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What must underpin
**SUCCESSFUL PROJECT
MANAGEMENT?**

The vital role
OF THE BCCEI



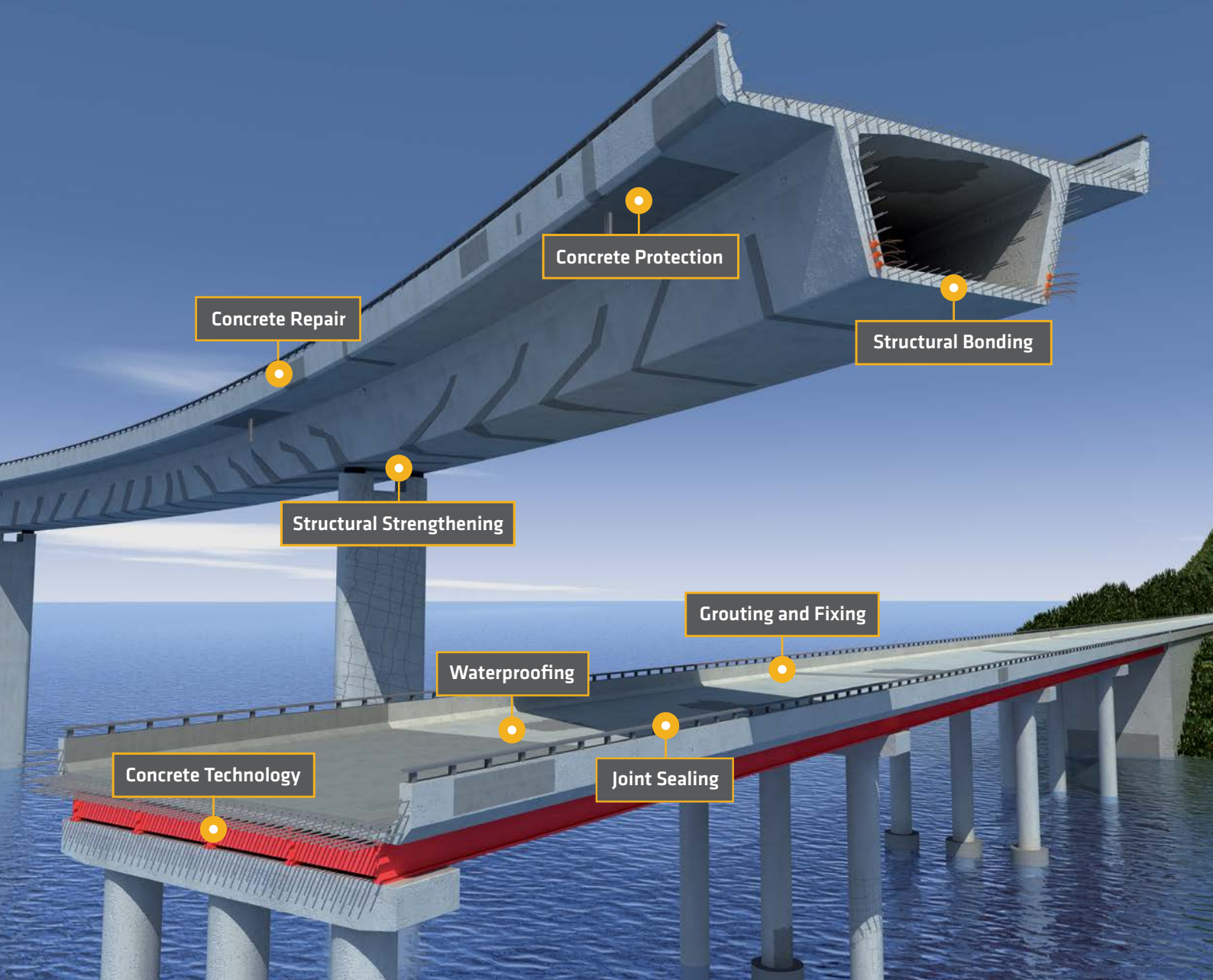
**How the private
sector can lead
SA's SKILLS
REVOLUTION**

