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BACKHOE LOADERS: JCB's new 3CX PLUS and PRO raise the bar

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Capital Equipment News is published monthly by Crown Publications

Managing Editor
Wilhelm du Plessis
capnews@crown.co.za

Advertising manager
Elmarie Stonell
elmaries@crown.co.za

Writer
Juanita Pienaar
jpienaar@crown.co.za

Design
Ano Shumba

Publisher
Wilhelm du Plessis

Managing Director
Karen Grant

Circulation
Karen Smith

PO Box 140
Bedfordview 2008
Tel: (011) 622-4770

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SOUTH AFRICA'S TRUCKING SECTOR FACES A ROUGH ROAD AHEAD

In the vast network that keeps South Africa's economy moving, the trucking industry is the backbone of logistics. But in 2025, that backbone is under extraordinary strain. Crumbling infrastructure, rising crime, economic pressure, and regulatory burdens have combined to create a perfect storm for transport operators - and the ripple effects are being felt across every corner of the supply chain.

The collapse of rail and port efficiency has pushed a greater burden onto the roads. Transnet, South Africa's state-owned logistics utility, remains beset by cable theft, underinvestment, aging equipment, and mismanagement. While the government has extended a R51-billion guarantee to stabilise Transnet, recovery has been slow and uncertain. With unreliable railways and congested ports, companies are increasingly forced to divert freight to trucks, even when it's less efficient and more costly.

This added pressure comes at a time when road freight operators are grappling with mounting costs. Fuel prices remain volatile, interest rates are high, and input expenses - ranging from tyres to licensing fees - have surged. For many operators, profit margins are wafer-thin or negative. Smaller firms, in particular, are finding it harder to survive.

Perhaps the most urgent threat to the sector is the rise in cargo crime. Truck hijackings and theft are now daily occurrences, particularly on key freight corridors like the N3 and N4 highways.

**Wilhelm du Plessis -
MANAGING EDITOR**



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In some areas, logistics firms are forced to hire armed escorts or reroute deliveries to avoid dangerous zones.

The human toll is also becoming more visible. A growing shortage of skilled, licensed drivers is being worsened by regulatory red tape. There are too few drivers with the correct permits - like Code 14 licences and Professional Driving Permits (PrDPs). Many smaller operators can't keep up with the compliance burden. Health and wellness issues add another layer: recent assessments showed that nearly a third of long-haul drivers are medically unfit for duty, with high rates of obesity, vision problems, and chronic fatigue. These health risks impact not just the drivers but also road safety and productivity.

Technology, often seen as the great equaliser, remains out of reach for many. Larger companies are beginning to adopt fleet management systems, predictive maintenance, and real-time tracking. But smaller and mid-sized firms are unable to invest in costly digital tools or shift to cleaner energy vehicles. In South Africa the shift towards electric trucks or low-emission fleets is still years away.

Fragmentation in the logistics ecosystem makes matters worse. Disconnected supply chains, poor regional road maintenance, and unreliable route planning tools further complicate delivery scheduling. Many logistics providers operate independently, with little coordination or shared infrastructure, which makes optimisation nearly impossible.

While the national government has committed billions toward logistics infrastructure upgrades and launched new programmes to invite private sector investment in rail, the trucking industry is still waiting for results. Political promises have been made before, and stakeholders are rightly cautious about relying on words over action. For now, many are focused on surviving, not scaling.

Ultimately, South Africa's trucking sector finds itself in a precarious position. It remains essential to the economy as it moves goods across vast distances where rail has failed. However, it is also vulnerable. Without coordinated efforts to improve security, support operators, fix infrastructure, and modernise operations, the road ahead looks long, costly, and uncertain. 🌀



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The G140 is well suited to all maintenance and light to medium construction tasks and is fitted with the ZF ERGOPOWER transmission, which is well respected in the grading application for entry level units.



BELL GRADERS: IMPRESSING OPERATORS WITH PRECISION PERFORMANCE

Production of the highly anticipated Bell Motor Grader range has started in the company's Richards Bay factory with the first units ready for sale in August for Stage 3 developing markets. The launch of the product line is a significant milestone for the South African manufacturing industry and a testament to Bell's innovation and listening to customers' needs.

According to Bell Equipment Product Manager, Jeremiah Mokhomo, the company has drawn upon its 70 years of design and manufacturing experience and spent years of expensive research and development to ensure that Bell Graders are able to demonstrate their capabilities in a variety of demanding applications.

Highlighting the Grader's robust design and reliability, he says: "Grading applications demand a powerful and dependable machine that can consistently deliver precision and efficiency. Our new Bell Motor Graders have been rigorously tested to ensure they meet the highest industry expectations. We are confident that they will compare favourably with established industry leaders."



A versatile product for international markets

The Bell Motor Grader range consists of three base models, each available in either a 4WD or 6WD configuration. The G140 is well suited to all maintenance and light to medium construction tasks. The G160, with its increased power and performance, is designed to handle heavy construction applications, while the G200 is designed for bulk earthworks and the mining industry.

In addition to these three models, Bell will start production with the G140 ECO – the base spec unit for the G140 – which is well suited to public sector opportunities, lighter construction or agricultural applications.

Mokhomo explains: “From the outset, we factored in the requirements of a six-wheel drive configuration. This early integration, as opposed to trying to add it to the platform later, has resulted in a better-performing, more controllable, and robust



“From the outset, we factored in the requirements of a six-wheel drive configuration. This early integration, as opposed to trying to add it to the platform later, has resulted in a better-performing, more controllable, and robust machine that is easier to maintain.”

Bell Equipment Product Manager,
Jeremiah Mokhomo.

TALKING POINT



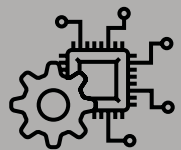
Bell Equipment’s test and pre-production Graders have been operating with great success in a wide variety of applications from landscaping through heavy ripping and final levels to overall road construction.

QUICK TAKE

The Cummins engines are known for their quiet operation, fuel efficiency, low maintenance, and reliability, and they met our expectations during testing.



Automation allows the operator to focus on precision grading while benefiting from improved fuel efficiency and extended component life.



Grading applications demand a powerful and dependable machine that can consistently deliver precision and efficiency.



The Bell Motor Grader range consists of three base models, each available in either a 4WD or 6WD configuration.





Automation has been one of the significant drivers in the motor grader design process to allow the operator to be more focused on the job at hand and the final product of his grade while still improving fuel efficiency and component life expectancy.

machine that is easier to maintain. The significant improvement in performance achieved by adding front-wheel drive is only useful if it is reliable for the life of the grader, so we have invested time to make sure this is the case.”

Bell Motor Graders are powered by Cummins engines paired with ZF transmissions. The Bell G140 is fitted with a 6.7l Cummins engine and ZF ERGOPOWER transmission while the larger G160 and G200 are driven by a 9l Cummins engine with the ZF cPOWER transmission.

Mokhomo says: “The Cummins engines are known for their quiet operation, fuel efficiency, low maintenance, and reliability, and they met our expectations during testing. Additionally, these engines are Stage 3A certified, do not require exhaust gas recirculation (EGR), and are compatible with both hydrotreated vegetable oil (HVO) and B20 biodiesel. Stage 5 Graders will be launched in time and will meet the EU and USA emission regulations.

