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Murphy's Bobcat, Inc.

See how work ethic and skills from his youth helped this Tennessee contractor to grow his business



Rodney Murphy,
Owner



Chase Boruff,
Chief Financial Officer/
Controller

A Message from Power Equipment Company



Chris Gaylor

**Looking forward to
what's ahead**



Dear Valued Customer:

We hope your year is off to a good start. Like you, we were pleased to see the end of 2020. With renewed optimism, we look forward to better things in 2021 and beyond. Although there is still a bit of uncertainty in some markets, many experts are forecasting positive results.

There are always questions whenever the term 2.0, 3.0 or any other update is mentioned. Is this new version really an upgrade? Will it improve my operations and make us more productive? When it comes to Komatsu's intelligent Machine Control (iMC), the answer is a resounding, "Yes!" Komatsu was the first to bring integrated GPS grade control to the market, and we are excited to show you how iMC 2.0 dozers and excavators build on the originals. Look inside this issue of your Power Equipmenteer magazine to learn more.

The first iMC 2.0 dozers, the D51i-24 and D61i-24, were recently recognized as top products; however, they were not the only Komatsu machines to earn that designation. Several standard and specialty products also made the list. Look for the article that highlights them and how they were designed and manufactured with input from customers like you.

As always, if there's anything we can do for you, please call one of our branch locations.

Sincerely,
Power Equipment Company



Chris Gaylor
President

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From dirt pits to housing developments, Murphy's Bobcat, Inc. takes on bigger projects every year



Rodney Murphy,
Owner



Chase Boruff,
Chief Financial
Officer/Controller

P Rodney Murphy grew up learning the value of hard work. He spent hours cutting tobacco, chopping wood and bush hogging around his family's property in Maryville, Tenn. In 2000, he turned the skills and work ethic he learned from his youth into his own company.

"I started Murphy's Bobcat as a side business to my factory job," said Murphy. "At first, I just had a tractor for bushhogging, plowing gardens and doing other small jobs. When the factory closed, I stepped up to a skid steer so that I could take on larger fine grading and backfilling projects and turned it into my full-time occupation."

As his company grew, Murphy was particular about who he hired. After working closely with Chase Boruff on multiple deals through his bank, Murphy hired him as Chief Financial Officer and Controller.

"We're up to 25 employees, and they are the most important part of the business," noted Murphy. "I hire people who can take on roles that I'm less familiar with, and Chase is the perfect example of that. Since starting this

company we've grown the business every year, which allows us to take on new and larger types of jobs."

In addition to the firm's local projects and thriving dirt and soil pits, Murphy's Bobcat has added mass grading and excavation work to its capabilities.

"Our jobs range from burying large animals to grading subdivisions and commercial properties," stated Murphy. "The subdivision work is new and a natural progression for the business. We offer turnkey solutions that can take a property from clearing vegetation to final grade."

"When the phone rings, we answer," added Boruff. "We will go anywhere we're needed but like to focus on jobs within a 40-mile radius between Loudon and Knoxville. We offer high quality services that have enabled us to build a base of repeat customers and make a name for ourselves among new clients."

Adding larger jobs

The two dirt and soil pits that Murphy's Bobcat operates are staples for local contractors.

"We added the property off Highway 411 roughly three years ago and have sold around 10,000 loads of highly compactable dirt out of it," said Murphy. "Our other pit is near Sixmile and has quality topsoil that's in high demand. As long as it's dry enough, we will load dirt into trucks all day."

To load material at its Highway 411 dirt pit, operator Cleaston Radford uses a Komatsu PC210LC-11 excavator. With more than 55 years of experience running machines, Radford appreciates the ease and comfort of working in Komatsu equipment

"Compared to the old excavators, it's simple and easy to operate," said Radford. "The machine has great power, and if I need a little extra, I can hit the thumb switch and I've got it. Overall, it's quiet, powerful and an awesome machine to run."

"We purchased a second PC210 for our fleet last year," added Murphy. "They have great horsepower, are well-balanced and have

A Murphy's Bobcat operator cuts to grade using a Komatsu D51EX-24 dozer at the Nails Creek subdivision in Blount County Tennessee. "We are using the D51s to crown the roads, do all the flatwork and fine grade the site before the paving crew arrives," said Murphy. "The larger D51 offers greater power to move more material and increase our productivity on a job like Nails Creek."

▶ VIDEO





▶ VIDEO

Operator Cleaston Radford loads dirt into a haul truck using a Komatsu PC210LC-11 excavator at Murphy's Bobcat's Highway 411 pit. "Compared to the old excavators, it's simple and easy to operate," said Radford. "The machine has great power, and if I need a little extra, I can hit the thumb switch and I've got it. Overall, it's quiet, powerful and an awesome machine to run."



slightly bigger buckets than our older PC200 excavator. We're using both 210s for bulk digging, whether in the pit or at a job site."

Recently, Murphy's Bobcat completed its first residential development project at Nails Creek. The 41-acre subdivision took four months to complete and required crews to move 10,000 yards of dirt.

"The development will be an upscale subdivision for people looking for property outside of Pigeon Forge and Gatlinburg," said Boruff. "We completed the clearing, grading, underground utilities, storm and drain sewers, and a detention pond for the job. One of our biggest challenges was working around the rain and stormwater."

