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## Fisher Contracting, LLC

Indianapolis-area company  
fuels growth with a constant  
drive for improvement



James Fisher,  
Managing Director

## A Message from Brandeis Machinery



David Coultas

**We're here  
in uncertain  
times**



Dear Valued Customer:

Like most every industry, construction has been affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. No one knows for sure what tomorrow will bring in these uncertain times. One thing you can count on, however, is that we at Brandeis Machinery & Supply will continue to offer around-the-clock sales and service support.

This issue of your Focusing on Solutions magazine highlights the diverse lineup of Komatsu equipment that we carry. Some of it is very technologically advanced, such as the intelligent Machine Control (iMC) dozers and excavators that were introduced several years ago. Read about iMC 2.0, which has new features including Proactive Dozing Control, that can make dozing up to 60 percent more productive than previous generation models.

Komatsu's smallest standard excavator, the PC130-11, performs its role like a champion. It is a basic digging machine that fits into nearly any operation and can be hauled on a tag trailer. Find out more inside.

Komatsu builds impressive specialty machines as well, such as the new WA800-8 wheel loader – made for big applications. The WA800-8 is a great loader for quarries, and with features like automatic dig, semi-auto approach and semi-auto dump, it can make operators more effective in V-cycle loading.

There are also interesting articles about our industry that I believe you will find useful, including one featuring a new AGC initiative called Culture of CARE that's designed to increase workplace diversity and inclusion. Find out how you can be a part of it.

As always, if there is anything we can do for you, please contact us. We're always here to help.

Sincerely,  
Brandeis Machinery & Supply Company



David Coultas  
President



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## Indianapolis-area's Fisher Contracting, LLC fuels growth with a constant drive for improvement



**James Fisher,**  
Managing Director



**Dane Waltman,**  
Director of  
Customer Relations



Discover more at  
[BrandeisSolutions.com](http://BrandeisSolutions.com)

New beginnings are a scary thing for many people. Yet when faced with that prospect, James Fisher doubled down. In 2012, the newly single Fisher decided that it was also a good time to open his own company.

"I figured if I was going to start over, I might as well go all the way with it," he laughed. "It petrified me, but it was one of those things where I didn't want to grow old and look back not knowing if I could have started something successful."

While the move was a gamble, it wasn't out of the blue. Fisher had 20 years in the construction industry with experience in managing crews and a Rolodex of contacts within the business. He finally felt it was the right time to do things his way.

"I love this work because every day, every jobsite is different," he said. "It's never been about money. It's about doing things my way, all the way, and seeing what happens."

Fisher Contracting, LLC started with three employees – including Fisher and Pipe Superintendent Shannon Hall, who remains with the company. Today, the business has more than 90 employees and regularly completes large civil earthwork and pipe jobs in the Indianapolis area.

Early on, Fisher Contracting tackled smaller projects that came its way, building a solid

reputation in the process. Growth began to accelerate in 2017 after Fisher reconnected with an old acquaintance, Dane Waltman.

"The companies that Dane and I were with previously often worked together, and we developed a relationship," said Fisher, who is the company's Managing Director. "I randomly called to ask him a question and learned he wasn't there anymore and was in transition. I thought it just made sense for him to come here, and soon he was on board."

"We've grown by about 50 percent since he started as Director of Customer Relations," added Fisher. "Dane is a great salesman for the company, and his philosophies align with mine; he values quality over quantity."

### Growing up

As Fisher Contracting has grown, so has its project list. It has developed relationships with some national homebuilders and serves as a prime contractor for them. The company also works as a subcontractor on other large-scale commercial projects.

"Our work force has increased and become more skilled, and we've attracted some great people, too," said Fisher. "We've moved away from the smaller jobs as our staff and equipment fleet have increased. Now, our focus is more on seven-figure contracts. We have been able to do those very well."

This spring, Fisher Contracting crews broke ground on Homestead Section 7 in Monrovia, Ind., an expansion of an existing residential subdivision southwest of Indianapolis.

"This is at the smaller side of our scale; we'll move about 50,000 yards of dirt on the 30-acre site," explained Fisher. "We will lay sanitary and water lines; install storm sewer infrastructure; and create a two-acre lake."

This summer, the company will move 200,000 yards of dirt on a project in Westfield, Ind.

"Those two projects really show our range," said Fisher. "We like jobs that we can get a lot of people and equipment onto and get moving."

### Bringing the iron

In addition to the ability to devote a full team to a jobsite, another reason that Fisher

Crew members with Fisher Contracting, LLC use an array of equipment from Brandeis Machinery & Supply Company on the Homestead Section 7 residential expansion in Monrovia, Ind.

► VIDEO







Komatsu excavators, like the PC490LC, are mainstays on Fisher Contracting jobsites. "Komatsu makes good quality equipment," said Pipe Foreman Anthony Krueger. "The PC490 is tight and intuitive, and it runs great."

Contracting succeeds on larger projects is the size of its fleet. With more than 100 pieces of machinery, Fisher can take plenty of equipment to any job.

A sizable portion of that fleet comes from Brandeis Machinery & Supply Company and Sales Rep Brian Cook. The relationship has led to the use of Komatsu excavators, dozers and trucks, WIRTGEN GROUP'S HAMM rollers and K-Tec pieces.