“The ERGOPOWER transmission is well respected in the grading application for entry-level units and we’re particularly excited about the hydro-mechanical transmissions in the larger models, which are new for the industry and are performing exceptionally well for us in heavier duty applications.

“The Bell Grader is a truly global product, engineered to meet different international emission standards and operator control preferences. We’ve had interest from both local and international markets, with a significant number of enquiries coming through, several of which have already been converted into firm orders, which is a promising indication of market confidence in the product and readiness for another premium grader option in the market.”

The South African launch will be three-pronged and includes a demo day that was held in Cape Town during the Mining Indaba, a KwaZulu-Natal event in Ballito in June, which focused on construction and agriculture customers, and a Gauteng launch in July for construction and mining customers in that region and Bell’s African dealers.

Built for the toughest challenges

Drawing on over two decades of experience in the supply, maintenance, and repair of motor graders, along with insights from industry experts, Bell Equipment has developed a clear view of what is important to make this product work. While retaining familiar controls and layouts, the Bell Motor Grader incorporates a range of advanced components and features that will help operators to improve productivity, accuracy, maintain costs, and deliver work efficiently.

As Bell has achieved success with its ability to intelligently automate specific functions within the ADT industry, automation also played a key role in the Motor Grader design process. This automation allows the operator to focus on precision grading while benefiting from improved fuel efficiency and extended component life.

Recognised the diverse range of applications and often remote uses of motor graders, Bell has standardised on high-quality, low-maintenance components, such as a fully sealed circle bearing. This allows extended service intervals and consistent grading performance without the need to make regular adjustments. To further simplify operations, advanced diagnostics are incorporated into the machine to reduce the complexity of daily checks and servicing.

Utilising industry-leading components for all systems has been instrumental in achieving an efficient and robust machine. “Getting established components to work well together is what our system engineers do well, and in a highly operator-sensitive product like a motor grader, we knew that we had to get the overall feel 100% right.”

Importantly, Bell Equipment’s focus on durability across all structures ensures that the Bell Grader’s gooseneck main frame – engineered as a single piece construction to eliminate fatigue on fabricated joints – will give maximum confidence in hard applications. In addition, the tandem axle, with enhanced bearing life and interaxle cooling, provides reliable performance in long-haul applications.

Proven performance in real-world applications

Bell Equipment’s test and pre-production demo graders have been operating with great success in a wide variety of applications, from landscaping, heavy ripping, and final levels to overall road construction. “It has been really pleasing to see the improvements in efficiency and performance identified during the design stage being confirmed on real-world job sites.

“The launch of this motor grader range is more than just a product release, it’s a statement of Bell Equipment’s commitment to local manufacturing investment, customer support, and long-term value. These machines are built in Africa, for Africa, and we’re confident they will set a new benchmark in performance, reliability, and operator satisfaction across the region,” says Mokhomo. 🌟



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HINO BUILDS MOMENTUM **AMID STRATEGIC INDUSTRY SHIFT**

Capital Equipment News' Juanita Pienaar spoke with Anton Falck, Vice President of Hino at Toyota South Africa Motors, about the company's evolving strategy, future plans, and continued commitment to the local market.



"Our products resonate with South African operators because they are tough and reliable platforms for a wide range of superstructures."

Anton Falck, Vice President of Hino at Toyota South Africa Motors

Strategic partnerships for a changing industry

The global automotive industry is in a period of rapid transformation and, for Hino, staying competitive means forging strategic alliances. Toyota Motor Corporation and Daimler Trucks have recently decided to pool the strengths of their two Japanese truck brands, Hino and Fuso. A new holding company, to be listed on the Tokyo Stock Exchange, will oversee both brands as separate subsidiaries.

"This collaboration allows us to improve efficiencies in product planning, development, purchasing, and manufacturing," explains Anton Falck. "Both Hino and Fuso are very well-established brands, and it makes sense for them to continue to compete as separate entities in the marketplace."

While these changes mark a significant global shift, Falck is clear about the



implications for South Africa: "Toyota South Africa Motors will remain the distributor of Hino products in Southern Africa. There will be no name change or multi-franchising. We believe brand-focused retailing is part of our success for Toyota, Hino, and Lexus."

Market performance and growth

Hino has held its ground in an increasingly competitive market. Falck points to the launch of the new 700 range as a key factor in the brand's recent success. "Thanks to the introduction of our successful new 700 range in the extra heavy commercial vehicle (EHCV) market, as well as our well-established position in the medium and heavy commercial segments, Hino has maintained market share in Southern Africa. We improved our share ranking from sixth in 2023 to fourth in 2024, and this year to date, we are pleased to be the third-ranked brand in Southern Africa, in terms of share of sales."

QUICK TAKE



The global automotive industry is in a period of rapid transformation and, for Hino, staying competitive means forging strategic alliances.



Toyota South Africa Motors will remain the distributor of Hino products in Southern Africa - there will be no name change or multi-franchising.



At the core of Hino's strategy is its renowned "Total Support" programme.



With a robust dealer network, a focus on sustainability, and a customer-first approach, Hino is well-positioned to navigate the changes in the global trucking industry while strengthening its foothold in Southern Africa.



Toyota South Africa Motors will remain the distributor of Hino products in Southern Africa. There will be no name change or multi-franchising. We believe brand-focused retailing is part of our success for Toyota, Hino, and Lexus.



From left: WesBank CEO - Ghana Msibi; Senior Executive Co-Ordinator Hino - Masafumi Kawabata; Hino General Manager - Itumeleng Segage and National Chairperson of the National Automobile Dealers' Association (NADA) - Brandon Cohen.



We ensure that we are there for our truck users and owners in every way they need us to be, from aftersales to purpose-built vehicles for their specific requirements.

The company is also seeing strong performance across its lineup. "Our products resonate with South African operators because they are tough and reliable platforms for a wide range of superstructures. The cost per kilometre is competitive, and our extensive dealer network ensures aftersales support throughout Southern Africa," says Falck.

Innovation and sustainability

As the industry moves towards carbon neutrality, Hino is taking steps to future-proof its product range. "We are currently making the Hino 300 Hybrid available to selected customers," Falck reveals. "This vehicle will be unique in the South African market, allowing operators to significantly reduce fuel consumption and emissions, while maintaining ease of operation."

Additionally, Hino is upgrading its digital capabilities. "We are migrating to Netstar as our new connected truck supplier. This will allow a wider range of data availability for each truck and enable enhanced aftersales support," says Falck.

The company's focus on innovation extends to customer experience as well. "We now offer a range of Hino-approved accessories via our dealers, including bull bars, windscreen protectors, carpet sets, and seat covers," he adds.

Total support as a differentiator

At the core of Hino's strategy is its renowned "Total Support" programme. "Our Total Support approach differentiates us from our competitors," Falck states. "We ensure that we are there for our truck users and owners in every way

they need us to be, from aftersales to purpose-built vehicles for their specific requirements."