To keep the project moving forward, the firm used one of its PC210 excavators to load trucks with material and a pair of Komatsu D51EX-24 dozers to reach final grade.

"We are using the D51s to crown the roads, do all the flatwork and fine grade the site before the paving crew arrives," noted Murphy. "We started with a D39PX dozer and loved the performance. The larger D51 offers greater power to move more material and increases our productivity on a job like Nails Creek."

"When we talk to our operators, they prefer the Komatsu equipment to competitive brands," added Boruff. "We tested multiple brands, and the Komatsu equipment outperformed everything. They're faster, stronger and don't tear up a site."

Introducing bigger machines was always the goal for Murphy. "We added the larger Komatsu dozers and excavators because they equate to larger projects. Taking on an assignment like Nails Creek meant we would need equipment that could move mass amounts of material, and our Komatsu equipment has held up. The machines make



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Continued . . .

'The Komatsu Care program is outstanding'

... continued

us more versatile and increase our ability to take on a variety of jobs going forward."

Partnership with Power Equipment

When looking to upgrade his fleet, Murphy worked closely with Power Equipment and Territory Manager/Sales Aaron Kiser to find the right machines.

"We've built a relationship with Power over the last 5 years after we added our first two pieces of Komatsu equipment," explained Murphy. "Anytime we call Aaron or anyone at Power, whether it's to talk about a new machine or a minor issue, they always take care of us. Komatsu is a high-quality product, and Power backs it with top-notch service."

The Komatsu Care program, which offers complimentary routine maintenance at factory scheduled intervals for the first three years or 2,000 hours of a machine's life, played a role in Murphy's decision to add four new pieces of equipment.

"The Komatsu Care program is outstanding," noted Murphy. "The techs at Power schedule the maintenance without disrupting our day.

"We try to work with people who have the same high standards as we do," continued Murphy. "Aaron and Power have lived up to the billing. Our relationship is more of a partnership than it is a business interaction."

Looking ahead

When Murphy founded the business, his goal was to work hard and earn a living. His dedication to doing things the right way has helped it grow to where it is today. Looking ahead, he plans to continue expanding and taking on larger projects.

"Five years ago, when I first started working with Power and Aaron, we had eight employees and a couple pieces of equipment," said Murphy. "It's interesting to see how far we've come in such a short time. We're very optimistic about the future.

"Chase is the future of Murphy's Bobcat," continued Murphy. "He has stepped into a leadership role and quickly built relationships with all of our customers. I'm confident he will take the business in the right direction." ■

(L-R) Power Equipment Territory Manager/Sales Aaron Kiser works closely with Murphy's Bobcat Chief Financial Officer/Controller Chase Boruff and Owner Rodney Murphy to find the right equipment. "Anytime we call Aaron or anyone at Power, whether it's to talk about a new machine or a minor issue, they always take care of us," said Murphy. "Komatsu is a high-quality product, and Power backs it with top-notch service."





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

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Construction industry forecasters predict rise in overall starts led by single-family housing, non-building segments

Uncertain? Cautiously optimistic? Upbeat? Construction forecasters are making their best predictions with most seeing positive territory for overall starts in 2021 as well as significant gains for certain market segments.

Dodge Data & Analytics (Dodge) looks the most bullish, forecasting an overall 4% increase in starts. The Portland Cement Association (PCA) predicts a 0.6% rise. On the flip side, FMI Corp. estimates an 8.7% decline.

The Northeast region of the country will be the most robust, according to Dodge. Its forecast sees a 14% jump in 2021, followed by the South Atlantic at plus 5% and the South Central at 4%. It believes the Midwest will be flat, while the West will fall 3%.

The industry is coming off a rough year in 2020, particularly the first half when COVID-19 caused a deep drop in construction starts, according to Dodge Chief Economist Richard Branch in a press release announcing the organization's outlook. He said to expect bumps along the way.

"While the recovery is underway, the road to full recovery will be long and fraught with potential potholes," said Branch.

Low rates spur home building, ownership

Single-family housing was one bright market segment last year, increasing by 4% compared to 2019. It also seems to be one area of broad agreement among forecasters. Dodge's outlook has it rising another 7% to \$254 billion, which would be its highest since 2007.

The National Association of Home Builders (NAHB) appears to concur, forecasting a 3% increase this year, followed by 2% more in 2022. PCA sees a 4% rise in total residential building.

"Overall, homebuilder confidence is at a data series high, as sales have outpaced construction," said Robert Dietz, Senior Vice President and Chief Economist at NAHB in a recent *Engineering News-Record* article. "Housing demand is driven by historically low interest rates, demographic tailwinds and a desire for more space, which, in turn, is leading to construction gains in lower-density markets."

Continued . . .

Construction industry forecasters agree that single-family housing will remain strong in 2021 spurred by low mortgage rates. Dodge Data & Analytics sees it increasing by 7% to \$254 billion, which would be its highest since 2007.



Homebuilder confidence is high

... continued

There are opposite indications for multifamily housing starts. Dodge has a positive outlook at plus 7%. However, FMI, which sees a decline for 2021 in single-family, also predicts a 16.7% decrease in multi-family homes, and NAHB sees a 15% drop.

