D measuring arm and cameras, and welding facilities that enable employees to develop high-quality solutions. “Essentially, we can make what we want here,” says Jacob.

One successful small group activity improvement was to replace blocks of wood between painted surfaces with a stand, which they designed and welded. “By doing so, we were able to prevent the damage caused by the inprint of the blocks into the paint. It’s a very simple yet effective solution,” says Rein. “We also use covers to protect the machines during assembly. It means less time is needed at the end to do small repairs or touch-ups, increasing efficiency once again.”

Bright ideas

The factory team has also paid close attention to maintaining high standards of quality in the production process. An example of this is the new lighting area, which incorporates powerful, adjustable light strips to enable employees to check the machines thoroughly.

“The same powerful lights are now used during manufacture,

painting and at the final checking stage,” confirms Rein. “The final strip lighting check should not show any mistakes.”

Another investment in lighting has led to reduced costs at the factory. An advanced and automated LED system has been installed in Factory B. It operates on sensors to ensure high levels of energy efficiency.

Before any machine leaves the Amsterdam factory, workers ensure that it is in optimum condition for delivery to the new owner. Functional testing takes place, which includes testing for hydraulic leakages and pressure configuration, as well as speed. After heating up the hydraulic oil, an inspection using UV light can show immediately if there are any leakages.

The final inspection includes strip lighting and specification checks to ensure that the machine leaving the factory is of the highest quality and exactly what the owner has ordered.

Meeting demand

The 8,000m² factory in Oosterhout has undergone a complete renovation this year and was officially reopened in June. The modernisation was carried out to enhance efficiency, and meet the growing demand for Hitachi mini and compact excavators.

“There has been a notable increase in market demand for mini and compact excavators in recent years,” says Marco Verhoef, General Manager, Oosterhout factory. “We have doubled our annual



output since 2014, and the next phase is to grow further. To achieve this, we needed a complete factory redesign.”

The factory produces ZX10 to ZX85 models. In most cases, the base machine is supplied from Japan, and the arm and boom are produced at Oosterhout. “We supply the blade and we also supply the cab for the ZX19; from next year, we will do so for all models up to the ZX55.”

The ZX10 and ZX85 are imported completely from Japan. The larger model can be customised at Oosterhout with options such as additional mirrors or counterweights, and different tracks, to meet customer requirements.

Driven by efficiency

The new facility features advanced equipment and paint booths, and a state-of-the-art assembly line comprising a semi-automatic system. The in-floor chain has moving platforms on which the base machine is placed and transported from one station to another as activities are carried out. Part of the chain moves outside to prevent exhaust gases being released within the factory, which improves the working environment for employees.

Other efficiency-enhancing measures include the adoption of *takt time*. This approach aims to ensure an activity is completed within a certain amount of time. The result of this is an optimal work flow and will lead to an annual output of 7,500 machines.

Inventory at Oosterhout has also been reduced by following the *kanban* method of lean manufacturing.

Oosterhout supplies machines to customers via the neighbouring European Distribution Centre. “When a certain number of machines leave the EDC, we add new machines from the factory. The EDC acts as a kind of buffer between the factory and the customer,” says Marco.

Throughout the extensive renovation project, production at Oosterhout continued, and Marco paid tribute to the resilience of its 100 employees at the opening event in June. “Thanks to all of our dedicated personnel, we now have a fully redesigned and modernised factory, and are very proud of what we have achieved. We are ready for the future, to supply more machines at shorter delivery times.”



To see a video of the factories, 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



Peace of mind with Premium Used

A demolition and recycling contractor has purchased the first Hitachi Premium Used excavator in The Netherlands to work on a wide range of projects in the province of North Brabant. *Ground Control* visits the city of Breda to see the ZX350LC-5 medium excavator working on its first job site at a former factory.

The Hitachi Premium Used programme applies to Hitachi medium and large excavators with less than 5,000 hours or less than five years old, and mini excavators with less than 3,500 hours. It also applies to all ZW-series wheel loaders above 125HP. They are covered by Hitachi's six-month/1,500-hour powertrain and hydraulics warranty.

This warranty was one of the reasons behind AC Stolwerk Sloopwerken BV's decision to purchase the ZX350LC-5, along with the favourable costs associated with the machine. Established in 1953, the company has had a long and successful working relationship with Hitachi Construction Machinery (Europe) NV (HCME) spanning four decades.

It also has three other Hitachi excavators (a ZX470LCH-3 and

two ZX210W-3s) at its disposal, for which it has always received a high level of technical support from HCME's domestic dealer. The Premium Used machine is no exception, having been through a rigorous inspection and refurbishment process.

This was carried out by HCME's domestic dealer in The Netherlands using only Genuine Parts and lubricants, according to Hitachi specifications. Scheduled oil sampling was completed and maintenance records were available via Global e-Service, Hitachi's remote machine monitoring website. The machine was also scheduled to be painted in Stolwerk's corporate blue colour, and the undercarriage was guaranteed to have had less than 50% wear.

Hitachi Construction Machinery

PREMIUM USED

“When I inspected the machine for the first time, I could feel the quality of a fully serviced machine – it was like new!”

Thierry Stolwerk,
Owner, AC Stolwerk Sloopwerken BV

**A beneficial programme**

Owner Thierry Stolwerk is the third generation of his family to run the business. They have always had a strong reputation in the demolition and recycling sectors, which even extends to the specialist range of attachments that they fit to their machines.

“We had a specialist concrete sheer, which was sourced from the USA and was one of the first of its kind in the world,” says Thierry proudly. “This was well known within our industry and my grandfather had the opportunity to help demolish the Berlin Wall with that tool. We took down four kilometres of this famous structure in five months and now we have the only section of the wall on display outside of Germany!”

