

Rugged equipment for rugged terrain



The first of the two VB4X concrete product manufacturing plants supplied by Pan Mixers, in action at Odebrecht operations in Luanda, Angola.

As a supplier of concrete manufacturing equipment South African company Pan Mixers has won several contracts across the African continent based on its ability to provide first-world technology built with third-world resilience.

The latest of these is for the supply, delivery and installation of two VB4X block plants for construction giant Odebrecht's operation in Luanda, Angola. Odebrecht is a Brazilian business conglomerate operating internationally in the fields of engineering and construction, chemicals and petrochemicals.

"Odebrecht approached us about two years ago seeking expertise and equipment to meet some of its needs on large housing contracts in Luanda," says Pan Mixers' director Robert Ebeling. "The order for the first of the two VB4X plants was met in record time, with one machine shipped off within 12 weeks of the order being placed." He notes, however, that there were major delays in getting the equipment to site.

Co-director Walter Ebeling adds that the VB4X is a highly efficient plant for the manufacture of hollow blocks as well as bricks and paving. "The machinery has aggregate-bin and weigh-belt batching

systems and allows for the weighing of bulk and bagged cement. Each plant incorporates a 1 500 litre counter-current rapid pan mixer. With two individual plants Odebrecht can run two different product ranges simultaneously."

Fitted with high performance electronic and hydraulic control systems, the VB4X offers fast and smooth running with a high production capacity. "The control systems reduce wear and tear," says Robert, "which is vital in outlying areas in Africa where equipment or parts can take months to reach sites." Transport is a major challenge and heavy weather can sometimes make roads impassable.

The second Odebrecht plant is due to be up and running soon. It was transported in pieces for reassembly on site and Pan Mixers sent six staff members to assist with the installation.

Robert warns that the challenges of more remote African locations should not be underestimated. He emphasises that it's important for overseas concerns to ensure their equipment and personnel can stand up to conditions on the continent.

Pan Mixers has been supplying equipment around Africa for about eight years, so its experience is valuable to clients. The company receives enquiries from all over the continent and sees it as an important market with great opportunities.

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