Anirban Basu, Chief Economist of the Associated Builders and Contractors (ABC), wrote in a December 2020 online article for *Construction Executive* that single-family housing has been and will continue to be a bright spot. Similar to others, he sees the ongoing decline in multi-family extending into 2021.

“Among the most buoyant segments at present is owner-occupied housing,” said Basu. “With more and more Millennials coming of age, coupled with the high rate of people looking to social distance, take advantage of low mortgage rates and acquire enough space for a home office, housing demand has raced even higher during the pandemic. But that surging demand has crashed into a dearth of available, unsold inventory, resulting in rapidly rising home prices and the highest homebuilder confidence on record.”

Contradictory indications for non-residential, transportation

Conflicting outlooks are also evident in the non-residential sector, which includes offices, lodging and commercial properties, as well as warehouses, educational, healthcare and other institutional buildings. FMI, PCA and the American Institute of Architects (AIA) all see relatively sizable declines, while Dodge

expects a 3% overall increase with the warehouse, healthcare and office buildings segments all up more than 5%.

Dodge’s optimism also remains for overall non-building construction with a 7% forecast gain. That market includes highways and bridges, environmental, public works and electric utilities. It believes the latter category will be especially robust with a 35% increase after falling more than 40% in 2020. Dodge indicated that several natural gas export facilities and a large number of wind farms are expected to break ground this year.

It projects a slight increase for highways and bridges. The American Road & Transportation Builders Association (ARTBA) sees it differently. It estimates that highway construction will fall 4.4% with a decline of almost 2% for bridges. FMI and PCA predict negatives as well.

These sectors could be affected by additional infrastructure funding. The most recent highway bill was set to expire in September 2020; however, Congress provided an additional year of funding as part of a short-term continuing resolution. Biden administration transportation advisor John D. Porcari said it is likely to seek an increase for core federal programs, as well as others such as BUILD grants awarded by the Department of Transportation.

“I think you need to kind of flood the zone with more (dollars) on the formula side, more on the competitive-grant side,” said Porcari during an annual meeting of the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials. ■

The picture is unclear when it comes to transportation spending, including roads and bridges. Dodge Data & Analytics sees a slight increase. The American Road & Transportation Builders Association, FMI Corp. and the Portland Cement Association predict negatives.



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Next-generation Excavator

New iMC 2.0 excavator delivers greater accuracy, comfort and versatility for increased productivity

What if you could dig basements, footings or utility trenches without worrying about overexcavating? How about using the same machine to accurately excavate slopes and finish grade ponds with limited movement? What if you could do it all with little or no need for a finish dozer, stakes or surveying?

According to Komatsu Senior Product Manager Andrew Earing, Komatsu's new intelligent Machine Control (iMC) 2.0 PC210LCi-11 excavator with integrated GPS lets you do all of those tasks and more. Earing noted that testing showed the latest-generation machine improves production by up to 33% and efficiency as much as 63% compared to conventional excavation and grading methods.

"The new iMC 2.0 PC210LCi-11 has added additional satellite systems improving satellite coverage and ability to work in more challenging areas such as near woods or on urban job sites," said Earing.

Bucket angle hold, new monitor

With iMC 2.0 comes bucket angle hold. When activated, it automatically holds the bucket to the design surface during arm-in operation.

"It's less fatiguing for operators, which makes them more productive throughout a shift," said Earing. "It also produces a better finish-grade surface, so there are multiple benefits."

Additional new features include a smaller, slimmer 10.4-inch monitor with more memory and faster processing speed. It has pinch-to-zoom and swipe functionality similar to a smartphone or tablet.

"Customers told us they wanted a more streamlined monitor," said Earing. "This is intuitive and easier to use, so there's decreased downtime navigating through it and more time producing."

Options up versatility

Earing added that users can boost efficiency further with optional features such as automatic tilt bucket control. Using an add-on inertial measuring unit, it allows machine control to manage the angle movement of a tilt bucket to dig and grade surfaces that are not perpendicular to the machine. Users provide their choice of bucket.

Continued . . .



Andrew Earing,
Komatsu Senior
Product Manager

A new feature of the latest-generation PC210LCi-11 intelligent Machine Control 2.0 excavator includes bucket angle hold. When activated, it automatically holds the bucket to the design surface during arm-in operation. "It's less fatiguing for operators, which makes them more productive throughout a shift," said Komatsu Senior Product Manager Andrew Earing. "It also produces a better finish-grade surface, so there are multiple benefits."



'Useful on projects with varying contours'

... continued

"While excavating a deep trench, you can slope the sides back without moving the excavator," explained Earing. "It's also useful on projects with varying contours, such as swales and ponds. Operators can sit in a fixed position and shape those transitions. Less movement saves time and wear and tear on the machine and the operator. We believe most contractors will want to take advantage of this.

"Another feature is optional pressure and flow control for plus-one piping," he continued. "This lets you fine-tune hydraulic pressure and flow on attachments such as hammers, vibratory compactors, processors and more for improved control and versatility."

Semi-automatic functions

The iMC 2.0 PC210LCi-11 maintains the main functions of the first-generation iMC excavators, including the ability to switch from manual to semi-automatic modes.