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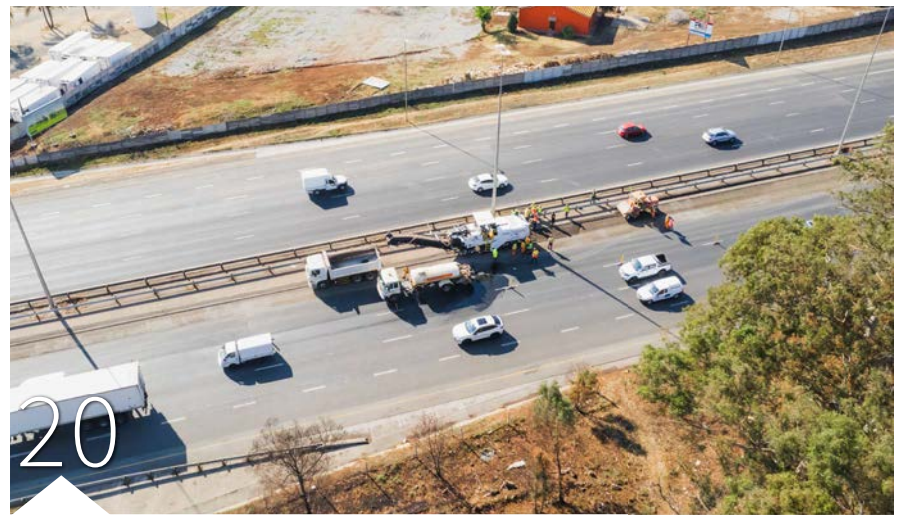
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ON THE COVER

Construction World recently spoke with Keon Kardolus, ELB Equipment's Divisional Director for Earthmoving and Construction (EMC), about the company's new partnership with LiuGong, a globally acclaimed construction equipment manufacturer. This collaboration is set to reshape the Southern African construction and mining equipment landscape, bringing innovative solutions, improved after-sales support, and increased competitiveness to the region.

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Towards the end of last year, two important (but retrospective) indices gave hope of an improvement in the South African construction industry. The first was the FNB/BER Building Confidence Index for the fourth quarter of 2024 and the second was the Afrimat Construction Index (ACI).

The FNB/BER Building Confidence Index maintained that the building industry is showing signs of life and held steady at 40 for the last quarter of 2024. This means that 60% of respondents were dissatisfied with prevailing business conditions.

Sentiment among main contractors improved by 10 points, among quantity surveyors there was a five point increase and among building material manufacturers a two point increase in sentiment.

However, among subcontractors there was a two point decline, while architects' positivity about market conditions declined by three points. Hardware retailers have even less confidence in prevailing market conditions and saw its sentiment shrink by seven points.

The increase in positivity

among main contractors is due to the increased activity they are experiencing, with some saying that it is the best in 10 years.

The ACI is a composite index of the level of activity within the building and construction sectors and is compiled by economist Dr Roelof Botha on behalf of Afrimat. It is based not on sentiment, but on actual figures and is constituted from 10 indicators.

Seven of the 10 constituent indicators of the index are in positive territory. Three of the indicators had significant improvements. These include "Buildings Completed", in the metros and larger municipalities, which was up by 23,3%, "Employment in construction" up by 14,6%, and "Sales Values of Building Material" up by 5,9%. Three other indicators had an increase: the value of "Building

Plans Passed", the volume of "Building Materials Produced" and the remuneration of construction sector employees, as indicated in "Salaries & Wages – Construction".

Sadly this index, when compared to the third quarter of 2023, declined by 1,3% and is indicative that the construction industry is still as lacklustre as it has been for more than a decade.

At the beginning of the year, one can only hope that the positive sentiment experienced by main contractors is indicative that better times are afoot for the industry and has a downstream effect that will make all sectors in the industry return to positivity.

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How the private sector can **LEAD SOUTH AFRICA'S SKILLS REVOLUTION**

*South Africa, I believe is at a talent and innovation tipping point. If we don't act now, we risk falling even further behind in the global race for competitive advantage. To put it bluntly the country is facing a triple crisis: an ever-widening digital skills gap, a challenged education system, and youth unemployment rates that threaten to destabilise our future. **By Ntsako Baloyi, senior manager within the Technology business at Accenture, Africa***

It's time to stop paying lip service to these issues and start driving real, meaningful change. The truth is that we have lagged in areas where we could have been at the forefront of technology in the past. Each missed chance has costly implications for both current and future generations.

The call to action is clear: The private sector must step up further and invest more in South Africa's skills future. Government initiatives, while necessary and laudable are not enough. We need a business-driven approach to accelerate the development of our digital workforce, fix our education system, and create opportunities for our youth - particularly young women - who continue to be left behind in the technology space. By focusing on skills development, mental health, and mentorship, we can close the gap and unlock the potential of the next generation.