Stolwerk bought the Hitachi Premium Used ZX350LC-5 to load the company’s mobile crusher, which is utilised to recycle demolished materials. However, the company is so busy that the versatile excavator has also been commandeered for other projects since it was delivered at the end of 2017.

After deciding on the ZX350LC-5 as the most appropriate machine for the capacity of the crusher, Stolwerk then considered the benefits of purchasing a model with 3,000 working hours through the Hitachi Premium Used programme. “When I was offered the guarantee of a high-quality machine with an approved Hitachi warranty, I had to assess how this would benefit our company’s operation,” says Thierry.

A cost-effective option

“The price of a used machine was obviously advantageous and offered a 36% saving over a new model. In addition to the advantage of having less depreciation, I also had the peace of mind of fixed running costs from the maintenance contract.

“When I inspected the machine for the first time, I could feel the quality of a fully serviced machine – it was like new! I was also impressed that HCME was able to deliver the machine within a week, complete with a quick hitch, which is essential for the number of attachments we use in our demolition business.

“I would have no hesitation in buying another Hitachi Premium Used machine, as there may be an opportunity to do so in the future to replace one of our wheeled excavators. As well as the high level of service we receive from HCME, I also consider the fuel consumption of our machines to be a top priority and the ZX350LC-5 also ticks this box with distinction.”

An immaculate machine

Stolwerk’s experienced operator, Cees Diepstraten, who has been with the company for 25 years, says, “While you would still know that it’s a used machine, the ZX350LC-5 was delivered in immaculate condition by HCME.

“On this site, I use it for sorting the demolished materials and loading our trucks with piles of rubble, wood and metal. The machine is very stable for working with such heavy materials, and the spacious and comfortable cab allows me to have a good view of what I’m doing.”



To see a movie of the ZX350LC-5, 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 relationship based on trust

A Bulgarian quarry is continuing to run efficiently thanks to the addition of two Hitachi Zaxis-6 excavators and ZW-6 wheel loaders to its expanding fleet of construction machinery. Persenk Invest Ltd bought the ZX350LC-6s and ZW310-6s after the confirmation of a significant new contract.





Plovdiv is an ancient city (the second largest behind the capital, Sofia) that lies on the banks of the Maritsa River and is home to Persenk Invest. The company was formed in 2009 by father and son Georgi and Ivan Georgiev to manage the Kurtovo Konare quarry.

The site is perched on one of the seven hills around which Plovdiv was built. The quarry was first established in 1959. During the communist regime, the processed materials went to the national railways to be laid as track ballast. Then, after the change to the democratic Republic of Bulgaria in 1990, there was a period of 18 years when the site lay dormant.



“The fuel consumption of our new Hitachi machinery is excellent and helps us to significantly reduce our running costs”

Ivan (left) and Georgi Georgiev, Owners, Persenk Invest Ltd

At the start of its tenure in the quarry, Persenk Invest opted to work with rented machinery as the most cost-effective option in the aftermath of the 2008 financial crisis. This was a useful exercise as Georgi and Ivan were able to test three different construction machinery brands before they decided to buy their first wheel loader and excavator in 2011.

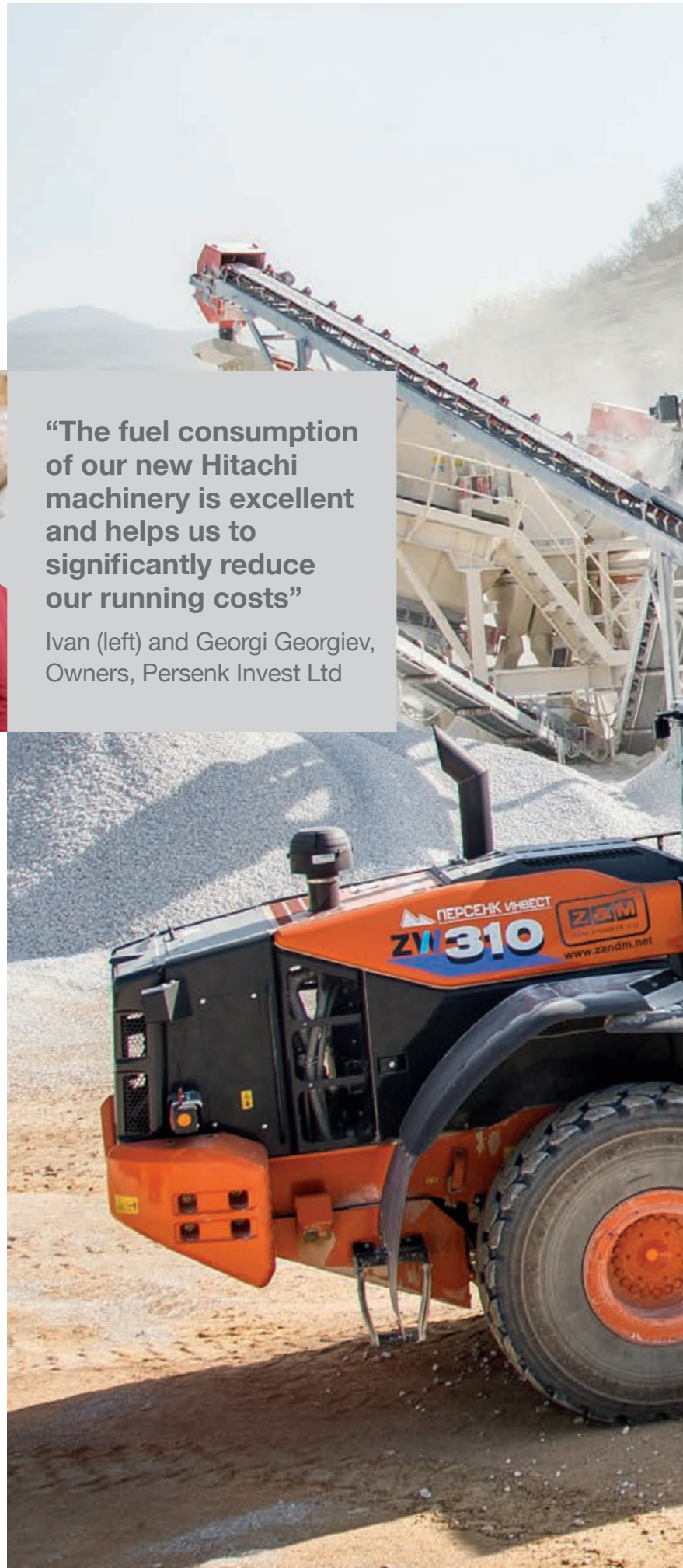
“During this period, we decided that Hitachi was the only choice for us,” says Georgi. “Our preference was to have only one brand on site and strike up an excellent working relationship with the dealer. It’s about the whole package, and Hitachi and Z&M have exceeded our expectations and lived up to their slogan of ‘reliable solutions’.