"In 2015, I bought my first brand-new machine – a Komatsu PC170LC excavator – and a big reason for that was Brian," noted Fisher. "We had been in business for three years at the time. Brian was persistent. I want to do business with people I like, and everyone at Brandeis has been really invested in us. They go the extra mile, and I feel like they know me personally."

On top of excellent customer service, the lines that Brandeis carries have delivered.

"Komatsu has been around for a long time," stated Fisher. "They're a well-established company and are leaders when it comes to equipment. We've also had a great experience with HAMM rollers. Combined with Brandeis, it's a great situation."



Earthwork Foreman Brent Hayworth uses Fisher Contracting's Komatsu intelligent Machine Control D51PXi dozer to grade on a jobsite in Monrovia, Ind. "I have all the blueprints right on the screen; I never have to stop," Hayworth said. "I'm 10 times faster in this dozer."

### Seeing the light

Even with a high level of trust in Komatsu equipment and Brandeis, Fisher held out for a while on adding Komatsu's intelligent Machine Control (iMC) technology.

"I always thought that if I had a decent operator, a dozer and someone on the ground checking grade, that was all I needed," admitted Fisher.

*Continued . . .*



# 'I knew this was a better way to work'

... continued

"I was 'old school.' Thankfully, Brian was persistent, because I was wrong. Within the first week, I knew this was a better way to work."

With no masts and cables to worry about or crews of people checking grade, thanks to the integrated GPS system, the time and material savings were clear. Another factor also influenced his decision to incorporate the iMC dozers.

"A lot of skilled operators are retiring, and there isn't anyone stepping up to replace

them," he said. "The iMC dozers have made my work force a lot better. I can put many more operators in the cab and know they'll be able to cut two inches and get within a half-inch of grade.

"We get it right the first time," he added. "The technology saves us from having to rework areas. And, we can do all of that with one person in a dozer instead of three on the ground with a measuring stick watching the operator."

The technology continues to prove itself in the field, and today, Fisher Contracting's fleet includes four Komatsu iMC dozers. He says they're here to stay.

"It's a pretty safe bet we will have more of them," Fisher said. "The iMC equipment pays for itself in efficiency. Right now we're focused on the dozers. The excavators are nice as well, and we'll explore those, too."

## Continued improvement

Eight years into his journey, Fisher is very happy with his company's current state. The next stage will focus less on growth and more on improvement.

"Bigger isn't always better," he stated. "If we were to jump up to 500 employees, that would be all about ego, in my opinion. The size we are at works great. The next step is to continue to get better at our processes. We want to keep improving, and luckily we have a great staff that has really bought into that mindset. We all just want to be really, really good at what we do." ■



## ▶ VIDEO

Fisher Contracting Operator Ben Ellis prepares a pad with a HAMM H12i roller. "The H12i has such a smooth ride, sometimes I have to check to see if it is on," said Ellis.

A Fisher Contracting operator hauls a load of material with a Komatsu HM400 articulated truck on a jobsite in Monrovia, Ind.



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**Brian (left) and Thomas Cronin / Prosperity Construction / Jackson, MS**

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# New faces bolster Indianapolis branch to bring consistent, focused sales and service approach to northern Indiana

For years, Brandeis Machinery & Supply Company's Indianapolis branch served as a model of consistency. Indiana customers benefited from a decades-long relationship with the key figures who guided the company's northern territory. When Northern Region Operations Manager John Newman retired in 2017 and Vice President Regional Sales Manager Spencer DePoy took another position, Brandeis was challenged to replicate those long-held partnerships.

"It's impossible to replace the knowledge and cachet those guys had in this industry," said Vice President Regional Sales Manager Corey Wall. "The bar was set very high in Indianapolis, and we're working to build a staff that will continuously meet that standard."

Today, Brandeis is setting the foundation for its next generation of leaders. With several new hires in the last year, the Indianapolis branch features a group that is brimming with enthusiasm.

"I think a lot of customers understandably wanted to wait and see how Brandeis handled the transition," said Wall. "We went through a 'prove it' phase. We had to make sure we gave them the confidence that the same culture would continue. Customers are really good at picking up on things, and they see that our employees are genuinely invested in helping them."

## Focused on rentals

In addition to fresh faces throughout the branch, other changes that are designed to deliver better solutions for customers have also been implemented. One area in particular was in Certified Rentals.

"We increased our sales staff and hired six additional technicians so that we're able to better meet our customers' rental needs," explained Wall. "We also created the position of a Yard Foreman. That person will help with machine coordination and tackle a lot of the paperwork associated with it. It really benefits our Certified Rental division. Rentals have been vital, so we needed to make sure we helped make it more efficient."

*Continued . . .*



**Corey Wall,**  
Vice President  
Regional Sales  
Manager



Discover more at  
[BrandeisSolutions.com](http://BrandeisSolutions.com)

## ► VIDEO

Brandeis Machinery & Supply Company's Indianapolis branch is laying the foundation for its next generation of service for customers in northern Indiana. "We want to do right by our customers," said Vice President Regional Sales Manager Corey Wall. "We value their support and are committed to helping them succeed. Everything we do here is with that in mind."