This commitment has been recognised in the industry. "We have again been awarded a Platinum Award by NADA based on the 2025 Dealer Satisfaction Index," says Falck. "This marks the seventh time Hino has achieved Platinum status and is testament to the strong relationship between Hino South Africa, our dealers, and our customers."

Future outlook

While the global collaboration is expected to bring long-term benefits, Falck emphasises that there will be no immediate changes to Hino's product lineup or strategy in South Africa. "The opportunities emanating from this new collaboration will take some time to reach the marketplace. For now, our focus remains on supporting our local growth strategies and continuing to provide the quality, durability, and reliability that Hino is known for," he says.

With a robust dealer network, a focus on sustainability, and a customer-first approach, Hino is well-positioned to navigate the changes in the global trucking industry while strengthening its foothold in Southern Africa. 🌍



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JACOBS TRANSPORT TAKES DELIVERY OF SA'S FIRST SCANIA 8X8 HEAVY HAULERS

Capital Equipment News' Juanita Pienaar spoke with Gys Jacobs, Director of Jacobs Transport, and David Reynders, New Vehicle Sales Executive at Scania South Africa, about a landmark moment in heavy haulage: the delivery of the country's first Scania 8x8 trucks.

A new class of heavy hauler

The arrival of Scania's 8x8 trucks marks a significant development in South Africa's logistics and transport industry. According to Reynders, "These trucks are specialised – it's the first time 8x8 heavy haulers of this kind are entering the South African market. Other manufacturers may have 8x4 units, but nothing with this level of gross combination mass of 220 tonnes."

Developed in response to specific operational challenges, these units offer exceptional traction and power, key for super-abnormal loads. "In the heavy haulage market, traction is one of the biggest problems," says Reynders. "With traditional 6x4 trucks, the front axle often lifts, reducing grip. With these 8x8 units, all axles provide traction, solving that issue entirely."

Built to spec

The trucks' journey from concept to delivery has been long and highly customised. While they originate from Scania's base in Sweden, the final configuration is the result of several levels of modification. "They're first built as rigids in Sweden, then sent to Luxor where they're transformed into 8x8 configurations," explains Reynders.

Additional engineering was handled locally. "We worked with SHE Engineering to make region-specific modifications," he says. "These trucks didn't come out of the factory ready for South African conditions, our engineering partner made sure they would thrive here."

From a legislative standpoint, everything had to be compliant. "It wasn't just about what the truck could physically do," Reynders notes. "It had to be 100% legal under South African road regulations."

Jacobs Transport leads the way

Jacobs Transport is the first South African company to take delivery of the new Scania 8x8 trucks – three units, in total. But for Gys Jacobs, this wasn't about making headlines. "I didn't think about it as being 'the first' at the time," he admits. "We needed the vehicles for a project. It was only afterwards that I realised it was a big deal – especially for Scania."

Jacobs Transport has been steadily expanding into super abnormal transport, a segment defined by payloads over 125 tonnes. "That's when traction becomes non-negotiable," Jacobs explains. "The



normal 6x4s and even 8x4s just don't offer enough grip, especially when you hit gradients like the ones on wind farms. The 8x8 gives us power on every wheel – no spinning, no struggling."

He adds that the move is strategic. "After this purchase, we might just be the biggest super abnormal transporter in South Africa," he says. "We're not talking general abnormal, we're talking super large."

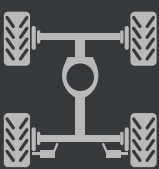
Operational gains and market impact

Beyond power and traction, the 8x8 configuration offers real operational efficiencies. "Before, we needed two truck tractors for these types of loads," says Jacobs. "Now, one 8x8 can do the job alone. That's one less driver, one less licence, less fuel, and more fleet availability for other jobs."


Scania's Reynders confirms that these efficiencies are a game changer. "This isn't just about horsepower," he explains. "It's about reliability, backup, and running costs. Jacobs Transport is a long-time client because we've proven ourselves on those fronts."

The 8x8 trucks feature 620hp engines and Euro 5 compliance, in line with


QUICK TAKE




These trucks are specialised – it's the first time 8x8 heavy haulers of this kind are entering the South African market.



In the heavy haulage market, traction is one of the biggest problem.



Traditional 6x4 trucks, the front axle often lifts, reducing grip.



With a robust service network spanning Southern Africa and strong aftersales support, Scania is ready. All technicians are trained, and our parts strategy ensures high availability.



global sustainability efforts. "More clients, especially those handling public infrastructure or bidding for tenders, are demanding cleaner fleets," Reynders adds. "AdBlue systems and Euro 5 ratings are fast becoming baseline requirements."

A home on the road for drivers

Long hauls and restricted operating hours mean drivers often sleep roadside,

and Scania has taken that into account. "These cabs are like mobile homes," says Reynders. "Fridges, microwaves, double sleeper bunks – everything you need. When drivers are confined to specific time windows, comfort and rest become crucial for safety and productivity."

Jacobs hasn't spent much time in the cab himself yet. "I haven't even seen inside," he laughs. "But I've seen the



From left: Jan and Gys Jacobs – Directors of Jacobs Transport and David Reynders, New Vehicle Sales Executive at Scania South Africa.



powertrain specs – and that's what matters for now. I'll leave the cab experience to the guys on the road."

Momentum builds across the market

While Jacobs Transport may be first, they certainly won't be the last. "Other clients are already placing orders," says Reynders. "There's a sudden boom in demand for heavy haulers – wind farms, transformers, coastal shipyards. One

client told me if I had 20 of the 6x4s in stock, they'd take them all today."

He believes the visibility of Jacobs' units will fuel even more interest. "Once these trucks are seen on the road – and you can't miss them – others will want them too. The mindset is shifting. Customers don't want to be left behind."

Built on trust and track record

For Jacobs, the partnership with Scania

is built on history. "There are cheaper trucks out there, sure," he says. "But Scania has proven itself. My first one lasted over a decade. When we sat down with David and their pre-sales analyst, Michael Marosi, we worked through every spec. That kind of support makes a big difference."

Looking ahead, Jacobs sees continued collaboration. "There's no contract work lined up for these trucks just yet – they'll be used for ad hoc work in SA and cross-border. But more are likely in the future. These are rare beasts. You don't find them behind every bush."

A strategic step for Scania SA

Scania views this rollout as part of a broader regional growth plan. "These trucks will put us on the map in the heavy haulage space," says Reynders. "The market is small, but growing fast. Once these are out there, people will talk, and more orders will follow."

With a robust service network spanning Southern Africa and strong aftersales support, Scania is ready. "All our technicians are trained, and our parts strategy ensures high availability," Reynders adds. "It's about peace of mind. These are big machines doing big jobs. We're here to keep them moving."

As South Africa's logistics sector continues to evolve, the arrival of Scania's 8x8s and Jacobs Transport's pioneering role may well mark the start of a new era in heavy haulage. 🌟

SMART TELEMATICS UNLOCK EFFICIENCY IN SA'S TRANSPORT AND LOGISTICS SECTOR

Webfleet shows how intelligent data can deliver system-wide improvements without compromising competitiveness.



