

Growth for precast concrete sector in 2016

Posted By **Beatrix Knopjes** on January 6, 2016 in **Cement & Concrete, Construction, News**

Despite leading earthmoving equipment, pipe and electrical equipment manufacturers, together with suppliers, all reporting a significant reduction in sales over the past year, all is not doom and gloom, comments PMSA sales and marketing manager Quintin Booysen.

He adds that the negative economic trends experienced in 2015 had abated somewhat by August, with a positive outlook anticipated by year end. "In the precast sector, we were fortunate to have had a good 2015 and expect a positive start to 2016, with significant orders already being placed for 2016 deliveries," reveals Booysen.

"Clients who have always done well are still investing, although looking for new technology and added features, especially for improving plant efficiency by increasing output with the same human resource complement."

Walter Ebeling, the organisation's MD, notes that "2016 will no doubt have challenges. Companies need to ensure they retain sufficient cash for any continued downturn next year. Companies also need to look at more efficient ways of doing business, from marketing to production methods.

"The global fundamentals are still shaky and the stability of the rand, along with other emerging market currencies, remains questionable. This instability makes planning difficult," Ebeling remarks. "We are fortunate to be opening 2016 with significant plant orders for existing and new clients."

Through innovative plant configurations and new engineering techniques and designs, the concrete manufacturer is able to offer fully-automated, large-capacity plants that can compete with imported plants, while offering a better technology and quality over imported plants at a more cost-effective price.

“Our plants are built to last, with no compromise in terms of quality of plant build, in order for us to be able to offer more cost-effective plants to the market. In 2016, we expect to grow and continue to dominate the market.

“This is because we are the only concrete equipment producer and supplier able to provide leading technology, full support, training, commissioning, back-up and spare parts across a range of concrete equipment and brick and block plants, from start-up to high-capacity 190 000 bricks-per-shift, fully-automated plants,” stresses Booyesen.

Looking at the ample opportunities offered by Africa, Booyesen adds that “companies need to broaden their marketing and sales focus to ensure they capture their share of the expansion and infrastructure projects on the continent.

As cement costs continue to rise, precast producers are seeking ways of saving on input costs. “One of the easiest methods in this regard is effective curing solutions, whereby manufacturers can maximise cement usage by increasing cement hydration and thereby maximising the strength of the end products,” elaborates Booyesen.

“More effective curing of concrete products also means lowering a company’s carbon dioxide footprint by effectively using the cement to its maximum. Customers using full curing solutions have reduced their cement usage by up to 30%. With cement being the single biggest cost factor for most concrete producers, this results in significant savings for their operations,” asserts Booyesen.

The company continues to hold industry training seminars whereby industry participants are invited to learn about the leading trends in concrete equipment. “We believe in giving back to the industry to ensure it has the latest cutting-edge technology when it comes to concrete equipment,” points out Booyesen. The company plans to hold six seminars in 2016.