# Branch features new demo area

... continued



***"Brandeis has a family atmosphere. From the owner of the company on down, the people here really care."***

Jason Smith, Machine Sales Rep



***"I'm still kind of old school. I want to be in front of people, hear their voices and work with them. I think that helps make relationships stronger."***

Dave Potts, Certified Rental Territory Rep



***"We've got a great level of talent in the Northern Region. Brandeis is very customer-focused, and we want a personal level of engagement with our customers."***

Trevor Thielbar, Regional Operations Manager,  
Northern Region



***"We represent top-of-the-line equipment with the parts and service to back it up. We can keep customers up and running throughout a job."***

Jacob Hopper, New Machine Sales Rep

The decision to beef up its rental division was numbers-based. As customers have looked to Brandeis and Certified Rentals to supplement their fleets, business has increased substantially in recent years.

"Dave Potts is our Certified Rental Territory Rep, and he does a great job," noted Wall. "But, he was just one person. He needed help, so we added Chris Carpenter as Yard Foreman. We've increased our rent-to-rent business in addition to rent-to-sell and rental purchase options. Customers want these choices, and we're invested in doing it for them."

## On-site demo

The Indianapolis growth also includes a new machine demo spot at the branch. The dedicated area opens up more opportunities for Brandeis to train and educate customers about the newest equipment and technology.

"Machines are becoming so advanced, especially our Komatsu intelligent Machine Control equipment, that customers want to test them out or get training on them before making a purchase. Taking a machine to a site for a demo can be tricky. Bringing an operator to our branch is more convenient for them, and we can provide a much better environment for training and education."

While there may be a lot of new things happening at the Indianapolis branch, Wall says one thing will never change.

"We want to do right by our customers. We value their support and are committed to helping them succeed. Everything we do here is with that in mind." ■

This summer, Brandeis Machinery & Supply Company finished an on-site machine demo area providing a dedicated, controlled location for customers to test new equipment and technology.







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# Five ways your construction business can address uncertainty during COVID-19, other crisis situations

Perhaps the hardest part of the COVID-19 pandemic has been the uncertainty – not knowing what will happen next. The rapid spread of the virus that resulted in essentially locking down the United States is unprecedented in our lifetimes, and the inability for even the experts to predict the human toll and economic outcome causes stress and fear for everyone.

Because none of us can control the outcome, you must try to manage those things you can. Following are some areas you have control over in your business:

**1. How you communicate.** Continual, honest communication with those on your payroll and your customers is essential. Share the facts about what's happening in the industry, the community and within your organization. Don't be brutally honest but don't sugarcoat things either. Be straightforward about what's going on, both good and bad. This will help limit confusion and gossip, as well as minimize any shocks when new information comes in.

**2. The willingness to listen.** It's within your power to encourage open dialogue. Allow workers to express their concerns, share their ideas or simply vent on occasion. Listen to what they have to say and address any problem areas as quickly as possible. Also be sure tailgate talks and safety discussions continue to take place – from a social distance, of course.

**3. Showing compassion.** Recognize that this is a difficult time for everyone, whether it's your employees or customers. Work with them to address specific challenges or concerns. Put the necessary precautions in place to ensure the safety of everyone entering your sites and ask them if they feel comfortable about the steps that are being taken. Allow for time off due to stress and especially illness, if needed.

**4. Monitoring employees' mental states.** Construction workers may not be on the frontlines of the crisis, but they are certainly close to it. The increased exposure on top of the job that already carries a certain level of risk can push some workers over the

brink. The industry already has the highest rate of suicide of any sector. Train staff to recognized signs of mental distress and suicidal tendencies.

**5. Giving hope.** While the coronavirus may seem like a never-ending bad news story, there is reason to be hopeful and there are some signs that we may pull out of this mess in the near future. Find the positive news stories where you can and pass them along. Reassure your employees and customers that you're in this for the long haul. Then make sure you are by staying informed about your company's position and managing costs that are within your control. ■

*Editor's note: Becky Schultz has served as editor of Equipment Today magazine since 1998. This article was excerpted from a piece that appeared at ForConstructionPros.com. To read the article in its entirety, visit [www.forconstructionpros.com/blog/21128525](http://www.forconstructionpros.com/blog/21128525).*



**Becky Schultz,**  
Editor,  
Equipment Today

**Becky Schultz, Editor, Equipment Today, offers five things you can control during uncertain times such as the COVID-19 pandemic. They include how you communicate and listen, among others.**





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# AGC 'Culture of CARE' program designed to help firms create more welcoming workplace environments

A new Associated General Contractors of America (AGC) initiative is aimed at increasing diversity in the construction industry and making jobsites more inclusive. Called Culture of CARE (commit, attract, retain and empower), its purpose is to help firms offer a more welcoming workplace environment for staff, particularly those from varied demographic backgrounds.

"We are asking companies to take bold and visible steps toward creating a more diverse, safe, welcoming and inclusive construction industry," said Stephen E. Sandherr, AGC's Chief Executive Officer. "This new program will attract the kind of diverse staff that research shows help construction firms become more innovative, safe, effective and profitable."

Culture of CARE calls on construction firms to sign a pledge to create more welcoming and inclusive workplace cultures. After signing the pledge, AGC will work with them to provide training and suggested human resources practices designed to help them take action. Education materials are available from the program, including sample HR policies, toolbox talks, jobsite posters and hardhat stickers.