Among a host of standout features is an exclusive control function that goes beyond simple guidance to semi-automatically limit overexcavation and trace a target surface. Once the target elevation is

reached, no matter how hard an operator tries to move the joystick to lower the boom, the excavator won't allow it. This reduces wasted time and the need for expensive fill materials.

Productivity and efficiency features include:

- In semi-automatic mode the boom adjusts the bucket height to trace the target surface and minimizes the chance of digging too deep.
- Auto stop control halts the working equipment when the bucket edge reaches the design surface to reduce design surface damage.
- Minimum distance control regulates the bucket by automatically selecting the point on the bucket closest to the target surface.
- The facing angle compass shows the operator the facing angle in relation to the target surface, allowing the bucket edge to be accurately positioned square to the target surface.

"Existing and new technology in the iMC 2.0 excavators has proven to increase production and efficiency while reducing costs," said Earing. "We encourage anyone looking for those attributes to contact their distributor and test one for themselves." ■

The new intelligent Machine Control (iMC) 2.0 PC210LCi-11 maintains the semi-automatic features of the first-generation iMC excavators, including auto stop control, minimum distance control and a facing angle compass to limit overexcavation.



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Strong relationships with area Komatsu facilities benefit Power Equipment customers



Bill Chimley,
Komatsu
Vice President of
Integrated Dealer
Performance



Walt Nichols,
General Manager
of Chattanooga
Manufacturing
Operation

Komatsu's Chattanooga Manufacturing Operation (CMO) and Cartersville Customer Center are separated by an 80-mile stretch of Interstate 75. Komatsu manufactures its 20- to 40-metric ton excavators and forestry equipment at CMO and utilizes the Customer Center as a demonstration and training facility for employees, distributors and their customers. The close proximity between the two facilities provides a unique opportunity for Power Equipment customers throughout Tennessee.

"Power Equipment customers are in the cradle of the Komatsu basket," said Komatsu Vice President of Integrated Dealer Performance Bill Chimley. "Sales reps can bring their customers to the Customer Care Center to experience Komatsu machines in the dirt and talk to the experts, then drive to the CMO for a tour to see how the machine they just ran is made and be back at work the next day.

"On the other side of Tennessee, the Ripley Parts Operation is Komatsu's largest parts depot in the United States," continued Chimley. "Power Equipment branches can use that to support their customers throughout the state. The unique positioning of all three facilities relatively close to one another is a unique benefit to our customers in Tennessee."

Getting direct feedback

In 2017, Walt Nichols was named General Manager of the CMO. During his tenure, he has worked to strengthen the connection between the area operations and customers.

"We want to reinforce the relationship among CMO, Power Equipment and the customer because their success is our success," noted Nichols. "When people think of Komatsu, they associate it with quality. Having a strong rapport with Power Equipment is an important step in the feedback process because they have the best relationship with customers and can act as an intermediary to relay information from the customer to us."

Individual and group tours of CMO further reinforce the ties between Komatsu, Power Equipment and the customer.

"CMO plant tours are an opportunity to showcase the quality of work that goes into making Komatsu equipment," said Nichols. "From robotic welding to the people assembling the machines, guests on the tour can see the hard work that goes into creating a Komatsu machine. We include representatives on every tour to answer questions and get direct feedback from the customers. At the end of the day, that three-way relationship is vital." ■

The Chattanooga Manufacturing Operation assembles Komatsu's 20- to 40-metric ton excavators and forestry equipment.



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Honored for Innovation

Six machines named to magazine's list of best products deliver improvements driven by in-the-field customer conversations

What do new intelligent dozers, two excavators of vastly different sizes, a specialty pipelayer and two mid-to-large-size wheel loaders have in common? For one, they were named among the Top 100 products by *Construction Equipment* magazine. More importantly, they were built with new efficiency and production features driven by customer input.

Among the prominent machines on the list are intelligent Machine Control 2.0 D51i-24 and D61i-24 dozers with integrated GPS technology that is proven to boost production by as much as 60%. They feature proactive dozing control that lets operators cut and strip like an experienced operator from first pass to last. (See related article on page 19 for additional features).

Large, small excavators

Earthmoving companies of all sizes appreciate a basic digging machine that's easily transported from job to job. They like it even better when the machine offers fast cycle times, deep digging capabilities and high production, such as the new PC130-11, according to Andrew Earing, Komatsu Senior Product Manager.

"Mobility is a real asset with the PC130-11," said Earing of the 28,660-pound excavator

that digs more than 17 feet deep. "When a contractor finishes one job, they can quickly load this excavator and be on the way to the next site. When they get there, it's a matter of minutes to unload and start digging. That increases production time."

He added that the PC130-11 is built with steel castings in the boom foot, boom nose and arm tip for exceptional durability. It is available with plus-one piping as an option, so you can run attachments for a wide range of applications and potentially boost profits.

The much larger 200-ton class PC2000-11 mining excavator is built for high-volume digging and can move up to 17.9 cubic yards of material in a single scoop.

"Customers told us they want better multifunction performance and productivity than the previous model and the competition," said Joe Sollitt, Komatsu Senior Product Manager, Mining Support Equipment. "With more available engine horsepower, we were able to increase pump absorption and re-engineer the engine-pump-control logic. In combination with a more efficient hydraulic system, the PC2000-11 can load out more material per shift."