“We are natural partners and this is not a normal customer/supplier relationship. Since the first contact, we have enjoyed excellent relations and there has been a high level of trust built between us. We started our business at the worst possible time, but Z&M worked with us and offered preferential terms on the machines that we bought – and we will never forget this!”

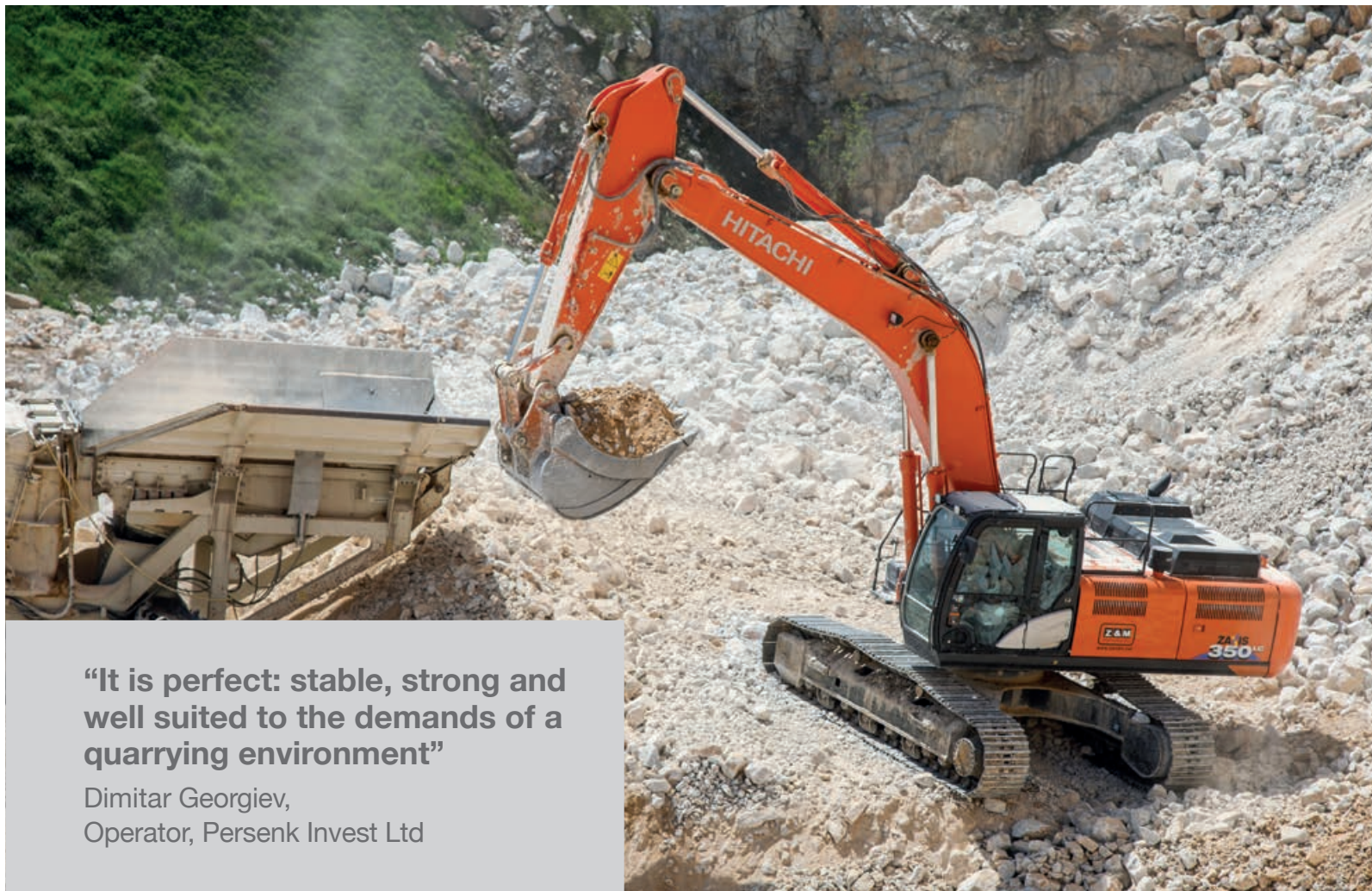
Persenk Invest still owns its first Hitachi machine, a ZW220 wheel loader, which arrived a week before its first Zaxis excavator, a ZX280LC-3. The current model line-up includes: a ZW310, and the two ZW310-6 wheel loaders that were delivered in September and December 2017 respectively; and a ZX210LC-3 and the two ZX350LC-6 medium excavators.

The first ZX350LC-6 – also the first Zaxis-6 machine in Bulgaria – was delivered to the Kurtovo Konare quarry in April 2017 and now has 2,500 hours. The second arrived a year later to complete the replacement of the two previous ZX350LC-3s.