As a leader in tech innovation, Accenture is well-positioned to shed light on the depth of these issues, particularly the digital skills gap in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM). Despite global advancements, South Africa's digital competencies lag significantly, as the country ranks 84th out of 135 in the Wiley Digital Skills Gap Index. The slow progression can largely be attributed to a lack of adequate education, socio-economic disparities, and the 'brain drain,' where highly skilled professionals leave the country in pursuit of better opportunities.

To address the skills gap, we must first tackle the educational crisis that fuels it. South Africa's education system has consistently ranked among the worst globally. The 2019 Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS) placed South Africa near the bottom in performance for primary and



This gender disparity in employment reflects broader systemic barriers for women, who are often hindered by social factors that prevent them from pursuing educational and career advancement. In response, there is an urgent need for programs and initiatives that prioritise skills development and employment for young women. These initiatives should aim to rectify this gender gap and uplift those who are most vulnerable in the job market.

The private sector must play a crucial role in addressing the funding shortfall that inhibits South Africa's educational and employment landscape. Government-led initiatives, though well-intentioned, often face bureaucratic delays and financial constraints. In contrast, the private sector can drive more agile, industry-focused solutions. For instance, Accenture has a vested interest in addressing the skills gap through targeted investments in educational institutions and STEM programs.

One innovative approach would be to establish new universities specifically focused on producing graduates in high-demand STEM fields. South Africa's slow progress in building academic capacity, particularly in STEM disciplines, underscores the need for such structural changes. The Oliver Tambo University of Science and Technology, for example, is one proposal that holds significant promise for increasing STEM talent in South Africa. Alongside the establishment of such institutions, the private sector can contribute through scholarships, mentorships, and other funding models that ensure talented students are not barred from education due to financial constraints.

In addition to funding and education, South African businesses must prioritise creating a conducive working environment that retains top talent. The 'brain drain' has cost the country some of its brightest minds, with skilled professionals opting for more attractive opportunities abroad. To retain talent, companies need to provide fair compensation, a supportive working environment, and opportunities for growth.

Mental health is also a critical issue. According to the third annual Mental State of the World Report by Sapien Labs, South Africa had the highest percentage (35,8%) of distressed or struggling workers. In competitive fields like tech, the mental toll can be severe. Businesses must therefore prioritise both mental and physical well-being.

South Africa of course cannot overcome its challenges in isolation – partnerships between the public and private sectors are essential. NGOs and tech hubs, such as WeThinkCode, GirlCode and youth@WORK, are already making headway in addressing critical skills shortages and should be leveraged for greater impact. South Africa's well-established tech ecosystem, primarily in Johannesburg, Cape Town, and Durban, provides an ideal foundation for such initiatives.

Moreover, mentorship programs are crucial. South Africa boasts exceptional leaders in the tech industry who can inspire and guide the next generation. Every organisation should adopt mentorship as a core component of its talent development strategy.

Finally, a digital platform that connects job seekers with mentors and employers could revolutionise the job market. Such a platform could use AI to match candidates with opportunities based on their skills and experiences, streamlining the job search process and ensuring that young talent is adequately matched with industry needs.

By leveraging partnerships, promoting mental health, and investing in education and mentorship, we can cultivate a thriving workforce prepared for the demands of the Fourth Industrial Revolution. ©



Ntsako Baloyi, Senior Manager within the Technology Business at Accenture, Africa.

secondary education. More alarmingly, a 2021 study revealed that 81% of South African Grade 4 students cannot read for meaning, the same figure as in 2011, erasing a decade of slow progress.

This educational failure is exacerbated by inadequate government interventions. While the Department of Basic Education has acknowledged the issue, the promised National Reading Plan remains poorly implemented. Without a strong foundation in basic education, students cannot transition successfully into higher education fields that are critical to closing the skills gap, particularly in STEM disciplines.

South Africa's alarming youth unemployment rate further compounds these challenges. According to the 2022 Labour Market Dynamics report, women are disproportionately affected. For instance, while 31,9% of young men are employed, only 24,2% of young women have jobs, and the unemployment rate among young females stands at a staggering 49,4%.

THE VITAL ROLE OF BCCEI

The civil engineering industry, known for its complex projects and large-scale operations, demands precision, cooperation and clear communication. Given the high stakes, it's inevitable that conflicts arise. The key to maintaining a stable and productive work environment lies in effective dispute resolution. In this space, the Bargaining Council for the Civil Engineering Industry (BCCEI) plays a vital role, offering solutions tailored specifically for the sector.



Merle Denson, Manager of the BCCEI's Dispute Resolution Centre, highlights that dispute resolution is not just about settling disagreements. "It's an integral part of sound business management," she explains. "Effective resolution prevents conflicts from escalating into costly legal battles, conserving both time and resources."