Those interested can sign the pledge at [www.buildingculture.org](http://www.buildingculture.org). More information about the program, as well as other resources, are also available on the website.

### Safety and financial benefits

Sandherr noted that Culture of CARE is based on a program first launched by the AGC of Washington Chapter in the Pacific Northwest. The national association's Diversity & Inclusion Council evaluated the state program and determined that it was a powerful tool to support the industry's efforts to become more diverse and inclusive. In addition to the CARE program, AGC of America has already released its Business Case for Diversity & Inclusion in the Construction Industry, which provides the economic, safety and productivity rationale for expanding construction diversity.

"Culture of CARE has the potential to support a broad expansion of the diversity of the construction industry," said Rita Brown, Chair of AGC's Diversity & Inclusion Council. "We want to provide the tools needed to recruit, retain and support people of all backgrounds." ■

**The Associated General Contractors of America (AGC) is focusing on increasing diversity in construction and making jobsites more inclusive through its Culture of CARE (commit, attract, retain and empower) initiative. "This new program will attract the kind of diverse staff that research shows help construction firms become more innovative, safe, effective and profitable," said Stephen E. Sandherr, AGC's Chief Executive Officer.**



# New excavator offers fast cycle times, high productivity in machine designed for easy transport on tag trailer



Andrew Earing,  
Komatsu Senior  
Product Manager,  
Tracked Equipment

Whether you’re a contractor just starting out or an established firm running multiple pieces of equipment, a basic digging machine likely suits your operation. Easy transport from job to job is an added bonus.

“Not all projects involve moving massive amounts of dirt; for instance, agriculture applications such as field tile repair to light utility and municipality work,” said Andrew Earing, Komatsu Senior Product Manager, Tracked Equipment. “With fast cycle times, a maximum digging depth of more than 17 feet and high productivity, the new PC130-11 is a good fit.”

Earing added that the excavator is highly portable. Komatsu’s smallest conventional tail swing can be moved with a tag trailer and still have capacity to spare for additional support equipment.

“Mobility is a real asset with the PC130-11,” said Earing. “When a contractor finishes one job, they can quickly load this excavator and be on the way to the next. When they get there, it’s a matter of minutes to unload and start digging. That increases production time.”

### Ready for the challenge

Earing added that like all Komatsu equipment, the PC130-11 is built for the long haul, as well as for versatility.

“It has steel castings in the boom foot, boom nose and arm tip,” he said. “That provides durability for years to come. Additionally, the excavator is available with plus-one piping as an option, so you can run attachments, such as a thumb or hammer, providing the capability to perform multiple applications and potentially boost profits.” ■

### Brief Specs on Komatsu’s PC130-11 Excavator

Model	Operating Weight	Horsepower	Bucket Capacity
PC130-11	28,660 lb	97.2 hp	0.76 cu. yd

Komatsu’s smallest conventional tail-swing excavator, the PC130-11 is a versatile digging machine for projects such as field tile installation, light utility and municipal work. It can be moved on a tag trailer with capacity to spare.



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**Marv Selge / Selge Construction, Inc. / Niles, MI**

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# Automatic, semi-auto systems in new wheel loader assist operators during V-cycle loading



Robert Hussey,  
Komatsu Product  
Marketing Manager



Discover more

Experienced operators know that V-cycle loading can be a challenging application that takes time to master. One way to speed up the learning curve is with machinery features that assist in automating the process, according to Robert Hussey, Komatsu Product Marketing Manager.

“Several factors are part of a successful loading cycle, including proper digging into the pile to get a full bucket, approaching the truck, dumping, backing up and turning,” said Hussey. “Helping new operators become proficient as quickly as possible is essential. We took that into account when designing our updated quarry, aggregate and mining loaders, including the new WA800-8.”

Hussey highlighted three key systems that contribute to productivity and efficiency, which can be used together or separately to automate the work phases when V-cycle loading haul trucks:

- **Automatic dig** optimizes bucket load, actuating the bucket tilt and lifting operations by sensing the pressure applied to the work equipment.
- **Semi-automatic approach** raises the boom automatically when reversing out of the pile. The lift arms elevate until reaching the upper setting of the boom positioner, allowing the operator to focus on the travel path of the loader.
- **Semi-automatic dump** automatically raises the lift arms and dumps the bucket with the push of a button. After dumping, it levels the bucket and returns the lift arms to the lower boom positioner setting; however, the lift arms will not lower until the bucket has cleared the truck.

### New bucket design, customer-requested features

The WA800-8's bucket has a new shape that includes an increased radius and floor inclination that make it easier to fill and retain material. The spill guard was adjusted to give operators improved visibility to the pile, and sweeper wings on either side protect the front tires.

“We also responded to customer requests by introducing a modulation clutch for optimal tractive effort and throttle lock that improves cycle times by maintaining high work-equipment performance and saves fuel with auto-deceleration.” ■

#### Quick Specs on Komatsu's WA800-8 Quarry, Aggregate, Mining Wheel Loader

Net Horsepower	Operating Weight	Bucket Capacity	Ideal Truck Match
854 hp	254,700 lb	15 cu yd	60- to 100-ton

With automatic dig, semi-automatic approach and semi-automatic dump systems, the WA800-8 assists operators in V-cycle loading. “Helping new operators become proficient more quickly is essential. We took that into account as we began designing our updated quarry, aggregate and mining loaders, including the new WA800-8,” said Robert Hussey, Komatsu Product Marketing Manager.