The rock at the upper levels of the site is blasted as and when required, although there are no explosions for two months (in April and May) due to the local birds’ egg-hatching season. The latest ZX350LC-6 moves the blasted materials from this precipice on to the quarry floor. The second ZX350LC-6 is lying in wait to load 3,500 tonnes of marble rock per day on to the primary crusher.







“It is perfect: stable, strong and well suited to the demands of a quarrying environment”

Dimitar Georgiev,
Operator, Persenk Invest Ltd



“The ZX350LC-6 is powerful and fast, as well as being easy to operate and enjoyable to work with,” says the first Zaxis-6 operator in Bulgaria, Dimitar Georgiev, who has been working with Persenk Invest for four years.

Smooth and stable

“It is smoother than the previous model, which means that I am not as tired after a long shift. The cab is also very comfortable and quiet – the best thing about this high-quality machine. It is perfect: stable, strong and well suited to the demands of a quarrying environment.”

The wheel loaders take over for the next part of the process – 3,500 tonnes of the crushed materials are moved every day into two piles by the first of the ZW310-6s. These are loaded periodically on to trucks that dump them into the feeding station for the secondary crushing and screening equipment.

The second ZW310-6 maintains numerous stockpiles and loads trucks in the stockyard with the finished products for onward transportation. “The ZW310-6 is very fast for moving between the

stockpiles and even more productive than the previous model,” says operator Stoycho Guglev, who has also been with the company for four years.

“The joystick is effortless for steering, as well as being smooth to operate and easy to control the machine. Loading is straightforward thanks to the traction force associated with the LSD (limited slip differential). The most impressive feature is the comfort in the cab, with ample space and a lack of noise.”

Persenk Invest’s biggest customer, the Government’s national power station, is 160km away and other customer sites fall within a radius of 30km of the quarry. Between 45 and 70 trucks leave the quarry fully loaded twice every day, with an average of 3,000 tonnes sent to the power station daily. At the time of *Ground Control*’s visit in April 2018, the company was about to utilise a new rail link on the site.

The new section of track diverts off the adjacent main line and comes to a halt at the base of the quarry. A train will take the place of the trucks and make two journeys each day with a load of between 2,200 and 2,500 tonnes, depending on demand. This will enable the materials to be moved faster, more efficiently and further afield.

Persenk Invest has a 35-year permit for the 100-hectare site – with an option to extend for a further 15 years – although only 25 hectares are currently being quarried. Since the licence was granted, the total production figure for the quarry has gone from 50,000 tonnes in 2012 to 700,000 in 2017 – a 1,300% increase in five years! It has also developed a strong team of 32 employees, who work in two shifts from 6am to 2pm and 2pm to 11pm.

The purchase of the new Hitachi models followed the confirmation of a three-year contract in September 2017 between Persenk



“The ZW310-6 is very fast for moving between the stockpiles and even more productive than the previous model”

Stoycho Guglev,
Operator, Persenk Invest Ltd

Invest and the power station. Prior to that, the company had been supplying this customer via a third party.

“The marble materials delivered from our quarry to the power station are mixed with coal at a high temperature within the furnace,” says Ivan. “The result of this is that the emissions are less harmful to the environment.

“We have to deliver 2.5 million tonnes over the duration of the contract and we are currently supplying 3,000 tonnes per day. Our Hitachi machines and team of employees give us the capacity to increase productivity if required, but we are very happy to retain this flexibility and meet our customers’ demands.

“While the power station is now our largest customer, we will never stop supporting our other customers. We won’t forget them, because we’ve been working together from the beginning and we consider this market as the front end of our business.”

Confidence in Hitachi

The new contract has given Georgi and Ivan the confidence to invest in the machinery to do the job. As well as having high-quality equipment, it is also important for them to have good partners in the unlikely event of any technical issues.

“It’s about the whole package, and Hitachi and Z&M are reliable partners for our business,” explains Georgi. “This relationship is important to us and we will continue to use them for after-sales service when our machines are out of warranty.

“The response time from the first call to their arrival on site is always less than 1.5 hours, which makes life very difficult for salesmen of other construction equipment! After this level of investment, we don’t want to try another brand – but there’s no



point anyway, because none of them can match Hitachi.”

Ivan also confirms the importance of fuel economy to Persenk Invest: “The fuel consumption of our new Hitachi machinery is excellent and helps us to significantly reduce our running costs.

“Both models are the optimum size for us, as they offer complete flexibility for our operations. As a result, we can deal with any fluctuations in demand – without the need to change the number of employees. At first, we thought they were excellent machines and now we don’t want to work with anything else other than Hitachi equipment.”



To see a movie of the Hitachi ZW310-6s and ZX350LC-6s, 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

Saving time and money

A Spijk-based excavation and transport company has purchased the first Zaxis-6 super long front excavator in The Netherlands. Küper Transport's Hitachi ZX300LC-6 has been selected to work on a longstanding project at a brick factory in nearby Pannerden, and is proving to be highly efficient and cost-effective.



Delivered in October 2017, the special application machine creates the correct mixture of materials required by Wienerberger AG (the world's largest producer of bricks) at one of its Dutch plants. The first stage of the process involves the building of a 200 x 28 x 0.5m stockpile with various types of clay, lava rock and sand delivered by Küper Transport's fleet of trucks.

The super long front's extensive reach (from the 15m boom) is utilised to scrape and flatten each load into an even layer. Once all of the layers have been prepared, the ZX300LC-6 is then engaged to mix the various types of material to the specification required by Wienerberger to make the bricks.