As South Africa continues to grapple with inefficiencies across its transport and logistics infrastructure, smart technology is emerging as a powerful lever for progress. According to Michelle De Freitas, Country Sales Manager at Webfleet South Africa, telematics has a critical role to play in alleviating congestion, improving coordination, and enabling more responsive and sustainable logistics operations.

Recent regulatory developments – including the introduction of targeted block exemptions under the Competition Act – are encouraging greater collaboration between players in infrastructure and logistics. These measures aim to address systemic constraints by allowing companies to share operational data, coordinate maintenance, and jointly plan services – all within a tightly regulated, pro-competition framework.

But regulatory reform alone won't solve the problem. "The real opportunity lies in using advanced fleet management solutions to unlock efficiencies, even as the landscape evolves," says De Freitas. "Modern telematics systems like Webfleet provide real-time, high-quality

data that can be used to improve route optimisation, maintenance scheduling, and asset utilisation – all while ensuring data privacy and compliance."

Technology that drives better decision-making

Unlike basic tracking tools, today's telematics platforms are dynamic and intelligent. These systems enable predictive maintenance through live vehicle diagnostics, optimise routing based on historical and real-time traffic data, and integrate seamlessly with emergency response systems – allowing transport operators to respond faster to incidents like road closures, adverse weather, or civil unrest.

"In times of disruption, fleet managers need both agility and foresight," explains De Freitas. "At Webfleet, we've seen how incorporating artificial intelligence (AI), including generative AI, into fleet solutions helps teams turn complex data into actionable insights and long-term strategies."

Collaboration with control

The success of any collaborative initiative in transport and logistics depends on trust, transparency, and robust data

governance. Advanced telematics tools support secure data sharing between stakeholders – from port authorities to logistics providers – enabling better coordination without risking competitive integrity.

"Operators can choose what data to share, when, and with whom," says De Freitas. "Privacy controls and user permissions are built into the system, ensuring that strategic insights can be shared responsibly while protecting proprietary information."

Telematics in action

Globally, over 50 000 businesses rely on Webfleet to enhance fleet efficiency, support drivers, improve safety, and work more sustainably. In South Africa, these intelligent telematics solutions are helping logistics companies stay competitive in a challenging environment by turning data into a strategic asset.

"Smart telematics is no longer a nice-to-have. It's a business-critical tool that helps transport operators overcome today's challenges and shape tomorrow's solutions – responsibly, sustainably, and competitively," De Freitas concludes. 🌟



JCB'S NEW 3CX PLUS AND PRO RAISE THE BAR

Juanita Pienaar spoke to Daniel Erasmus, District Manager Africa South - Mining & Construction at JCB Sales Ltd, about the manufacturer's latest innovations in the backhoe loader market.

A heritage of leadership

JCB has held its position as the global leader in backhoe loaders for decades, a status it attributes to a relentless drive for innovation. "JCB is the number one Backhoe Loader manufacturer and has been for many years," says Daniel Erasmus. "This is because JCB was the first to market and has continually invested in innovating our products over the last 80 years."

Now, with the launch of the JCB 3CX PLUS and PRO models, the company

aims to further cement this leadership, particularly in key non-legislated markets such as Africa, the Middle East, and Asia.

Responding to customer demands

Modern construction and agricultural customers are demanding more from their machines. "Customers are constantly looking for machines that can do more work whilst reducing costs, as well as offer better operator comfort and ease of use," Erasmus explains.

The new models were designed to address these needs directly. JCB's strategy was clear: create a simplified range that offers varying price points, and prioritise usability, efficiency, and productivity. "Our global strategy is to make the machines easier to use, more efficient, and more productive," he notes.

Game-changing features

So, what sets the JCB 3CX apart from the rest? Erasmus highlights several upgrades that elevate performance, operator experience, and fuel economy.

"The new models introduce features that help customers to reduce costs and increase efficiency, with improved comfort, versatility, and productivity when loading, roading, and excavating,"



"The new models introduce features that help customers to reduce costs and increase efficiency, with improved comfort, versatility, and productivity when loading, roading, and excavating."

Daniel Erasmus, District Manager
Africa South - Mining & Construction
at JCB Sales Ltd

TALKING POINT

QUICK TAKE



JCB has held its position as the global leader in backhoe loaders for decades, a status it attributes to a relentless drive for innovation.



Modern construction and agricultural customers are demanding more from their machines.



Fuel efficiency is another area where the new models shine with features like the Smooth Ride System and auto idle deliver tangible savings.



JCB's 3CX PLUS and PRO models aren't just an upgrade; they are a bold statement of intent.

he says. These features include a completely redesigned cab interior, a single loader lever with F-N-R as standard, LED work lights, Bluetooth radio, and rear axle limited slip differentials (available on the JCB 3CX PRO only).

Other options further enhance productivity, such as shovel-mounted forks and a bi-directional hydraulic circuit.

Designed around the operator

JCB's longstanding belief that "a comfortable operator is a productive operator" has guided the redesign of the cab. "Operators will first notice the completely redesigned interior with a striking new design and high-quality moulded plastics," Erasmus says.

Seat-mounted joystick controls, now standard on the JCB 3CX PRO, offer effortless operation of both the loader



The new models introduce features that help customers to reduce costs and increase efficiency, with improved comfort, versatility, and productivity when loading, roading, and excavating.

and excavator while improving visibility to the rear working area. A new Forward-Neutral-Reverse (F-N-R) directional switch incorporated into the loader lever reduces effort and saves time when changing direction. "This will be a standard feature in addition to the existing column shift control," he adds.

Efficiency meets innovation

Fuel efficiency is another area where the new models shine. Features like the Smooth Ride System and Auto Idle deliver tangible savings. "Auto Idle reduces fuel consumption by automatically dropping the engine to low idle speed if no hydraulic services are active after twenty seconds."



The result? Up to 20% fuel savings compared to earlier models. "With increased focus on operating costs and emissions, introducing fuel savings gives us an advantage that no competitor can match," Erasmus states.

Outperforming the competition

In benchmarking tests, the JCB 3CX PLUS and PRO outperformed competitors. "Benchmarking analysis proves that JCB's new JCB 3CX PLUS and PRO offer class-leading productivity, durability, and ease of use," says Erasmus. "Compared to competitor machines, the new JCB 3CX PLUS is up to 21% more productive

and up to 75% more fuel efficient when excavating."

These gains translate to significant cost savings, with potential operator savings of up to £3 000 (just under R73 000) a year.

A strong value proposition

Residual value is another key strength for JCB. "Our Backhoe Loaders are renowned for being the most productive and reliable, hence the reason why one in every 2 backhoes sold worldwide is a JCB," Erasmus points out. "This reputation is reflected in the market with very strong residual values."

The company's ability to design and

manufacture its own axles, engines, and transmissions gives it an edge. "Doing so has allowed us to fine-tune our components to maximise overall productivity," Erasmus explains.

Market reception

The new models have already made a significant impact. "The launch of our new PLUS and PRO Backhoe models has been a resounding success, and this has reflected in our gains in market share," Erasmus confirms.