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# Contractor keeps moving with a fleet of intelligent Machine Control and standard equipment



**Kelly Fulfer,**  
Owner/President



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**B**efore earning his high school diploma, Kelly Fulfer was an experienced operator who had chosen a career path in construction. As a teen, he worked part time for a contractor and was running a backhoe by his junior year.

"During my senior year I had only a couple of classes, so I worked during the day, too," recalled Fulfer. "If the project was close to the school, I would just drive the backhoe between there and the jobsite."

Today, Fulfer spends less time on machinery and more on overseeing his business, Superior Construction & Excavating, which is a full-service sitework company that also has its own gravel pits. The business typically runs 12 to 15 jobs at once. Recent assignments included a subdivision that called for excavating a pond with close to 270,000 cubic yards of dirt that was kept on site and spread for fill and grading.

### Spot-on accuracy in all materials

Superior Construction & Excavating operators used Komatsu intelligent Machine Control (iMC) D61PXi-23 and D61PXi-24 dozers

to construct the ponds, build subgrade for roads and level lots.

"The accuracy is spot-on, no matter the application," said Operator Justin Bollinger. "I love that there are no masts and cables to deal with. Set up is easy. Once a model is downloaded, it's a matter of getting in the machine, doing a quick calibration and letting it do the work. If you have an area to fill, it will place the materials as fast as the truck drivers can dump them. The blade holds grade no matter how fast I push or what material I'm placing."

Fulfer acquired the iMC dozers not long after he started using standard Komatsu equipment in his fleet. He now has more than 20 machines, including excavators, dozers, wheel loaders and articulated dump trucks.

"We had hydraulic component issues with another brand and that led to a need to rebuild several engines in a short time, so we took a look at Komatsu," said Fulfer. "(Our distributor) put together an impressive package of machines. Equally important is service. (They) have been excellent to work with." ■

Superior Construction & Excavating Operator Justin Bollinger fine grades dirt with a Komatsu intelligent Machine Control D61PXi-24 dozer. "The accuracy is spot-on, no matter the application," said Bollinger. "I love that there are no masts and cables to deal with. Set up is easy. Once a model is downloaded, it's a matter of getting in the machine, doing a quick calibration and letting it do the work"

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# Powerful, versatile VÖGELE pavers are designed for highway, large-scale projects

**V**ÖGELE's new SUPER 2000-3i and SUPER 2003-3i 10-foot pavers are designed for large commercial projects like highway construction. Developed specifically for North American customers, both the tracked 2000-3i and wheeled 2003-3i deliver power and versatility in one package.

The driving force behind the machines is the powerful 6-cylinder, 250-horsepower diesel engine. With the VÖGELE EcoPlus low-emissions package, intelligent engine management supports low fuel consumption and low noise operation.

The large cooler assembly guarantees that the power unit delivers full output at all times. With innovative air routing and a variable-speed fan, temperatures are continually kept in the optimum range. This positively influences engine life and oil consumption, enabling the pavers to work in all climate regions.

Additionally, self-diagnostics and sensors for all critical engine functions virtually eliminate daily maintenance checks.

Each model is equipped with the latest version of VÖGELE's ErgoPlus 3 operating

system, which includes several ergonomic and functional features. The screed console has a large color display that can be conventionally shifted to either side of the operator's platform.

### Paving efficiency

Both the SUPER 2000-3i and 2003-3i have large material hoppers with a capacity of 16.5 tons. The hydraulically operated hopper front prevents mix from spilling when feed trucks change and ensures complete emptying, without requiring any manual work. A wide conveyor tunnel and powerful separate hydraulic drives support a laydown rate of up to 1,540 tons.

The pavers feature VÖGELE's Niveltronic Plus Automated Grade and Slope Control – a unique system that provides the basis for efficient paving that is true-to-line and level on any kind of base.

Efficient machine operation can be enhanced with the addition of VÖGELE 600-series Extending Screeds to meet any application. The VF 600 improves the pavers' maximum paving widths to 25 feet, 6 inches; the VR 600 extends to 28 feet, 3 inches; and the AB 600 allows for coverage of up to 27 feet, 11 inches. ■

**Quick Specs for VÖGELE's SUPER 2000-3i and SUPER 2003-3i Pavers**

Model	Paving Width	Laydown Rate	Max Weight	Horsepower
<b>SUPER 2000-3i (tracked)</b>	9 ft, 10 in	1,540 ton/hr	49,490 lb	250 hp
<b>SUPER 2003-3i (wheeled)</b>	9 ft, 10 in	1,540 ton/hr	49,420 lb	250 hp

Developed specifically for North American customers, both the VÖGELE tracked SUPER 2000-3i and wheeled SUPER 2003-3i deliver power and versatility in one package.



## Mike Gidaspow says that the features and technology in today's equipment are the result of connecting with customers

*This is one of a series of articles based on interviews with key people at Komatsu discussing the company's commitment to its customers in the construction and mining industries – and their visions for the future.*



**Mike Gidaspow, Director, Sales and Marketing, U.S. Central and Canadian Regions**

Mike Gidaspow said that when he joined Komatsu it fulfilled a childhood wish. He started with the company as a test engineer executing performance and stress testing of equipment.