Moving from one side of the 28m-wide stockpile to the other, operator Davey Heimen skilfully takes 5-10cm from each layer. He scrapes down from the top to the bottom of the pile, before pulling the mixture towards the super long front machine. The bucket is then emptied at an angle to the right of the excavator, so that its tracks can flatten the materials and complete the cycle as it continues to repeat the process and move across the face of the pile.

Strong quality/price ratio

Founded by current owner Remaldo Küper's grandfather in 1938, Küper Transport has been working at the Wienerberger factory for more than 40 years. The company bought the ZX300LC-6 super long front with a 1,450-litre chain bucket and 7,000-hour extended warranty and service contract (engine and hydraulics) from Hitachi Construction Machinery (Europe) NV's (HCME) domestic dealer in The Netherlands.

Küper Transport has enjoyed a long-term relationship with HCME, having owned Hitachi machines for 32 years. "Hitachi produces a great excavator with a strong quality/price ratio," says Remaldo. "In my opinion, anything engineered and manufactured in Japan is perfect, especially when supported by HCME's excellent maintenance and service here in The Netherlands."

The primary decision-making criteria determined by Küper Transport for the super long front investment were brand, price and quality. "We considered three machines on this occasion," adds Remaldo, "but we were immediately impressed by Hitachi's



in-house solution and the lifting capacity of the 15m-boom model.

"We previously used a conventional machine for this project, but some of the materials had to be dug twice as much, which cost us more time, fuel and therefore money. By comparison, we are now able to save 15l per hour and complete our normal cycle 30% faster than before.

"The ZX300LC-6 is the perfect machine for this job. It is stable in these challenging conditions, compact and light, so it's easy to transport and doesn't sink into the ground. Hitachi also has a technical advantage over the other brands. The TRIAS II hydraulic system means that only one of the three pumps is used for the swing mechanism. So, when the machine is swinging and lifting, there is no decrease in capacity."

Stable and comfortable

Operator Davey Heimen is also impressed with the new machine's suitability: "It's very smooth and stable, and handles well. This is especially the case when flattening and grading the layers of

materials at full reach.

"It's also faster to complete this task as I can position the machine further back from where the trucks dump the materials than a conventional machine. In addition, I can stay in the same place throughout, because everything I need to do is achievable in one movement."

"The cab is very comfortable with a heated seat, climate control and an excellent all-round view, which is so important for the precise work that I do. I am also able to save one hour per day with the Hitachi super long front when scraping and mixing the materials."



To see a movie of the Hitachi ZX300LC-6 super long front in The Netherlands, 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



Making a **BIG** difference

A Finnish contractor relies on the consistency and quality of the Hitachi Support Chain after-sales programme. *Ground Control* visits Tuomas Kaiponen to evaluate how the technical support, parts, remote monitoring and extended warranty – provided through his local Hitachi dealer, Rotator – impacts on the success of his business.

Maanrakennus Lassi Kaiponen Oy was founded in 1985 by the current owner Tuomas Kaiponen's father, Lassi. In fact, the Vihti-based company started out life operating on forestry projects, only a few days after he was born in January of that year. Tuomas has worked for the family company since he started his career more than 18 years ago.

Maanrakennus Lassi Kaiponen has eight employees, who work on its utility, road construction and groundworks projects in Helsinki and within a 50km radius of the capital city. These contracts are evenly split over public- and private-sector work, and the company also acts as a subcontractor for larger construction firms.

"We work in the same way, week in, week out," says Tuomas. "There are no changes in this type of work. I trust my colleagues to carry out their tasks to the best of their ability, so that we can deliver the same high level of results every time.

"A good example is that we've been working with our local

government authority since 2000. This is a three-year revolving contract that we have renewed again recently, and we have been rewarded for our hard work with a four-year agreement on this occasion."

Helping to retain the company's contracts is a key part of Tuomas's role. "It helps that we keep a relatively new fleet of reliable Hitachi excavators and have a high level of first-class dealer support," he adds. "We need to have tough machines to work all year round, even in winter conditions with temperatures as low as -30°C – as we had for two weeks last year."

Good working relationship

Lassi bought his first Hitachi excavator in 1997. The family's sentimentality for this machine, which has more than 20,000 working hours, is highlighted by the fact that Tuomas still keeps it on display in his yard at home.



Maanrakennus Lassi Kaiponen and Rotator have worked together since 2004. The dealer's salesman, Juha Myötämäki, has been the main point of contact for the past six years. "We have a good working relationship," says Tuomas, "he keeps his word, stays in contact – not just for selling – and also helps us out with any other issues."

Specific service work is carried out in conjunction with Rotator's Maintenance Manager, Ari Köpsi, who is based at the dealer's Vantaa branch. Ari manages a team of mobile technicians, who are deployed for routine maintenance and service work on the Maanrakennus Lassi Kaiponen fleet.

Tuomas opts for the HELP (Hitachi Extended Life Program) extended warranty when he signs for a service contract with Rotator. Each of the five Hitachi medium excavators on his company's fleet are covered:

- two ZX225USRLC-5s (one rented and then purchased as a used machine in 2018, 4,261 hours; the other purchased in June 2014, 5,749 hours)
- a ZX225USRLC-6 (purchased in May 2017, 1,431 hours)
- a ZX250LC-5 (purchased in March 2014, 6,725 hours)
- and a ZX250LC-6 (purchased in July 2016, 3,322 hours).