Contractors remain the primary customer segment, but the JCB 3CX models are also gaining traction with agricultural users. With the combination of innovative features, class-leading performance, and operator-centric design, JCB's latest machines are poised to maintain the company's dominance in the backhoe loader market.

Client Feedback: A proven performer

Joao da Silva, CEO of QuickSILVA Group, provides a compelling real-world testament to the 3CX's capabilities. "Since 1993, we have relied on the JCB as an excellent, superior, and reliable product that just gets the job done," he says. "About 50% of our fleet consists of JCB TLBs, and they continue to meet all our needs in terms of functionality, reliability, efficiency, and fuel economy."

QuickSILVA Group experimented with alternative brands but decided to remain solely with the JCB TLB. "We did not get the same reliability and efficiency from other brands and, even if we pay a slight premium, the JCB 3CX delivers the best results for total cost of ownership," da Silva explains.

The company's partnership with JCB and its finance partners has also proven invaluable. "Since 2017, we've had an ongoing relationship that offers preferential interest rates and great service. This year alone, we bought 20 TLBs - a record-setting single purchase of TLBs for us and possibly the Western Cape," he adds.

With nearly 110 JCB machines purchased over seven years, including TLBs, excavators, rollers, skid steers, telehandlers, and front-end loaders, QuickSILVA Group's loyalty underscores the 3CX's value. "It's a machine that has stood the test of time," da Silva concludes.

JCB's 3CX PLUS and PRO models aren't just an upgrade; they are a bold statement of intent. By focusing on the things that matter most - productivity, efficiency, and operator comfort - JCB is ensuring its iconic backhoe loaders remain the benchmark for years to come.

BUILT TO WORK SMART AND HARDER - LOAD AFTER LOAD

From rugged farmlands and remote forest landscapes to demanding construction and mining sites, success in today's industries requires machines that are faster, smarter, and more versatile. In environments where efficiency and productivity are key to business sustainability, Wacker Neuson's range of wheel loaders rises to the challenge.



Designed to adapt, perform and deliver in diverse conditions, wheel loaders offered by Wacker Neuson feature standout innovations – such as All Wheel Steering (AWS) and a broad range of attachments – that redefine manoeuvrability, stability, and on-site productivity.

“When efficiency, performance and long-term value matter, these machines rise to the occasion,” says Stefan le Roux, Wacker Neuson Managing Director – Sub-Saharan Africa. “They’re more than just loaders. With high-flow hydraulics and a quick hitch system, our wheel loaders become true multi-tool carriers.” This adaptability enables operators to seamlessly transition between tasks by effortlessly changing attachments

to efficiently tackle a variety of tasks such as materials handling, loading and logistics, and site clean-up - maximising on-site productivity. Attachments include brooms, standard and screening buckets, mulchers, mixing buckets, branch cutters, front wood grabs, pallet forks and dozer blades – transforming each unit into a productivity powerhouse. This value-driven versatility also contributes to lowering the total cost of ownership.

Wacker Neuson's wheel loader range comprises seven models. The compact 5035 model starts with a tipping load of 1 140 kg, a bucket capacity of 0,35 m³, and an 18,5 kW power unit. At the top end of the range, the robust 8155L offers a tipping load of 5 600 kg, bucket capacities ranging from 1 m³ up to 2,5 m³ depending on the specific

gravity of the material being moved.

The All-Wheel Drive (AWD) feature on all loader models provides excellent traction and pushing power across all terrain. Exceptional stability and high payload capacity, even on uneven surfaces, are achieved through a robust one-piece chassis or rigid frame with rear axle oscillation, combined with All-Wheel Steering (AWS). This offers enhanced agility and a significantly smaller turning radius.

The rigid frame design of these wheel loaders maintains the machine's centre of gravity, even during sharp turns. This ensures even weight distribution and a balanced, secure ride across slopes and rough terrain. Combined with premium components and a rugged frame, the loaders are built to withstand tough working environments – maximising uptime and machine longevity.

Efficiency, both in fuel consumption and environmental impact, is essential for operators striving to meet their economic and sustainability goals. Wacker Neuson's wheel loaders feature fuel-efficient power units designed to optimise fuel use, achieving the perfect balance between performance and cost-effectiveness.

Operator comfort, safety, and productivity are closely linked – and Wacker Neuson's wheel loaders are designed with this in mind. The ergonomic cab features intuitive controls and thoughtful amenities that reduce fatigue and enhance safety – supporting extended, more productive shifts. Features include improved visibility, low vibration and noise levels, and large glass surfaces with narrow cab pillars for all-round visibility.

From the compact and powerful 5035 to the high-capacity 8155L and 8145T, Wacker Neuson's wheel loaders are purpose-built to meet the evolving needs of the construction, agriculture, mining and forestry sectors. With an optimal balance of productivity, manoeuvrability, fuel efficiency and operator comfort – alongside their compatibility with a wide range of attachments – these machines are true multi-tool carriers, ready to perform in any environment. 🌟



TOYOTA MATERIAL HANDLING'S LEGACY OF LEADERSHIP IN SOUTH AFRICA

Juanita Pienaar spoke with Richard Cox, Managing Director of CFAO Equipment, about the evolution, strengths, and strategic focus of Toyota Material Handling as it celebrates four decades in the South African market.

A legacy built on innovation and service

Toyota Material Handling, a division of CFAO Equipment, has stood as a market leader in the South African material handling sector for four decades - a position underpinned by a reputation for reliability, innovation, and customer-centric service. As the company marks this 40-year milestone, it continues to raise the benchmark for the industry, delivering cutting-edge solutions tailored to the evolving needs of businesses across sectors.

"We're incredibly proud of this achievement," says Richard Cox, Managing Director of CFAO Equipment. "Toyota Material Handling has been the preferred partner for countless companies in South Africa over the past 40 years, and our commitment to excellence remains as strong as ever."

The journey has been one of constant evolution, expanding the product range,

deepening aftersales support, and embracing technology to keep pace with an increasingly competitive logistics and warehousing environment.

A trusted name under a powerful group

As a division of CFAO Equipment, Toyota Material Handling operates within a robust organisational framework. CFAO Equipment itself is part of the broader CFAO Group, wholly owned by Toyota Tsusho Corporation, which in turn is a key member of the Toyota Group of Companies. This layered ownership structure enables Toyota Material Handling to leverage global best practices while remaining firmly embedded in the local landscape.

"Our connection to the Toyota Group ensures that we can offer the quality, durability, and performance that the Toyota brand is known for globally," says

Cox. "But equally important is our local presence. We understand the unique challenges and opportunities in the South African market, and we tailor our solutions accordingly."

Comprehensive, customised solutions

The Toyota Material Handling brand represents more than just a range of forklifts. Its product offering includes a wide variety of materials handling solutions from electric pallet trucks and stackers to high-capacity diesel and electric forklifts. All products are designed to meet the demands of operations across manufacturing, logistics, agriculture, warehousing, and retail.

"What sets us apart is our ability to deliver integrated, end-to-end solutions," Cox explains. "We don't just sell equipment. We work closely with our customers to understand their business operations, workflow, and logistical pain points. This enables us to recommend and implement equipment that fits perfectly into their supply chain strategy."