"Growing up, I had visions of working for a car-review magazine and performance testing automobiles," said Gidaspow. "Construction equipment was pretty close, so it was a bit of a dream come true."

Komatsu was Gidaspow's second job after graduating from Illinois Tech with a degree in mechanical engineering. It has since led to a 20-year career with the company and an MBA from the University of Chicago. During that time, he has held several positions in design engineering, strategy, product marketing and sales.

In his current role as Director, Sales and Marketing, U.S. Central and Canadian Regions, Gidaspow works directly with Komatsu distributors to acquire equipment and assists them in helping their customers find the right machinery to fit their needs.

"There are new challenges and opportunities every day in this industry," Gidaspow stated. "When you work with an individual or a company to come up with solutions that make their business more efficient and potentially more profitable, that's a real win for everyone. And, the equipment is fun. That's what makes this career so enjoyable."

When he's not in the field with distributors and customers, Gidaspow enjoys spending time with his family traveling, biking and doing other outdoor activities. He and his wife, Julie, have two sons. ■

**QUESTION:** During the past few years, Komatsu has emphasized talking with customers in the field. Why is that so important?

**ANSWER:** Those visits with contractors and individuals give us tremendous perspective about what's happening in the industries we serve. What challenges are they facing? What are their pain points with equipment? We use that information and feedback to develop machines and support solutions that are designed to increase efficiency and production and, hopefully, make the end user more profitable.

**QUESTION:** That's surely been a challenge with COVID-19. How are you adapting?

**ANSWER:** Much like everyone else, we are doing a lot of remote video conferencing. There have been some growing pains, but also positives, such as the ability to "meet" and talk with more people each day. It's not the same as talking face-to-face, shaking hands and being on a jobsite – and we hope to be able to get back to that very soon – but it's a fair substitute.

At CONEXPO, we placed a strong emphasis on Smart Construction and its ability to increase efficiencies with technology. A big component of it is having fewer people on the jobsite and more people working remotely. That seems to have gained acceptance faster with the current situation. Customers have really embraced remote technology, such as KOMTRAX and intelligent Machine Control, to monitor and manage their machinery.

**QUESTION:** Do you see this as a long-term trend?

**ANSWER:** We were already seeing it to some degree, but it appears to have accelerated under the circumstances. Customers are asking what tools we have to help them better function in this situation, and we believe they will continue to do more and more going forward.

**QUESTION:** Will technology continue to play an ever-increasing role?

**ANSWER:** It certainly will, and the faster equipment users accept and implement it, the faster they will see the positives. Technology is transforming construction. It's giving companies the ability to get results in less time. Drone surveys provide actionable





In-the-field conversations provide Komatsu with first-hand feedback on what customers seek to make their operations more efficient and productive. “Those visits with contractors and individuals give us tremendous perspective about what’s happening in the industries we serve,” said Mike Gidaspow, Director, Sales and Marketing, U.S. Central and Canadian Regions. “We use that information and feedback to develop machines and support solutions that are designed to increase efficiency and production and, hopefully, make the end user more profitable.”

data that can be acted on much more quickly than with traditional surveying methods. Remote file transfer to an intelligent machine delivers real-time information about changes to plans. That replaces driving to the jobsite. Those are just a couple of the numerous ways technology is changing the landscape.

**QUESTION: Komatsu Chairman and CEO Rod Schrader serves on the board of the Associated Equipment Manufacturers (AEM) and you are on its I Make America committee. Why is this involvement important?**

**ANSWER:** These groups are comprised of individuals and companies who advocate for common causes. For instance, AEM has all types of manufacturers, including our competitors, who want to bring awareness to issues such as increased infrastructure investment. We know we have a stronger voice, and, if we work together, we can hopefully get Congress to pass meaningful legislation that has a positive effect on the country, such as better roads, bridges and utility systems.

Another area we are supporting is increased investment in workforce development, so we can get the word out that manufacturing and construction are great, well-paying career choices. ■



Mike Gidaspow, Director, Sales and Marketing, U.S. Central and Canadian Regions, says technology will continue to play an ever-increasing role in construction machinery, including GPS grading systems, such as Komatsu’s intelligent Machine Control.



## MyKomatsu web-based solution simplifies fleet management and e-commerce



Rizwan Mirza,  
Komatsu Manager,  
Telematics, Products  
& Services Division



Tom Hergenreder,  
Komatsu Marketing  
Manager, Parts

Fleet management is essential to machine health, ensuring maximum uptime and, in turn, production. Keeping track of data across multiple jobsites and ordering maintenance items through various online platforms can make it a challenge.

"Quick access to critical information is vital," said Rizwan Mirza, Komatsu Manager, Telematics, Products & Services Division. "Customers told us they wanted to be able to access their fleet data at any time, from a single site where it's organized in a standard way. We responded with MyKomatsu, a complimentary web-based solution that integrates many legacy systems to deliver intelligence that assists customers in running their businesses."

### Actionable resources at your fingertips

MyKomatsu enables users to visualize and evaluate their assets with fleet-wide or equipment-specific information from any device and order Komatsu Genuine Parts.