Sollitt emphasized that Komatsu designed the 1,046-horsepower excavator for greater reliability and durability with thicker, stronger boom plates and castings that are highly resistant to bending and torsional stress. The center and track frame were strengthened, and it has larger diameter carrier rollers for extended service life. He added that a ground-level service center is standard, and the power module that service personnel grew to love was maintained.

Loaders prove more productive

Komatsu incorporated next-generation technology with considerable benefits to make its new WA475-10 wheel loader an ideal fit for quarry, waste, infrastructure, forestry and non-residential applications. Feedback received in the field guided improvements, which made it 30% more fuel efficient than its predecessor, leading to savings that can potentially make you more competitive and profitable.



Earthmoving companies of all sizes appreciate a basic digging machine that's easily transported from job to job. They like it even better when the machine offers fast cycle times, deep digging capabilities and high production, such as the new 28,660-pound PC130-11.

Continued . . .

New iMC 2.0 dozers increase production up to 60% with the ability to use automatics from grass-to-grade



Intelligent Machine Control 2.0 D51i-24 and D61i-24 dozers feature patent-pending proactive dozing control that automatically cuts and strips from existing terrain like an experienced operator – 100% of the time, from grass to grade. The dozers also have improved automation with patent-pending lift layer control, tilt steering control and quick surface creation.

Jon Jennings,
Komatsu Product Marketing Manager

When experienced operators retire, they take with them their knowledge about how to move dirt as productively and efficiently as possible. That could potentially slow down your operations. What if it could be faster for your new or less-experienced operators to become as productive as those who left? It's possible.

One of the key attributes of Komatsu's new intelligent Machine Control (iMC) 2.0 dozers is patent-pending proactive dozing control that automatically cuts and strips from existing terrain like an experienced operator – 100% of the time, from grass to grade. This technology increased production by as much as 60% compared to the first-generation dozers, according to Komatsu Product Marketing Manager Jon Jennings.

"The ability to use automatics from first pass to last, instead of just during the finish grading, significantly reduces the time it takes to reach target elevation," said Jennings. "Proactive dozing control logic decides the appropriate action, such as whether to cut and carry material, spread or fill that material or whether it should finish grade."

The system provides the real-time position of the dozers to the job site to create a highly accurate elevation for it to drive the blade to the precise grade needed. During operation, the dozers measure the terrain as they track and use the track-level data to plan the next pass.

New automation, satellite systems

Improved automation is also part of iMC 2.0, including patent-pending lift layer control, which automatically spreads

fill from existing terrain with the press of a button. Much like proactive dozing control, this feature tracks the terrain and uses the data to plan the next pass, which doubles production and achieves consistent layers for quality compaction.

Additional automation features include tilt steering control that automatically tilts the blade to maintain straight travel during rough dozing, reducing the need for operator steering input by 80%. Quick surface creation produces a temporary design surface with one press of a button without the need for a complex 3D model.

Other upgrades include a second GPS antenna, which Jennings noted will aid in side-slope work. The new machines also gain access to three additional satellite systems.

"The biggest advantage is greater overall accuracy," he said. "More satellite systems increase production through the ability to use GPS in places where it may have been a big challenge before, such as at the edge of a wooded area or close to buildings on an urban project."

In addition to the new D51i-24 and D61i-24 models recently touted by *Construction Equipment* magazine as top products, the D39i-24 and the highly anticipated D71i-24 that was introduced last year at CONEXPO will soon be available.

"We had numerous orders for these machines before they were available because customers realized how much the new dozers will increase their production," said Jennings. "We encourage anyone looking for the same in their business to contact their distributor for a demo, more information or to add one to their fleet." ■

New features improve cycle time

... continued

The WA475-10 has 18% greater horsepower but achieves increased fuel efficiency with its Komatsu hydraulic mechanical transmission. Contributing to better economy and productivity is the independent work equipment control that simplifies operation by separating the accelerator pedal from the speed of the work equipment.

To further boost productivity, the boom lift force was bolstered by 20% and breakout force increased by 8%. A new bucket design improves pile penetration and better retains material in load-and-carry applications.

“Additional conversations with equipment users also led to an improved operating environment that includes an updated cab with floor-to-ceiling glass, ergonomically designed switch layouts and a fully adjustable five-axis console for enhanced operator comfort,” noted Bruce Boebel, Komatsu Senior Product Manager.

The WA800-8 wheel loader also has a new bucket shape that incorporates an increased radius and floor inclination to 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. In larger quarry, aggregate and mining applications, the 254,700-pound machine is an ideal match for 60- to 100-ton trucks.

The loader features key new automatic and semi-automatic systems that assist operators and contribute to productivity and efficiency. The three features can be used together or separately to automate the work phases when V-cycle loading, including automatic dig to optimize bucket load, actuating the bucket and lifting operations by sensing the pressure applied to the work equipment.

A 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 raises the lift arms automatically 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.

“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 saving fuel with auto deceleration,” said Komatsu Product Marketing Manager Robert Hussey.

New pipelayer designed for exceptional stability

Komatsu worked closely with pipeline companies to develop its new D155CX-8 pipelayer that has an oval design nine-roller track with 12 feet, 10 inches of track on ground for stability. It also features 32-inch track shoes.