When asked to comment on each of the four links in the Hitachi Support Chain programme provided by Rotator, Tuomas said:

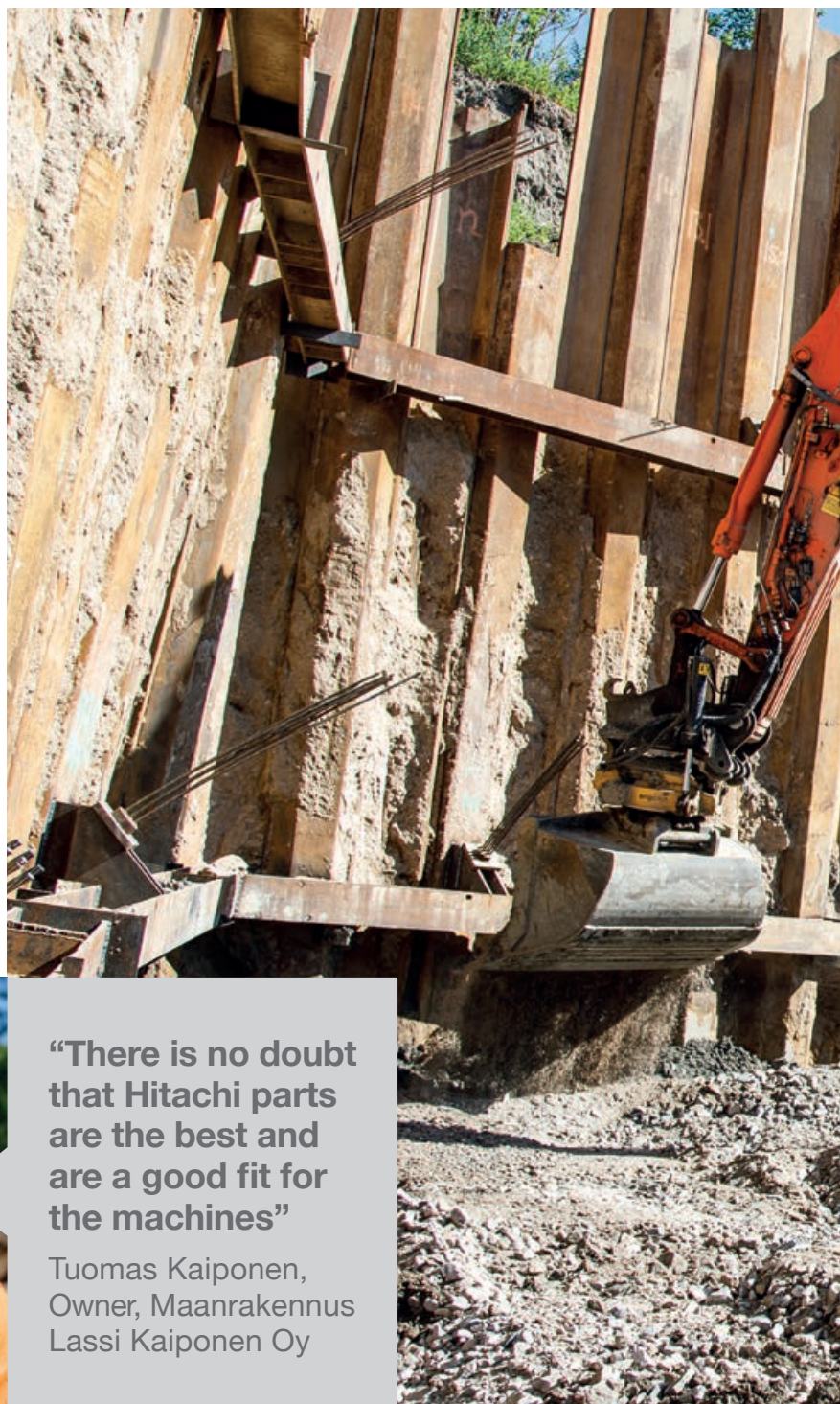
1. Technical support

"All of our machines benefit from Hitachi's 500-hour routine maintenance checks. The service team from our dealer, Rotator, is very professional. They call me to plan as and when each visit is due, and provide a fast and efficient service – even if it's only a small issue."



"There is no doubt that Hitachi parts are the best and are a good fit for the machines"

Tuomas Kaiponen,
Owner, Maanrakennus
Lassi Kaiponen Oy



"They know what they're doing as professional Hitachi technicians and it's clear that they have been well trained. There are four different technicians who carry out our work, and they all carry out their duties to the same high standard. Working with the right people is vital and I am confident about the level of support provided for our machines."

2. Parts

"In my opinion, it's important to use Hitachi Genuine Parts, so that we can work safely in the knowledge that the quality of our machines is being well maintained. An added benefit is that the resale prices of our excavators are better as a result."

"There is no doubt that Hitachi parts are the best and are a good fit for the machines. Delivery is always on time, and this shows the value of the Hitachi network in Finland. We only have to visit our local Rotator branch in Vantaa in exceptional circumstances."

3. Global e-Service

"As part of Hitachi's remote monitoring systems, we receive the ConSite report by email and check this every month. Rotator's technical support team also receive any alerts, and they call me as a matter of priority if required."

"The number one benefit is the alert system and it's good to know that someone from Rotator is always looking out for our machines. Another advantage of ConSite is that we can see the number of daily working hours for each machine, which is always useful when communicating to our customers."

4. HELP

"All of our Zaxis excavators are covered by a 5,000-hour extended warranty and service agreement, based on HELP. These cover all aspects of maintenance, including consumable parts and genuine oil."



“We pay for this in direct relation to the number of working hours and it’s good to know that this is a fixed price. We can get on with our work and don’t have to worry about the performance of our machines.”

Satisfied customer

Overall, Tuomas is really happy with the Hitachi Support Chain services offered by Rotator: “There’s not much to improve on in my view. Everything that has been promised has been done.

“We’re very satisfied with Rotator and how they look after our Hitachi machines. In addition, we are always dealing with the same people and this element of consistency makes everything easier and more personal. We are able to carry out our work with the added confidence that there’s always someone we can talk to.”

Maanrakennus Lassi Kaiponen used to buy another brand of construction machinery, but after the delivery of the first

Hitachi from Rotator, the value of the Support Chain network became apparent.