"Combining parts ordering capabilities and telematics allows customers to monitor machine conditions and quickly order parts when needed," said Tom Hergenreder, Komatsu Marketing Manager, Parts.

Hergenreder added that ordering parts is easy with checkout similar to that of online shopping sites. "Customers receive a tracking number to keep tabs on the order. With flexible shipping options, they can conveniently have their parts delivered virtually anywhere, including directly to their jobsites or have them waiting at their local distributor's parts counter."

Fleets can be viewed on a map or list and highlighted with quick statistics from the past day, week or month. "Starting from a fleet view, users can easily check the performance of their fleet or an individual machine," Mirza explained.

"Working hours, fuel, idle time, working modes, CARE reports, standard and extended warranty details, recommended parts lists based on machine hours and more are available," added Hergenreder.

"The parts recommendation feature makes it easier to quickly identify the maintenance items that are coming due for service, without the need for extensive searching."

Customers can register for a complimentary account on the MyKomatsu website (MyKomatsu.komatsu). After inputting some details, a notice is sent to the local distributor who provides the customers with access. Once activated, users can begin to reap the benefits.

"We are working to add customers' competitive machines to be able to track them, too," said Mirza. "This really does simplify fleet management, marrying it with a simplified e-commerce. We are also working on a mobile app with the same features, which will be available in the near future for both Android and Apple devices." ■





# intelligent Machine Control 2.0 increases dozer productivity with grass-to-grade automatics

Construction companies are always seeking ways to boost production. The combination of today's equipment and technology elevates the ability to do so like never before.

"Aftermarket GPS add-on systems started the trend toward automated grading, and we built on that with the first generation of our integrated intelligent Machine Control (iMC) dozers," said Derek Morris, Komatsu Product Marketing Manager, intelligent Machine Control. "Now, we're introducing the second generation with products that deliver iMC 2.0."

Morris describes iMC 2.0 as a suite of productivity features that utilize advanced machine technology to improve dozer production. It debuted at CONEXPO and was previewed on the D71PXi-24, Komatsu's newest and largest hydrostatic dozer to date. The D71 will be available later this year, and iMC 2.0 will be available on other dozers later this year as well.

One of the key attributes of iMC 2.0 is the previously introduced patent-pending proactive dozing control that automatically cuts and strips from existing terrain like an experienced operator, 100 percent of the time. During operation, the dozer measures the terrain it tracks and uses the track-level data to

plan the next pass, making it 60 percent more productive than previous-generation iMC models, according to Komatsu.

### Improved automation

New features of iMC 2.0 include patent-pending lift layer control, which automatically spreads fill from existing terrain with one press of a button. Much like proactive dozing control, this option also tracks the terrain and uses that data to plan the next pass, which doubles production and achieves consistent layers for quality compaction.

Tilt steering control automatically tilts the blade to maintain straight travel during rough dozing, reducing the need for operator steering input by 80 percent.

Quick surface creation creates a temporary design surface with one press of the button. When combined with other iMC 2.0 functions, operators can begin stripping or spreading using automatic without waiting – or the need – for a complex 3D model.

"iMC 2.0 uses a new system architecture to deliver automatics from grass to grade," said Morris. "It really is the next evolution of iMC and further enhances operators' ability to increase production." ■



**Derek Morris,**  
Komatsu Product  
Marketing Manager,  
intelligent Machine  
Control

Komatsu introduced intelligent Machine Control 2.0 during CONEXPO and previewed the D71PXi-24, which features the second-generation technology. The system allows operators to run fully automatic from first-to-last pass with key features that boost productivity by up to 60 percent.





# Adding automatic lubrication system can sustain vital components' performance, longevity



**Scott Ruderman,**  
Komatsu Product  
Marketing Manager



**Dan Varon,**  
Graco Market  
Specialist

**P**roper greasing completed at recommended intervals is vital to the performance and longevity of components. Komatsu Product Marketing Manager Scott Ruderman emphasized that one way to stay on schedule is with an automatic lubrication system.

"Equipment has several grease points, and it takes time to manually hit them all," said Ruderman. "In some cases, those tasks are done multiple times a day. The chance of missing one can potentially be very costly. An automatic lubrication system eliminates that possibility by dispersing a metered amount of grease to each individual point at set intervals during operation."

### Easy to use

Ruderman said systems from Komatsu-allied vendors, such as Graco, should be considered and are available for trucks, wheel loaders and excavators. They are pre-installed on new machines or come as a field-install kit for equipment already in the field. Working together, the two companies ensured that a Graco automatic lubrication system meets Komatsu's recommended grease intervals.

"Ideally, once it's set to Komatsu's recommendation, no additional adjustment is needed," said Dan Varon, Graco Market Specialist. "However, you can manually regulate the amount of grease. For example, if

operators notice that they are raising the dump body more than usual, they can increase the interval for that individual point."

Varon added that newer Graco systems, such as the one used with a Komatsu HD605 haul truck, have enhanced features. Its GLC X controller and Auto Lube™ app are Bluetooth-enabled for remote condition monitoring and data logging. Information can be tracked via the smartphone app and exported to a common data file for maintenance records. Additional components include the new Compact Dyna-Star® pump that reduces weight, increases platform space and has continuous level monitoring.

