

MACHINE CONTROL DIVISION

Platform Contracting: iMC TECHNOLOGY DRIVES CAPABILITIES AND GROWTH

Jason Klar, owner of Platform Contracting, credits Komatsu's intelligent Machine Control with helping his company grow from a concrete contractor into a site development company.

KOMATSU



Keith Strever (center) and crew onsite with a Komatsu D51EXi at a Cleveland Clinic parking lot project in Warrensville Heights, OH.

Jason Klar, owner of Platform Contracting, credits Komatsu's intelligent Machine Control (iMC) with helping his company grow from a concrete contractor into a site development company.

Klar, a civil engineer by training, worked for Platform before buying it in 2006. At the time, the company primarily did light commercial and residential concrete work. "I noticed many of our customers desired a turnkey solution to site development issues," work that the company was subcontracting out, he said. Klar hired Keith Strever, who is now general superintendent of sitework, to help expand the company's site development capabilities.

Strever is a big proponent of GPS and integrated machine control. Klar was willing to try the technology, and as a first step, the company retrofitted a Komatsu D61 dozer with GPS equipment several years ago. "The integrated

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Jason Klar, Owner
Platform Contracting



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Keith Strever and Jason Klar (right) at the Maltz Performing Arts Center on the \$9-million Nord Family Greenway Connector Project in Cleveland.

technology was still new, and I needed to prove the benefits to myself," Klar recalled. "After we had GPS-enabled equipment, I really saw the benefits of it, and we made the plunge into the integrated dozers."

Platform, based in Mentor, Ohio, now owns two Komatsu D51i dozers and a PC210LCi excavator as well as the GPS-enabled D61. It has grown from a handful of employees in the early 2000s to about 120 employees in the concrete and earthwork divisions, and the company primarily works on commercial building sites and government projects such as schools around Northeastern Ohio.

Accuracy and efficiency are among Klar's top concerns, and "integrated technology has really helped us achieve that," he said. "The increased accuracy and efficiency from iMC equipment has also given us the confidence to go after more complex projects." One example is a new gre-

enway trail through the campus of Case Western Reserve University, where Platform used both D51i dozers. The meandering path required a lot of grading and "it would have been a challenge to lay it out conventionally with string lines," he said. The iMC equipment "added flexibility and accuracy and made it quicker."

Many customers have praised the speed Platform completes projects with when using Komatsu iMC equipment, he added. For instance, the company recently did an indoor tennis facility. "It was the perfect scenario—flat ground, good access," Klar said. "With conventional dozers, the project would have taken five workers five days to grade and lay 2,000 tons of stone. With iMC dozers, we were able to do it in one day, with three guys. And at the end of the day, it's more accurate."

Strever, the sitework superintendent, has been



According to Klar, the company's D51i dozers brought flexibility, accuracy and efficiency to the \$9-million Connector Project, which called for Platform to grade, and install concrete walks and hardscape in a five-city-block area of the Case Western Reserve University campus over a 12-month period.

impressed with the possibilities machine control offers since working with his first GPS system about 15 years ago. "It intrigued me and I wanted to find bigger and better things for it," he said. He's excited about the possibilities Komatsu's iMC technology brings to excavators.

Platform's demo of a PC490i was a big success. "We did a 14,000-yard dirt job with it. Between the two iMC dozers and the iMC excavator we moved 14,000 yards with four people and it took a week. Without the intelligent equipment, the job would have taken three weeks and required another two or three workers," he estimated.

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Keith Strever; Site Superintendent, Platform Contracting

An iMC excavator enables an operator to potentially execute the project by himself, Strever said. "There's no time wasted waiting for information from an outside source—another laborer or surveyor. The excavator gives guys the immediate knowledge they need, with no worries about undercut or overcut." Operators like that prospect, too, he noted.

Klar and Strever recently converted a Komatsu PC210i excavator rental into a purchase. "We knew what the machines can do on the site side, now we know what they can do on the concrete side, in terms of basement excavation. I can use it in every application—rough cut,

final grade, curbing, ponds. I can't wait to see it used for footers," Strever said. "An excavator can do way more than a dozer."

"With 15 years of experience using machine control, the only thing that surprises me is how far out on the cutting edge Komatsu is with their equipment," Strever said. "I've demoed other brands. Nothing is as good as Komatsu's iMC."

"I don't know if there is a better support team out there. We love the support, love the equipment, and never worry about downtime."

Jason Klar; Owner, Platform Contracting

Strever also appreciates the support he gets from Columbus Equipment Company and the machine control technology support team. "I don't know if there is a better support team out there. Mike Fenster and Nate Koerper are always available and quick to help. We love the support, love the equipment, and never worry about downtime."

Like Klar, Strever believes Komatsu's iMC equipment has helped expedite Platform's transition to a site contractor. "Part of our success here is that machine control helped us to compete right off the bat," he said. "Customers believe in us. They've seen the results of what we can do, and they know technology is a big part of that."

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