Heavy final drive components are close to the ground, which lowers the center of gravity. The rollers are fixed suspension and don't oscillate like a dozer for greater ground contact.

With a 170,000-pound lift capacity, the D155CX-8 can handle up to 36-inch steel pipe. It has a K170 pipelayer package with a standard 24-foot boom length. An optional 28-foot boom is available.

“It's essential that we get feedback from the contractors who will ultimately use a pipelayer like our new D155CX-8,” said Chuck Murawski, Product Manager, Dozers. “One item they recommended was a larger steering motor, so we incorporated one into the machine to give it better displacement and more torque.” ■

Komatsu incorporated next-generation technology with considerable benefits to make its new WA475-10 wheel loader an ideal fit for quarry, waste, infrastructure, forestry and non-residential applications. It's 30% more fuel efficient, has 18% greater horsepower, 20% more boom lift force and a breakout force increase of 8% compared to its predecessor model.



The new D155CX-8 pipelayer has an oval design nine-roller track that features 12 feet, 10 inches of track on ground for stability. With a 170,000-pound lift capacity, the D155CX-8 can handle up to 36-inch steel pipe. It offers a K170 pipelayer package with a standard 24-foot boom length.





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Dimitra Balafoutis,
Komatsu Product
Manager,
Consumables

When you turn the key on a machine or a vehicle, you expect it to start. Several systems play a role in whether this does or does not happen, but one of the most important factors is the battery.

“It is essential to use one that’s proven to perform under all circumstances,” emphasized Dimitra Balafoutis, Komatsu Product Manager, Consumables. “We recommend using genuine Komatsu batteries in our machines because they are manufactured to stand up to challenging conditions such as extreme temperatures and high vibrations, which are common on our customers’ job sites. They were designed and built to ensure durability and reduce downtime.”

Balafoutis noted that Komatsu genuine batteries undergo more than 300 quality-control checks throughout the manufacturing process. With proper maintenance, they typically last three years or longer. Komatsu supports all batteries with its standard parts warranty, which is one or two years depending on part number.

“A wide range of 6- and 12-volt sizes are available,” said Balafoutis. “Our distributors stock the most common ones, so they are easily available. If a less common type is needed, you can order it through your distributor or on the My Komatsu web

application (www.komatsuamerica.com/mykomatsu) and have it shipped to the distributor or your location.”

Power your vehicles too

With Komatsu’s all-makes program, customers can also order OEM batteries for their Komatsu equipment and its competitors through their local Komatsu branch, explained Balafoutis. This includes construction, agriculture, mining, forestry and forklift products.

“Those OEM options are available if customers want them; however, Komatsu genuine batteries work in most brands of machinery,” Balafoutis pointed out. “Distributors can assist customers in determining the right fit for their needs.”

She noted that Komatsu genuine batteries are ideal for cars, pickups or other vehicles.

“If you think they are great in your equipment, consider them for other uses,” said Balafoutis. “They power class 1 through class 8 on-highway trucks, boats, recreation vehicles, power sports products such as four-wheelers, golf carts and more. Your Komatsu distributor can be a one-stop shop for all of your battery needs. They will even install them if you like.” ■



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Bramco service apprenticeship program earns AED Foundation recognition for heavy equipment industry

Bramco, Inc., parent company of Brandeis Machinery & Supply Co. and Power Equipment Co., recently became the first Associated Equipment Distributors (AED) dealer members to earn recognition from the AED Foundation (AEDF), pursuant to Department of Labor standards as an Industry Recognized Apprenticeship Program (IRAP).

Last fall, the Department of Labor named AEDF as a Standards Recognized Entity for the heavy equipment industry. The IRAP designation allows technicians who complete their apprenticeship through the Bramco program to also become Certified AEDF Technicians. This distinction demonstrates that technicians have received optimal education that meets the industry standard.

“The program allows us to concentrate on our customers’ goals and build our service capabilities,” said Power Vice President, Product Support Shawn Robins. “As an IRAP, we are able to offer our apprentices continued

career development. We know that investment in our apprentice program sets us apart from other dealers.”

Hands on plus classroom learning

Bramco founded its apprenticeship program in 2015. New classes start every nine months, and are conducted over 24 months through a combination of on-the-job and classroom instruction. Dedicated instructors center the curriculum around the apprentices, ensuring that students who successfully complete the program gain the knowledge that will enable them to effectively help Power customers.

“Our focus is on our customers, and our apprentice program exemplifies just that,” said President Chris Gaylor. “With a shortage of qualified technicians in our industry, this program allows us to develop knowledgeable technicians right within our own walls. We are honored to be the first IRAP recognized by the AEDF.” ■



Representatives from Bramco, Inc. and Associated Equipment Distributors (AED) gather to commemorate the Bramco apprenticeship program’s achievement as the first AED Foundation (AEDF) dealer member Industry Recognized Apprenticeship Program. “In this industry, there is a shortage of qualified technicians. This program allows us to develop knowledgeable technicians, who are the foundation of our customer service commitment. We are honored to be the first IRAP recognized by the AEDF,” said Power Equipment President Chris Gaylor.

Tracey Drechsel says new structure delivers better service as regional teams work together to be your one point of contact



Tracey Drechsel,
Komatsu Business Director,
East Region

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.