Toyota Material Handling places strong emphasis on machine reliability and lifecycle value. Their equipment is engineered to be robust and efficient, requiring less maintenance and delivering excellent fuel economy or battery performance.



"What sets us apart is our ability to deliver integrated, end-to-end solutions."

Richard Cox, Managing Director of CFAO Equipment.



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Toyota Material Handling's product offering includes a wide variety of materials handling solutions from electric pallet trucks and stackers to high-capacity diesel and electric forklifts.



The company remains future-focused, committed to innovation, operational excellence, and expanding its customer base across industries.

Powered by people

People are central to the success of Toyota Material Handling. From technical staff to sales teams and support personnel, the company prioritises skills development, safety, and long-term relationship-building.

"Our strength lies in our people," Cox affirms. "Our teams are highly trained, knowledgeable, and committed to delivering world-class service. Whether we're supplying a single pallet jack or a fleet of forklifts, our customers receive the same level of attention and care."

This ethos of support is reflected in the company's extensive aftersales network. With branches and service centres strategically

located across the country, Toyota Material Handling ensures quick response times and ongoing technical assistance. Customers also benefit from tailored service contracts, mobile support units, and a deep stockholding of genuine parts.

"Our nationwide footprint enables us to provide rapid assistance whenever and wherever it's needed," says Cox. "It's not just about selling machines, it's about keeping our customers up and running."

Driving digital transformation

Like most sectors, material handling is being reshaped by digital technology. Toyota Material Handling has embraced

this shift with a focus on smart fleet management, telematics, and automation.

"Digital transformation is a priority for us," Cox explains. "We're seeing increasing demand for data-driven insights that help customers optimise fleet usage, reduce downtime, and improve safety."

Through smart systems, customers can monitor their equipment in real-time, tracking usage, identifying inefficiencies, and scheduling proactive maintenance. This approach enhances both operational performance and asset longevity.

Additionally, Toyota Material Handling offers semi-automated and fully automated solutions for high-throughput warehousing environments, allowing clients to scale up their operations without increasing headcount or compromising on safety.

Sustainability and efficiency

Toyota Material Handling is also committed to environmental responsibility, offering a growing portfolio of electric and hybrid machines that align with corporate sustainability targets. Their electric forklifts are particularly popular among clients looking to reduce emissions and lower long-term operating costs.

"As sustainability becomes a key business priority, we're helping our clients transition to cleaner technologies," says Cox. "Our electric range offers the same strength and reliability as internal combustion models but with reduced environmental impact."

The company also takes its own environmental footprint seriously, with ongoing efforts to minimise waste, reduce energy usage, and promote recycling at all operational levels.

Looking ahead: continued leadership

With 40 years behind it, Toyota Material Handling is not resting on its laurels. The company remains future-focused, committed to innovation, operational excellence, and expanding its customer base across industries.

"We're not just celebrating a milestone," Cox concludes. "We're using it as a springboard for what comes next. The logistics sector is changing rapidly, and we intend to stay at the forefront by listening to our customers, adapting to the market, and staying true to the Toyota philosophy of continuous improvement."

As South Africa's supply chains become more complex and the demand for responsive, reliable equipment grows, Toyota Material Handling is poised to lead the next chapter of progress, equipped with four decades of expertise, a world-class brand, and an unwavering commitment to customer success. 🌟



GROWING MANUFACTURING THROUGH STRATEGIC INVESTMENT AND INDUSTRIAL FOCUS

South Africa's manufacturing sector remains one of the country's most powerful levers for economic transformation, yet for over two decades it has been under pressure. From its once-commanding share of GDP in the 1980s to its more constrained position today, the industry has faced sustained headwinds: energy instability, logistics backlogs, policy uncertainty, and rising input costs. But while the challenges are real, so too are the opportunities. *By Amith Singh, National Manager: Manufacturing, Nedbank Commercial Banking*

At Nedbank Commercial Banking, we work with manufacturers across various sectors, including automotive, high-precision equipment, food processing, and the clothing industry. And what we're seeing now is a shift in mindset: many businesses are no longer waiting for perfect conditions. Instead, they're asking how to build resilience, sharpen com-

petitiveness, and seize the opportunities presented by regional integration and a maturing industrial base.

What's holding the sector back?

Policy and regulatory uncertainty remain two of the most consequential barriers to growth. Over the past few years, unpredictable shifts in industrial policy, red tape, and a lack of long-term infrastructure planning have left investors

hesitant. But there are early signs of stabilisation. The establishment of the Government of National Unity (GNU), renewed attention on grid stability, and a clearer logistics reform agenda are all steps in the right direction.

However, manufacturers still need clarity, not just in words, but in action. A consistent industrial policy framework is critical. This also includes faster decision-making on energy generation, rail reform,

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At Nedbank Commercial Banking, we see our role as a conduit, not just of capital, but of strategy. We collaborate with our manufacturing clients to design customised financial solutions, support operational improvements, and integrate ESG standards into their core operations.

We already have pockets of excellence, including automotive, textiles, and food processing. These sectors consistently deliver world-class quality and generate value across the supply chain. Instead of questioning localisation, we should be expanding and replicating what already works, and backing it with investment, skills, and smarter procurement policy.

We also need to challenge the myth that South African manufacturing can't compete globally. In many verticals, we already do. The task now is to scale selectively, with a focus on value-added manufacturing and strong aftersales capability, not just volume or cost.

Industrial strategy

Sector-specific master plans (automotive, textiles, plastics) exist and have shown some success. However, what is missing is a clear, cohesive national vision for the manufacturing sector.

What is our industrial North Star?

Where do we intend to lead, and where should we partner or import? Until those questions are answered at a policy level, the private sector response will remain cautious. Manufacturers and financiers alike need that strategic direction to guide investment, risk, and growth planning.

The upside is that we've been here before. In the late 1970s and early 1980s, manufacturing accounted for a quarter of the economy. Reaching those levels again

will take time, but the infrastructure, skills, and institutional memory are still in place. Getting back there is not an impossible task, but it does require bold, coordinated action.

Green shoots and the rise of diversification

Rather than sector-specific surges, what we're seeing in 2025 is something more strategic: diversification. Manufacturers are reconfiguring their operations, adding new production lines, broadening supplier networks, and rethinking offtake agreements to manage future risk more effectively.

This shift is a direct response to lessons learned from recent global disruptions, including COVID-era constraints and geopolitical tensions that impacted import reliability. South African businesses are demonstrating a strong commitment to future-proofing themselves by developing more adaptable and resilient manufacturing systems.

As bankers, we're not just seeing capital requests; we're seeing innovative strategies. Businesses want more than funding; they're also looking for partnerships to support modernisation, sustainability, and market access.

The role of banks in reindustrialisation

At Nedbank Commercial Banking, we see our role as a conduit, not just of capital, but of strategy. We collaborate with our manufacturing clients to design customised financial solutions, support operational improvements, and integrate ESG standards into their core operations.

