

Milcon Concrete Inc.

INTELLIGENT EQUIPMENT, DEDICATED EMPLOYEES ... RESULT IN CONSISTENT GROWTH

Milcon Concrete Inc. has grown significantly in recent years, making the Dayton Business Journal's list of fastest growing companies four times. But as any contractor knows, growth doesn't just happen. It takes hard work, dedication and smart decisions.

One of the decisions Milcon stands behind is adopting intelligent Machine Control (iMC) equipment from Komatsu. "The intelligent machines have exceeded our expectations," said Abe Wirick, vice president of the Troy, Ohio-based company.

The value of intelligent machinery is evident as he describes one of the company's recent big projects, removing and replacing the economy parking lot at Dayton International Airport. The parking lot covers 22 acres, and the contract required keeping half of it open to the public at all times, so the \$7.5 million project was completed in two phases. Along with those logistical challenges, Milcon also had to deal with a subgrade that required stabilization.

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"We started the six-month, Dayton International Airport project in April 2017. We completed it in four and a half months," Wirick said. Efficiencies from the company's two D51i dozers played a big part in the speedy turnaround.

The most obvious time saver is that iMC eliminates the need for stakes, so the operators never had to stop and wait for a surveyor to come onsite to replace a lost stake. The intelligent dozers can also perform all phases of grading, from rough cut to fine grading, so Milcon only needed the two D51i machines. "We didn't have to sub out the fine grading or rent a grader. We're eliminating the need for any grader at all," Wirick noted.

How much faster is a project with iMC dozers? "One thing that was impressive to us was that we spread 5,000 tons of 304 aggregate a day with the two D51i machines working together. With conventional dozers

equipped with laser, the best we're going to do to put it on grade is 1,000 tons per day per dozer, so we more than doubled our production," Wirick said.

Milcon has also found it's saving a lot of material thanks to the accuracy of the intelligent dozer. At the Dayton airport, the company expected to lay 62,000 tons of 304 aggregate on the new subgrade, but the actual job took 240 fewer tons because there were no low spots in the grading. "The savings are impressive," Wirick said. "In the past, we would have had 5 to 10 percent wasted material because of improper grading. Not now."



Milcon Vice President Abe Wirick plans the work and works the plan—a plan that materializes more quickly and accurately today with Komatsu iMC technology.

The project also used the exact tonnage of asphalt that was estimated, also because of the precise dozer work. "We have found we waste way less material, typically stone," with the intelligent dozers, he added. "We know we don't have to bid wasted material into the project."

Milcon purchased its first D51i in late 2015 and added the second to its fleet shortly before starting the airport project.



Milcon's Komatsu D51EXi intelligent dozer cutting in a retention pond on the company's \$5.4-million Union Village Development Project. Given their experiences with iMC technology—including recently needing 30 trucks to feed the voracious dozers stone on a Dayton International Airport project—Milcon crews have rightly come to depend upon “phenomenal production” from the equipment.

Company President Mark Miller founded Milcon in 1995 and started out doing large commercial footers and slab projects. Wirick, who has a background in civil road construction, came on board in 2002, and

least four job sites at a time.

Milcon is a long-time customer of Columbus Equipment Company and Komatsu. Its fleet includes a variety of Komatsu excavators, dozers and wheel loaders.

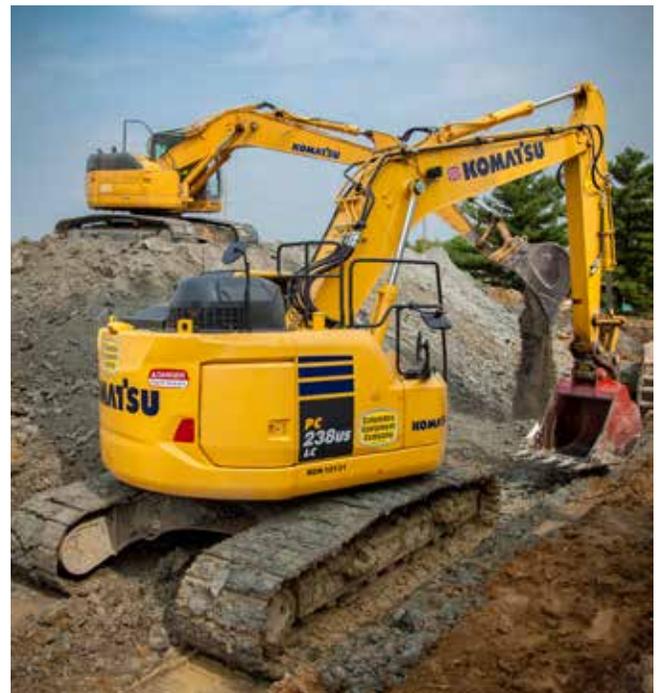
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a few years later the company started branching out into commercial excavation projects, such as site packages for CVS drugstores. The following year it started doing small public works projects, like water main replacements, and eventually moved into road reconstruction.

Milcon is comprised of two companies. Milcon Concrete Inc. is the excavation specialist and Milcon Commercial Concrete is the concrete specialist.

Wirick describes Milcon Concrete’s specialty niche as “complete street reconstruction and street extensions. We specialize in complete reconstruction including all the underground utilities, excavation and grading that goes with that.” The excavation company has 24 field employees, three office employees and three project managers. It typically runs four field crews and at



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The Komatsu brand is conspicuous by its abundance on Milcon jobsites. Not surprising since, according to Milcon Concrete Inc. President Mark Miller, “Komatsu equipment really has the least amount of downtime of any of our equipment.” A good thing when excavation; 10,000 lf of sanitary, 5,600 lf of water, and close to 5,000 lf of storm pipe; curbs and roads are awaiting completion on the site.

PC228s because the machines are extremely versatile and can be used on excavation, road reconstruction and underground utilities, including handling trench boxes, he said.

All of Milcon’s Komatsu excavators—the PC228s plus a PC35, PC55, PC78, PC138 and four PC88s—are zero-tail-swing models, “which is a huge benefit on road

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reconstruction. On an existing street the zero-tail-swing models can swing around in one lane, and with a conventional excavator that’s not an option,” Wirick commented.

The equipment is reliable, and so is the service. “One of the biggest reasons we buy Komatsu is the service we get from the Columbus Equipment Company branch here in Dayton. We’ve had very few problems with any of the Komatsus we’ve ever owned, but if a problem ever comes up, Columbus Equipment is very quick to handle it and loan us a machine if ours is in the shop.”

The contractor has a mechanic on staff who does most of the service outside warranty work or highly technical repairs. “Columbus Equipment Company

provides excellent parts availability. Normally we don’t have to wait for more than a day, and parts for common service issues are always available immediately,” Wirick

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Abe Wirick; Vice President, Milcon Concrete Inc.

noted. “Their service is exceptional compared to any other equipment brand we buy parts from. Hands down, they are the best people we deal with on any brand of equipment.”

Milcon plans to keep growing and to keep focusing on opportunities in the greater Dayton area. “We’re a young company with a great group of employees,” Wirick said. “We intend to keep growing and providing opportunities for our employees.”

Growing a successful business is all about making smart decisions. As Milcon’s experience with Komatsu intelligent Machine Control dozers shows, choosing the right equipment allows you do more in less time while lowering your expenses—a proven formula for success.

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