Tracey Drechsel's career with Komatsu began right out of college. The 1998 Austin Peay State University graduate started with Komatsu Financial and held various roles in operations, sales and marketing. She spent six years as the Finance Sales Manager, working at Komatsu's Newberry, S.C., plant before returning to the Chicago area. Along the way, she earned a master's degree from North Central College.

"As a kid, I never thought construction equipment would be my life. I wanted to be a marine biologist and swim with dolphins," shared Drechsel. "The gig with Flipper didn't work out, so here I am helping people dig holes and push dirt.

"The best part of the industry, and personally, the most rewarding, is the human interaction," she added. "I get to meet people from different backgrounds and find ways to make a difference in their lives. I have been very fortunate to wake up every day for 22 years and enjoy who I work for and who I work with; and I don't take that for granted."

In 2017, Drechsel was promoted to Director/Sales Marketing for the North Region of Komatsu's construction equipment division. In late 2020, she was named Business Director, East Region, which includes states from Michigan to Maine and down to Florida.

A two-sport athlete in college, basketball and softball, she enjoys staying active today. Drechsel likes to run, workout, boat, walk her dogs and travel. She also may be the only person in Chicago who cheers for both the Cubs and White Sox and dislikes deep-dish pizza.

QUESTION: Komatsu has made some structural changes with personnel taking on new roles, including those of regional business directors. What's the customer benefit?

ANSWER: As always, our focus is on helping customers find solutions by utilizing our dealer network, products, technology and, most importantly, our people who care at all levels. Speed to market and technical resolution is something we really focused on improving with this new structure. We empowered our people to make more decisions in the field to improve our response times to customers and distributors.

With this new concept, all business units within a region – parts, sales, finance, warranty, etc. – are now part of the same channel, whereas before it was more individualized. We've created small, focused regional teams with diverse skills to address the entire life cycle of customer needs. We are packaging our solutions as "Komatsu" and are aligned to act in the best interest of the customer.

QUESTION: How are members of each regional team working together?

ANSWER: Internally, we are leveraging each other's skill sets in more proactive ways to add value to our individual knowledge base as well as to our customer interactions. In the past, our collaboration had a tendency to be more reactive.

Now, we're meeting and talking on a consistent basis about what's happening within our region. Individuals and groups can bounce ideas off of each other; and we can discuss best practices in customer satisfaction as we share success stories and customer feedback.

Ultimately, it's a great opportunity to better serve our markets and moves us toward our goal of creating one point of contact that our customer value chain can trust and rely on.

QUESTION: Last year was certainly different from many perspectives. How did events



Komatsu's focus is on helping customers find solutions by utilizing its dealer network, products, technology and, most importantly, its people who care at all levels said Tracey Drechsel, Komatsu Business Director, East Region.

affect the construction markets and what do you see looking forward?

ANSWER: COVID-19 accelerated the acknowledgment and need for digital solutions in our industry. The pandemic provided a real-life example of the role technologies, such as online meetings and Smart Construction (the digital transformation of the job site), can play in keeping customers' businesses and projects on track. Those customers who were hesitant or skeptical about adopting GPS systems, intelligent machines and Smart Construction, now see the value in investing in those solutions.

Many are also utilizing our fleet management site, My Komatsu, more often. It enables them to remotely track production, idle time, fuel usage and other data with a tablet, smartphone or desktop computer. It allows them to reference manuals for their fleet, find the needed parts and purchase them quickly and easily. Again, it's actionable information they get without the need to be present at the job site. The complimentary service can save time and improve practices. ■



The use of Smart Construction solutions and My Komatsu for fleet management increased during the past year. "COVID-19 accelerated the acknowledgment and need for digital solutions in our industry," said Tracey Drechsel, Komatsu Business Director, East Region. "The pandemic provided a real-life example of the role technologies, such as online meetings and Smart Construction (the digital transformation of the job site), can play in keeping customers' businesses and projects on track."

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Redesigned Takeuchi compact track loader features new automotive-style cab

For contractors looking to add a do-it-all track loader that can deliver impressive results on any job site, the new Takeuchi TL8R-2 compact track loader checks that box and then some. The newly revamped 9,185-pound TL8R-2 provides superior power, strength and maneuverability in addition to a radial lift design that delivers a tipping load of 6,041 pounds.

“Takeuchi is excited to release the completely redesigned TL8R-2,” said Keith Kramlich, National Product and Training Manager. “Takeuchi prides itself on a continuing tradition of innovation and advancing technology, and the TL8R-2 is a perfect example of that. Operators will feel more strength, performance, maneuverability, versatility and efficiency in this machine, increasing their profits.”

The track loader is equipped with a Tier 4 Final, 74.3-horsepower turbocharged engine. The diesel oxidation catalyst and diesel particulate filter minimize emissions for a clean and efficient operation.

The TL8R-2 also features individualized operation modes, including Creep Mode for models equipped with high-flow auxiliary hydraulics. Creep Mode enables operators to precisely match the forward speed of the machine to a particular attachment without the need to constantly adjust the travel lever. It’s ideal when using attachments that require a consistent, repeatable travel speed, such as during milling and trenching.