However, we also advocate for a more fundamental shift: we must stop treating manufacturing as a sunset industry. It is a strategic asset, a job creator, a technology enabler, and a growth engine. With the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) opening new regional markets, now is the time to invest in scalable, export-ready capacity.

South African manufacturing has the technical depth, entrepreneurial spirit, and market access to lead again. What's required now is confidence and courage. At Nedbank Commercial Banking, we believe this is the time to Think Bigger: to stop treating manufacturing as a sector in decline and start backing it as a national asset. With clear policy direction, strategic partnerships, and sustained investment, we can reindustrialise South Africa as a leap toward a resilient, inclusive, and competitive economy. We've done it before. With the right conditions, we can do it again. 🌱

and trade policy. Manufacturing is a long-cycle business; capital is patient, but only when the ground is firm.

Localisation vs global competition. It's not either-or

There's been debate around whether localisation is a viable path in an era of global oversupply and low-cost imports. But the question is not whether we should localise, it's how and where. Every major industrialised country today localises strategically, not blindly. South Africa must do the same.



At Nedbank Commercial Banking, we work with manufacturers across various sectors, including automotive, high-precision equipment, food processing, and the clothing industry.

**Amith Singh, National Manager:
Manufacturing, Nedbank Commercial
Banking.**

TALKING POINT



PIONEERING PERFORMANCE: VOLVO CE AND BABCOCK LAUNCH NEXT-GENERATION EQUIPMENT

Juanita Pienaar recently attended a special event in Middleburg, where Babcock Equipment and Volvo Construction Equipment (CE) unveiled the latest generation of articulated haulers and excavators. Among those present were David Vaughan, MD of Babcock Equipment's business division, Joakim Arndorw, Head of Region International at Volvo CE, and their colleagues.

The launch marked a significant milestone for both companies, not just in terms of new machinery, but also in the evolution of smart, sustainable, and customer-centric construction solutions.

Investing in the future of equipment

"This is the most significant update to our articulated hauler range in over 20 years," said David Vaughan, noting that the new machines are equipped with a completely redesigned electronic platform. "This allows us to offer a host of future-ready features. For example, load weighing hardware is already built in. Customers can opt to activate it when needed, saving



significantly compared to third-party retrofits.”

Among the machines launched were the A40, A45, and the all-new A50 - Volvo’s first foray into the 50-ton articulated hauler segment. “We believe this model fills a sweet spot between the 45 and 60-ton machines,” said Vaughan. “It’s already demonstrated extremely competitive cost-per-ton figures in overseas testing.”

A strategic launch in a strategic location

Middleburg was not chosen by chance. “This branch is one of our most important, given its proximity to coalfields and high concentration of active customers,” Vaughan explained. “In fact, the first A50

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was delivered to a local customer who immediately ordered 10 units.”
With South Africa being one of



“This is the most significant update to our articulated hauler range in over 20 years.”

David Vaughan, MD of Babcock Equipment’s business division.

TALKING POINT



“Our A30 and A40 electric haulers are in pilot stages in Europe. It’s clear that different markets will move at different paces.”

Joakim Arndorw, Head of Region International at Volvo CE.

TALKING POINT



50-ton

Among the machines launched were the A40, A45, and the all-new A50 - Volvo’s first foray into the 50-ton articulated hauler segment.



Safety and operator comfort remain central to Volvo CE’s product philosophy.



One standout innovation on the A50 is its full-suspension system, making it the only machine in its class to offer this.



Volvo and Babcock’s decades-long partnership is built on more than just machinery, it’s rooted in exceptional aftermarket service.

Volvo CE’s top three global markets for articulated haulers, the local launch carried global significance. “The success



of ADTs in South Africa is important for the world,” said Joakim Arndorw. “Our A60 has sold over 100 units per year across Africa, and with the A50, we expect even more traction.”

Built for South Africa, built to last

Volvo and Babcock’s commitment to local conditions is evident in how the equipment is spec’d and built. “We bring in excavators and haulers in heavy-duty configurations as standard, which is rare,” Vaughan noted. “Our machines are designed to operate across a variety of African terrains, from chrome and iron ore to hot slag and coastal diamond mines.”

These configurations include robust booms and sticks, heavy-duty cooling packages, specialised tyres, and reinforced bins. “Every year, we revise our specs with Volvo to align with South African conditions,” Vaughan added. “We’re not just selling machines, we’re selling uptime, reliability, and performance.”

Safety and operator experience take centre stage

Safety and operator comfort remain central to Volvo CE’s product philosophy. “We’ve improved visibility significantly, redesigned the engine hood, and widened the access platforms on both sides of the cabin. Operators report feeling as though they’re sitting in a smaller machine due to the excellent sightlines,” says Vaughan

Other safety innovations include dynamic side-view cameras, improved emergency exits, and clever visual cues, such as yellow markings on rear mud flaps, to help operators gauge proximity to hazards. Volvo also continues to lead in integration with pedestrian detection systems (PDS), a critical safety feature in Southern Africa’s mining sector.

Suspension, precision, and power

One standout innovation on the A50 is its full-suspension system, making it the only machine in its class to offer this. “It’s a hydraulic, actively adjusting suspension in both the tractor and trailer units,” explained Anteneh Gebremeskel, Product Manager at Volvo CE. “It enhances comfort, safety, and productivity, especially in rough terrain. Faster cycle times with more comfort translate directly into a lower cost per tonne.”

Excavators have also seen major enhancements. “Our 22-ton EC220 is 37% more productive than the previous EC210 model,” said Vaughan. “We’ve improved hydraulic flow for smoother, more precise operations and redesigned the cab interface for optimal control.”

Driving sustainability with pragmatism

Although electrification is not yet mainstream in African markets, Volvo is paving the way. “We’ve already launched a 20-ton electric wheel loader and a 22-ton electric excavator,” Arndorw revealed.

“Our A30 and A40 electric haulers are in pilot stages in Europe. It’s clear that different markets will move at different paces.”

Vaughan acknowledged this, saying, “While we may not be ready for full electrification, our current models are up to 15% more fuel-efficient and use fewer fluids, which extend service intervals and reduce waste.”

From software-enabled trenching control to dig assist and boom height limiters for working near power lines, the machines are engineered not only for performance but also for efficiency and reduced environmental impact.

A changing market, a steady vision

With global shifts away from fossil fuels, many wondered how Babcock would adapt, given its deep involvement in the coal sector. “There’s no doubt the energy landscape is changing,” Vaughan admitted. “But coal and mining, in general, remain crucial to our economy and communities. While we prepare for future shifts, our focus is on helping customers mine competitively and sustainably now.”

Volvo CE echoes this sentiment, having adopted a “three-legged” sustainability approach: battery electric, hydrogen fuel cell, and combustion engines using renewable fuels. “We are investing heavily in R&D to stay ahead,” Arndorw emphasised. “By 2040, we aim to sell only zero-emission equipment.”

Service is still king

Volvo and Babcock’s decades-long partnership is built on more than just machinery, it’s rooted in exceptional aftermarket service. “We’ve won Volvo’s international award for best aftermarket support,” Vaughan proudly shared. “We’ve flown technicians to Sweden, held intensive training sessions, and made sure our teams are ready the moment new machines hit South African soil.”