Wheel loaders and excavators use a GLC™2200 controller to control the pump and monitor the level of grease and system performance. Working in conjunction with the controller is Graco's G3™ pump, featuring an 8-liter translucent reservoir with stir paddle and a low-level monitoring switch. The series progressive system feeds a set of divider valves to deliver the predetermined volume of grease to each point.

"Both systems have convenient ground-level ports for refilling the reservoir quickly without the need to climb on the machine," Ruderman noted. "Using auto lube is highly recommended for keeping vital parts moving and preventing premature failure." ■

**Automatic lubricating systems for trucks, wheel loaders and excavators are pre-installed or come as field-install kits for equipment already in the field. The systems ensure greasing at recommended intervals to maximize component performance and longevity.**





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# Komatsu supports Feeding America as national partner in COVID-19 response efforts, donating funds to aid food banks



Rod Schrader,  
Chairman and CEO,  
Komatsu North America

More than 37 million Americans face hunger each year. Recently, as the COVID-19 pandemic pushed millions more into food insecurity, Komatsu's North American business units partnered with Feeding America, the nation's largest domestic hunger-relief organization, to donate up to \$250,000 to support the organization.

"The hunger crisis grew quickly in the face of COVID-19," said Rod Schrader, Chairman and CEO of Komatsu's North American operations. "We are honored to partner with Feeding America to support their work to rapidly scale to meet the rising needs of our communities."

In May, Feeding America predicted that its network of local food banks would need an additional \$1.4 billion during a six-month period to provide food assistance to people facing hunger – a 30-percent increase to the nonprofit organization's operating costs. The network of 200 food banks works with more than 60,000 soup kitchens, food pantries, churches and other community organizations to deliver food, even in the midst of a global pandemic.

"Feeding America is grateful to Komatsu and its employees for their generous support of our neighbors who face hunger during these uncertain times," said Lauren Bierdron, Vice President of Corporate Partnerships at Feeding America. "Their donation will help food banks serve communities hit the hardest by the COVID-19 pandemic."

## Matching employee donations

Komatsu America Corp., Komatsu Mining Corp., Modular Mining and Hensley Industries – all North America subsidiaries of Komatsu Ltd. – are joining together in the effort. The business units are donating \$150,000 and are providing a two-for-one match of employee donations up to \$50,000.

The companies are dedicating an additional \$100,000 to local organizations in the communities in which they operate throughout North America to support specific charitable efforts and needs in the areas of medical supplies and support, food insecurity and community funds. ■

Komatsu's North American business units partnered with Feeding America, donating up to \$250,000 to the organization's efforts to provide food assistance to those facing hunger. "We are honored to partner with Feeding America to support their work to rapidly scale to meet the rising needs of our communities," said Rod Schrader, Chairman and CEO of Komatsu's North American operations.





# Travis Heseltine loves the daily variety, challenge that come with inside parts sales career

**W**hile some tasks are occasionally repeated, no two days are ever exactly the same for Travis Heseltine, who handles inside parts sales for a Komatsu distributor.

"It's hard to believe such variety after 21 years in a parts department, but that's a great advantage to this job," emphasized Heseltine. "Sure, there are some jobs I do on a routine basis to keep things in proper working order; however, I never have that sense of 'here we go again' doing the same thing over and over, day after day."

Working in a parts department has been the one constant in Heseltine's life since he joined the distributor in 1999 after serving in the U.S. Army for five years. While in the service, he was a radio operator and worked with computers and automation.

"That training fit right into the current parts world, which has become increasingly automated, Heseltine pointed out. "When I started, parts books on CD were the big thing. Now, pretty much everything is online. Today, when a customer places an order by phone or online, we can find what they need in seconds after a few mouse clicks. I put the order together and send it to the warehouse for them to pull the part or parts to be ready for pick up, delivery or shipping."

### Priority on speed, affordability

Heseltine helps locate and secure parts for both internal use – which includes the distributor's shop – and for external customers either through his company's warehouse locations or directly from the inventories of Komatsu and other manufacturers.

"The sooner we can get machines back into production the better, and that's why most common items are kept in stock, as well as a large inventory of replacement parts," Heseltine explained. "If we don't have something, in most instances, we can get it in fairly short order. I try for the fastest, most cost-effective means for the customer."

Case-in-point involved a recent order from a mine for radiator coolers. Heseltine worked with a freight company to ensure delivery

of the coolers to the customer within its specific timeframe.

"It was a challenge, but anytime you deliver for the customer and make them happy, it's a good feeling," said Heseltine. "I enjoy what I do, or I would not have stayed with it this long. The equipment industry is great, and parts are a critical piece of the puzzle. You can't fix machines without them. I love the day-to-day activity and the interactions with co-workers and customers alike. I'm glad I found this job and made a career out of it." ■

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**"I'm glad I found this job and made a career out of it."**

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Travis Heseltine (below) looks up at a part on his distributor's inventory. "I enjoy what I do, or I would not have stayed with it this long," said Heseltine of inside sales. "The equipment industry is great, and parts are a critical piece of the puzzle. You can't fix machines without them. I love the day-to-day activity and the interactions with co-workers and customers alike. I'm glad I found this job and made a career out of it."





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