Designed for operators

While technology and on-site performance have been enhanced, Takeuchi took steps to help improve operator performance as well.

The automotive-style cab boasts a 5.7-inch multi-informational color display with a rearview camera and a sealed rocker switch bank. The design helps boost performance and functionality by providing a wider range of information to the operator.

Also standard on the TL8R-2 are the low-effort pilot controls and proportional auxiliary switch that give the operator the precision needed to work more efficiently in a comfortable, fatigue-free environment.

The TL8R-2 offers a pressurized cab equipped with a roll-up door, air conditioning, heat, defrost, front wiper and an optional AM/FM/Bluetooth radio. ■

Quick Specs for the Takeuchi TL8R-2 Compact Track Loader

Model	Weight	Horsepower	Tipping Load	Bucket Width
TL8R-2	9,185 lb	74.3 hp	6,041 lb	5 ft, 6 in

Takeuchi’s newly-redesigned TL8R-2 compact track loader features a Tier 4 Final, 74.3-horsepower turbocharged engine and a full complement of operational upgrades.



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2015 Komatsu D155AX-8, S/N 100057, 1,775 hrs.



2007 Komatsu D61PX-15EO, S/N B45206, 5,170 hrs.

Year/Make/Model	S/N	Description	Hours
Drills			
2014 FlexiROC T45-10	A1145	Cab, AC, rock drill	5,124
2014 FlexiROC T45-10	A1227	Cab, AC, rock drill	6,093
Trucks			
2015 Komatsu HM300-5	10349	Dump body, tailgate, body heat	3,618
2018 Komatsu HM300-5	10698	Dump body, body heat	3,381
2016 Komatsu HM400-5	10349	Dump body, tailgate	5,989
2015 Komatsu HD465-7EO	11404	Rigid truck, tailgate	5,200
Dozers			
2017 Komatsu D39PX-24	95482	Cab, AC, 27.5" grousers, 128" PAT blade	2,156
2019 Komatsu D39EX-24	95804	Cab, AC, 20" grousers, 107" PAT blade, front sweeps	1,000
2018 Komatsu D51PX-24	10098	Cab, AC, 28" grousers, 11' PAT blade	852
2019 Komatsu D51PXi-24	B20583	Cab, AC, 28" grousers, PAT blade, UHF radio	1,332
2019 Komatsu D51PXi-24	B20660	Cab, AC, 28" grousers, PAT blade, 915 radio draw bar	1,521
2007 Komatsu D61PX-15EO	B45206	Cab, AC, good u/c, six-way blade	5,170
2019 Komatsu D61PXi-24	B60827	Cab, AC, 34" sg, draw bar, UHF radio	1,511
2019 Komatsu D61PXi-24	B60937	Cab, AC, 34" sg, draw bar, pat site link mc-r3 radio	1,731
2017 Komatsu D61EXi-24	B60242	Cab, AC, 24" sg, PAT blade, draw bar, UHF	4,867
2015 Komatsu D155AX-8	100057	Cab, AC, 24" grousers, sigma blade dual tilt, giant variable ripper	1,775
Excavators			
2015 Komatsu PC88MR-10	7238	Cab, AC, roadliner pads	3,441
2016 Komatsu PC170LC-10	30718	Cab, AC, 42" bucket, 28" grousers	1,230
2017 Komatsu PC210LCi-10	452694	Cab, AC, 31.5" TG, 9'7" arm, UHF, JRB power latch coupler, no bucket	2,162
2017 Komatsu PC210LC-11	500406	Cab, AC, 9'7" stick, 31.5" tg, 48" bucket	2,594
2017 Komatsu PC210LC-11	A12401	Cab, AC, 9'7" arm, 48" bucket, thumb	2,361
2018 Komatsu PC210LC-11	C80280	Cab, AC, bucket, hydraulic thumb	775
2012 Komatsu PC210LC-10	450056	Cab, AC, & std eq	3,541
2013 Komatsu PC228USLC-8	50845	Cab, AC, & std eq	4,482
2018 Komatsu PC240LC-11	95312	4PE11B hydraulics, 10' arm, bucket	1,865
2018 Komatsu PC290LC-11	A27752	Cab, AC, 31.5" grousers, 10'6" arm, aux hydraulics, coupler	2,301
2016 Komatsu PC290LC-11	A27208	Cab, AC, 31.5" TG, 10'6" arm, 56" bucket	2,195
2019 Komatsu PC360LC-11	A37359	Cab, AC, 33.5 TG, aux hydraulics, 10'5" stick, 42" bucket	734
2019 Komatsu PC360LC-11	A37321	Cab, AC, 33.5 TG tracks, aux hydraulics, 10'5" arm	1,130
Wheel Loaders			
2019 Komatsu WA200-8	85596	Cab, AC, coupler, bucket, two-spool valve	350
2019 Komatsu WA200-8	85599	Cab, AC, coupler, bucket, two-spool valve	400
2018 Komatsu WA200-8	85058	Cab, AC, coupler, bucket, third-spool, LSD, full fenders	825
2019 Komatsu WA270-8	83942	Cab, AC, coupler, bucket, third-spool, LSD	102
Forestry Equipment			
2016 Komatsu Forest XT460L-3	A5131	Track feller buncher with Quadco 2900 cutter	1,422



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