As construction and mining businesses face tighter margins and rising costs, the ability to provide swift, effective support becomes as important as the machines themselves. “It’s all about uptime,” Vaughan concluded. “That’s where we win.”

With cutting-edge updates, smart systems, and a strong service ethos, the latest Volvo equipment, launched by Babcock in Middleburg, positions both companies at the forefront of a changing, challenging, and opportunity-rich market. Built for power, precision, and resilience, these machines are truly Made for the Wild. 🌍



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The Powertrack PT PRO C-20E mobile cone crusher is capable of processing between 150 and 200 tonnes per hour in secondary crushing applications.



ELECTRIFYING THE FUTURE OF CRUSHING: ATHOS CRUSHING AND SCREENING LAUNCHES POWERTRACK RANGE

Capital Equipment News' Juanita Pienaar spoke with Francois Marais, Sales and Marketing Director at Athos Crushing and Screening, and Jorge Abelho, about the company's latest introduction - the Powertrack range of electric-powered crushing and screening equipment, and how it aligns with the growing demand for cost-effective, sustainable solutions across mining, construction, and aggregate industries.



Anywhere there's access to off-grid power, these machines are ideal," notes Marais. "They're especially useful in established quarries or mining operations looking to reduce fuel costs and maintenance complexity.

Meeting the market where it's at

The Powertrack range was developed in response to a noticeable gap in the mobile crushing and screening market. "We wanted to bring in a product that addressed different segments of the market that our premium Lokotrack machines couldn't reach," explains Francois Marais. "Those machines, imported from Metso, are excellent for high-end mining applications, but not all clients need, or find it economical, to have equipment at that level."

The new range is specifically aimed at the aggregates sector and junior mining operations, offering a more accessible price point without compromising on core functionality. "These are full electric crushing and screening machines," says Marais. "They're designed to offer the same reliability in processing, with a shift in the way power is supplied - either via off-grid electricity or an external genset. This flexibility allows operators to choose setups and brands that can dramatically reduce operational costs."

A game changer in power and simplicity

The biggest differentiator for the

Powertrack range is its fully electric drive. "Traditionally, mobile crushers have used diesel-powered engines," says Marais. "But our case studies show that users can expect up to 50% savings on consumption costs when switching from diesel to off-grid electric. That's a significant impact on the bottom line."

Each machine is equipped with a small onboard diesel engine, but it's only used to track, unfold and set up the unit. Once in place, the system relies entirely on external electric power for operation. According to Jorge Abelho, this results in a machine that's quieter, cleaner, and dramatically simpler to maintain.

"One of the key issues in the field is finding skilled artisans to service complex diesel-hydraulic machines," says Abelho. "The Powertrack range eliminates a lot of those complexities. Maintenance becomes more predictive. There are fewer hydraulics, less oil, and less piping involved. It's a much simpler machine to look after."

From a training perspective, this also reduces the learning curve. "You don't need laptops or proprietary diagnostic tools to operate or troubleshoot these machines," adds Abelho. "It's a rugged design with industrial-grade components like circuit breakers and relays - straightforward and reliable."

Proven technology, new configuration

While the drive system may be new, the crushing technology is anything but experimental. "These units are fitted with SRH crushers, which are well known and extensively tested in global markets," says Abelho. "We've retained the core crushing components because they're proven and trusted."


Current models in the range include a 1060 x 700 mobile jaw crusher, capable of handling 600 mm rock and producing 150 to 250 tonnes per hour, and the SCH 2000 cone crusher, which processes 150 to 200 tonnes per hour. "The jaw comes standard with vibrating grizzly feeders, overband magnet, and other features you'd expect from a high-quality mobile crusher," Marais notes.

Although only one size range is currently available, Pilot Crushtec expects this to grow quickly. "Globally, the Powertrack range is gaining traction," says Marais. "By year-end, we anticipate the release of a dual-power version and the introduction of units in the 400 to 600 tonnes per hour segment."

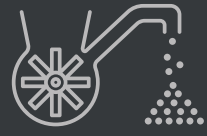
Built for Africa - and beyond

The Powertrack machines are manufactured by SRHeavy (SRH), a Metso-


QUICK TAKE




These are full electric crushing and screening machines and designed to offer the same reliability in processing, with a shift in the way power is supplied - either via off-grid electricity or an external genset.



The Powertrack range was developed in response to a noticeable gap in the mobile crushing and screening market.



Athos Crushing and Screening's commitment to innovation, sustainability, and practical value is clear.



The new range is specifically aimed at the aggregates sector and junior mining operations, offering a more accessible price point without compromising on core functionality.



"Anywhere there's access to off-grid power, these machines are ideal."

Francois Marais, Sales and Marketing Director at Athos Crushing and Screening.

TALKING POINT



"One of the key issues in the field is finding skilled artisans to service complex diesel-hydraulic machines."

Jorge Abelho.

TALKING POINT

owned company, as part of a broader global multi-brand strategy. "We've already got 15 of their fixed machines in

the field locally and have been selling their products for over five years," says Marais. "This gave us the confidence



The Powertrack PT PRO C-20E mobile cone crusher is fitted with a belt feeder and an SCH2000 cone crusher.



The Powertrack PT PRO J-11E mobile jaw crusher is equipped with a 1060 mm x 700 mm jaw crusher, vibrating feeder, overband magnet, dust covers and a discharge hood.



The electric Powertrack range, manufactured by SRHeavy (SRH) - a Metso-owned company, comprises mobile jaw crushers, cone crushers, and screens powered entirely by an external power supply.

to bring their mobile range to southern Africa."

Distribution will be managed through Pilot Crushtec's sister company, Athos Crushing and Screening. "It's all within the same group, and we operate from the same premises," says Marais. "This structure allows us to service Southern Africa while complementing the rest of our product offering - from entry-level to premium."

In terms of applications, the machines are particularly suited for aggregates and construction, but are robust enough to handle mining tasks as well. "Anywhere there's access to off-grid power, these machines can be a game changer," notes Marais. "They're especially useful in established quarries or mining operations looking to reduce fuel costs and maintenance complexity."

Overcoming market hesitation

Despite the advantages, Pilot Crushtec acknowledges some initial hesitation in the market. "It's a completely new way of thinking about powering equipment," says Marais. "We've had questions like, 'How will I run cables to the machine?' But as more customers see the cost savings and simplicity, we believe that will change."

Abelho adds, "Infrastructure is catching up. And even in off-grid sites, a single genset can power multiple machines. That's still more efficient than managing and fuelling multiple diesel engines."

A strategic step forward

The Powertrack range plays a vital role in Athos Crushing and Screening's growth strategy, both locally and abroad. "For us, it's about offering solutions for every market segment," Marais states. "From junior miners and small contractors right up to major mining houses. This range lets us serve a wider customer base while moving toward greener, more efficient technologies."

Athos Crushing and Screening's commitment to innovation, sustainability, and practical value is clear. With the Powertrack range, the company is not just launching a new product, it's paving the way for the future of mobile crushing and screening in Southern Africa and beyond. 🌱

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