“We buy Hitachi machines due to their reliability and they ‘feel’ good, but it’s the after-sales support that makes a big difference. When we bought one Hitachi, we had to change all of our machines to Zaxis models. Thanks to Support Chain, there is no doubt that the high level of availability and resale value of our Hitachi fleet are beneficial to the profitability of our business.”




To see the Support Chain movie, 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



Where children's dreams come true

Adventure, games and action – that's what visitors young and old can experience at the Ravensburger amusement park, Spieliland, near Lake Constance in south Germany. One of the more than 70 fun-filled attractions is the BRIO construction site. Since the start of the 2018 season, families have become construction workers with ten new ZX17U-5 mini excavators, sponsored by Hitachi Construction Machinery (Europe) NV. And with that, the attraction fits perfectly with the participatory concept of Germany's most family-friendly theme park.



The park attracts more than 400,000 visitors per year

The Ravensburger name and blue triangle trademark can be spotted around the world on children's books, games and puzzles. Founded in 1883, the brand is synonymous with entertainment, playful learning and quality. In 1998, the company used its experience to create an interactive entertainment park for families, and opened Spielendland on a 18-hectare site in the town of Meckenbeuren, Baden-Württemberg.

Over the past two decades, the park has expanded to 30 hectares and welcomed more than seven million guests. It attracts visitors from the whole of Germany, as well as Austria and Switzerland. The park is also popular with holidaymakers spending their summer near Lake Constance.

Thanks to the careful landscaping of the park, every themed area has its own environment. The Kaleidoscope of Fun and Games, for example, is surrounded by a lagoon, the brightly coloured Sorcerer's tents are concealed in a forest of oak trees, and an alpine mountain panorama forms the backdrop to the Land of Discovery.

Spielendland has achieved exceptionally high safety and quality standards. It has received the "certified theme park" quality seal from Germany's technical inspection association, TÜV SÜD (and was only the third theme park worldwide to do so in 2005).



"My overall impression of Hitachi machines is that they are reliable and highly robust"

Carlo Horn, Managing Director
Ravensburger Spielendland

More recently, it has been voted the country's most family-friendly theme park four years in succession (in surveys by the Goethe University Frankfurt and newspaper *Welt am Sonntag*). The short waiting times, numerous shaded areas and a variety of refreshment stops ensure a relaxed environment, especially for young children.

The park is also designed for the whole family to enjoy together, as Managing Director Carlo Horn explains: "If you have a three-year-old and a 12-year-old, both can have fun together at Spielendland. At other theme parks, the older child goes on a rollercoaster, while the younger one does something else, so the family is divided. Here you can do everything together. We don't have huge thrill rides, but we have many attractions where children and families can learn something while having fun. That's what makes our concept of participation."



“It would be fantastic if this attraction awakens an enthusiasm for excavators, and paves the way for operators and technicians of tomorrow”

Toni Kiesel, Managing Partner, Kiesel
(pictured with daughter Kathrin and granddaughter Leni)

Act like a grown-up

One of the most popular participatory attractions is the construction site in the new themed area, BRIO World. It was redesigned to celebrate Spieleland's 20th anniversary and is dedicated to the Swedish wooden toy manufacturer. In a real construction site, visitors of all ages now have the opportunity to dig with 10 Hitachi ZX17U-5 mini excavators.

Children from the age of three can sit in the cab (accompanied by an adult), while those aged eight and over can operate the machine independently. For three minutes, they can experience what it's really like to work with a Hitachi excavator, using the joysticks to lift and unload gravel at the specially created pit.

“Children find it fascinating,” says Carlo. “Where else do they get the chance to sit in a real excavator on a construction site? It's also nice to see parents with children sitting on their laps, and experiencing it together. Although sometimes you see the parents fighting to have a turn of the controls!”

Specially modified

The Hitachi machines were installed in March after being modified at the authorised German Hitachi dealer, Kiesel, which is located in nearby Baienfurt. The excavators are in a fixed position on concrete blocks and have no pedals, but the joysticks are original. Fitted with electric engines to eliminate fuel emissions, they are controlled by an electronic safety monitoring system.

Safety and robustness were also important requirements, says Carlo. “The machines have to operate continuously every day for 8-10 hours. And they must comply with the stringent conditions set by TÜV, which they do completely.”

Barriers at the front of the cab, and a safety belt that must be fastened before the excavator can start, are examples of the measures in place. The swing radius has also been limited to 30 degrees left and right to ensure that the excavators do not come into contact with one another. “It was also important for us to have the excavators painted in orange and green,” adds Carlo. “We wanted to combine the colours of Hitachi and BRIO.”

The special Hitachi fleet will be maintained regularly by



The BRIO construction site with Hitachi machines is one of 70 attractions at Ravensburger Spieleland

Spieleland's nine-strong technical team, with support from the technicians at Kiesel if required. "The machines are working well and have done since day one," says Carlo, who always tries the attractions himself, including at the prototype stage.

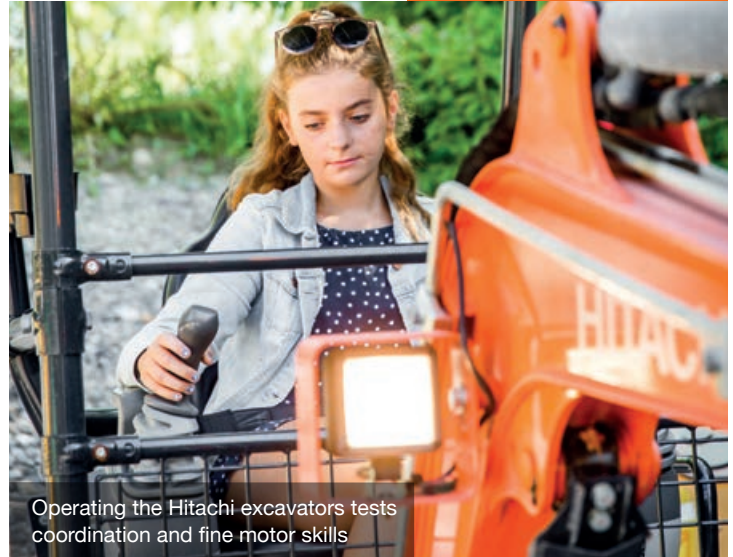
Reliable and robust

"I noticed the technological progress within the excavators. The Hitachi models replaced another brand of machines, which had been in use for 18 years. The ZX17U-5 is easy to operate, the controls were more responsive, and technically they are more refined. My overall impression of Hitachi machines is that they are reliable and highly robust. They have exceeded all my expectations, particularly in terms of quality and ease of maintenance."

Spieleland's cooperation with Kiesel has also been a positive experience for Carlo. "We have a good relationship with them, established over many years, and I trust them completely," he says. "They listened to our requirements, checked the site, removed the old excavators and prepared the new attraction really well."

The partnership with Spieleland has been equally beneficial for the German Hitachi dealer. Managing Partner Toni Kiesel says: "We entered into this cooperation because we want to get as many children and young people excited about machines and technology as possible. It would be fantastic if this attraction awakens an enthusiasm for excavators and paves the way for future operators and technicians."

Visitors to Spieleland have been positive in their reaction to the new Hitachi machines. Six-year-old Merlin Brauchle tried the ZX17U-5 with his mother, and said: "I think it's super that I'm allowed to experience how a construction site really is." And 13-year-old Marvin Gasser commented: "I liked digging with the



Operating the Hitachi excavators tests coordination and fine motor skills

Hitachi excavator because it was so easy to handle. I think it's the best attraction here."

"The response to the Hitachi machines has been very good," agrees Carlo. "We cooperate with brands that fit with the Ravensburger philosophy, and with Hitachi that is definitely the case. Quality is our top priority."



To see a movie of the Hitachi ZX17U-5 mini excavators at Spieleland, 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





An excellent match

Since he started his company 15 years ago, Arco de Visser has relied upon a growing fleet of Zaxis mini and medium excavators. Following the arrival of his latest and largest model, a ZX210LC-6, he explains why he continues to remain loyal to the Hitachi brand.

“We chose this Hitachi model because it’s powerful and has low fuel consumption”

Arco de Visser,
Owner



Renowned for receiving the most hours of sunshine in The Netherlands, the south-western province of Zeeland is a popular tourist destination. Consisting of several islands and peninsulas, its 650km of coastline provides beautifully clean and safe beaches for largely Dutch and German holidaymakers. In some areas, the population more than doubles in the summer season.

To cater for the needs of visitors, the Zonnedorp campsite in the coastal village of Renesse was renovated last winter by contractor van Gelder and subcontractors Melse & Maljaars BV and Arco de Visser BV. Previously updated in the 1980s, the five-hectare site required modernisation, which involved redesigning its infrastructure, including new pathways, utilities and sewers.

The design of the new campsite features a small canal running through the middle, acting as a border between an area for small holiday cottages and space dedicated to tents and caravans. The trench for this was built by a Hitachi ZX210LC-6 medium excavator, fitted with a 1.3m³ V-shaped bucket, in November 2017. Owned by Arco de Visser, the versatile machine was also used for landscaping and creating slopes around the perimeter of the site. The project

was completed in March 2018.

The ZX210LC-6 has several additional options and features, which were supplied by local Hitachi dealer Pladdet (a sub-dealer of Hitachi Construction Machinery Nederland). These include a hydraulic quick coupler, automatic central greasing, Trimble GPS, LED work lights and additional bars on the cab for safety. As well as manufacturing four buckets for the machine, Pladdet also added a plate on the underside of the arm with holes that can be used for heavy lifting of items such as pipes.

Arco took delivery of the ZX210LC-6 in March 2017. It’s his 13th Hitachi machine – his first was a ZX50 mini excavator in 2009. Since then, he’s invested in two ZX10U-2s, a ZX80USBL, two ZX18-3s (with canopy), two ZX60USB-3s, a ZX65USB-5, ZX85USB-3, ZX180LC, ZX19U-5 and now the ZX210LC-6.

The fleet is used on a wide variety of projects, including demolition, earthmoving, rental, groundworks and road construction, within a 100km radius of the company’s base in Oostkapelle. Pladdet carries out services on the Hitachi fleet at 500 and 1,000 hours, using Hitachi Genuine Parts.

Improvements in efficiency

“I first invested in Hitachi because of the price and the service from my local dealer,” says Arco. “It was an excellent match. Over the years, I’ve noticed improvements in the Hitachi machines, particularly in terms of fuel consumption. The engine and hydraulics are also more efficient. The relationship I have with Sales Manager Peter van Liere is extremely important.”

Peter, who has worked at Pladdet for almost 30 years, says: “It’s more of a friendship than a working relationship. When we deliver a new machine, it’s a real party atmosphere with all the operators.”

Such was the welcome for the ZX210LC-6 provided by Arco and his team of 20 employees. “We chose this Hitachi model because it’s powerful, has low fuel consumption, a long lifespan and a high resale value,” he explains. “Overall, we think it’s a fantastic machine.”

The customised Hitachi number plate in the front window of the cab shows that operator Ronnie Wattel agrees: “I love the work I do and Hitachi adds to my enjoyment. It has the total package: power, speed, a comfortable cab and it looks great on the outside too. The visibility is superb, thanks to the sunroof, the excellent camera angles and in combination with the mirrors, I don’t miss a thing.”



To see a movie of the ZX210LC-6, 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

Hitachi merchandise



Buy online at
www.hcmewebshop.com