The BCCEI's Dispute Resolution Centre (DRC) stands out in its approach by offering industry-specific dispute mechanisms. Accredited by the Commission for Conciliation, Mediation, and Arbitration (CCMA), the Centre ensures that all cases are handled within legal frameworks, promoting fair and just outcomes.

"This is crucial," Denson explains, "as civil engineering disputes often involve highly technical aspects that require industry knowledge. The BCCEI's panel of commissioners is specifically chosen for their knowledge of the civil engineering field as well as appropriate legislation, allowing for informed decisions that benefit all parties involved."

Denson says that one of the standout features of the BCCEI's approach is its accessibility. By scheduling cases regionally, this reduces the logistical and financial burden on parties ensuring disputes are resolved quickly and efficiently. "This regional focus is further bolstered by the Centre's access to online services; this digital approach not only increases efficiency but also reduces costs, making the resolution process more accessible across the industry."

Denson explains that the DRC encourages parties to choose the online route for dispute resolution, allowing them to leverage the BCCEI's established resources across its regional offices. "Conducting sessions online significantly reduces the time and costs associated with travel for all parties, which is especially beneficial for cases scheduled in distant or external venues."

This approach enhances accessibility and streamlines the process, ensuring that disputes are resolved efficiently and

conveniently for all parties involved," she says.

Financial accessibility is another cornerstone of the BCCEI's success. Both employers and employees contribute to the dispute resolution fund through a monthly levy, ensuring that services remain affordable and accessible. This mechanism has allowed the Dispute Resolution Centre to resolve numerous disputes without burdening the parties involved with excessive costs.

In dismissal cases, which are common within the industry, the BCCEI Dispute Resolution Centre follows a well-structured process. From the initial referral to the final arbitration, each step is handled with care, ensuring fairness and impartiality. The involvement of experienced commissioners and arbitrators guarantees that the process remains transparent and that settlements are reached efficiently.

"Dispute resolution is fundamental to maintaining stability and fairness within the civil engineering industry," says Denson. "The BCCEI's Dispute Resolution Centre is uniquely positioned to provide expert and accessible solutions, fostering a harmonious work environment that benefits all stakeholders."

While the BCCEI is well-known for its dispute resolution services, its mandate extends far beyond. As a bargaining council, its responsibilities include the conclusion and enforcement of collective agreements, preventing and resolving labour disputes, administering dispute resolution processes and promoting training and education within the sector. Additionally, the BCCEI is involved in developing labour policies and legislation, providing industrial support services and extending its offerings to non-parties within the civil engineering industry.

"In essence, the BCCEI plays a pivotal role in shaping the civil engineering landscape, not only by resolving disputes but by fostering an environment of growth, fairness and stability. This makes it an indispensable institution for all stakeholders in the sector," Denson concludes. ☉

PPPs can help revive SA's infrastructure, **UNLOCKING GROWTH AND PROSPERITY**

*South Africa is currently grappling with several major challenges such as unreliable water and electricity supplies and ageing transportation infrastructure, resulting in some municipalities falling short on service delivery and being placed under administration. **By Mamiki Matlawa, Group Business Development Executive at ACTOM***

One of the most crucial issues facing water boards and utilities across South Africa is ageing infrastructure, which needs to be replaced urgently as it is beginning to impact water supply. Despite a reduction in load shedding, the country still faces challenges with its distribution network, which has seen the introduction of load reduction in some areas that experience overload to protect outdated equipment and infrastructure.

At the same time, Transnet's railway network has suffered significant theft and vandalism over the past few years, coupled with inadequate investment in rolling stock and infrastructure maintenance. This has seen a decrease in South Africa's railway transport capacity, shifting a large portion of freight to the country's road network.

The impact of these challenges on the South African economy has been profound, stifling growth, hampering investment and exacerbating inequality, ultimately threatening the stability and future prosperity of the country.

First-class service delivery

To remedy these challenges, Public-Private Partnerships (PPPs) must be encouraged to help government fast-track its goals of creating robust infrastructure and first-class service delivery. PPPs can cover various sectors like transport, energy and water, facilitating diverse projects and demonstrating successful collaborations. Private sector participation improves service quality and efficiency, bringing innovative solutions and maintaining high standards.

One of the specific benefits that PPPs offer government is the ability to access private funding quickly due to the relative lack of bureaucracy in terms of allocating investments. PPPs can also unlock funding for local municipalities that do not have money to spend on required infrastructure upgrades. This is as an increasing number of private sector companies become involved in the municipalities where they operate.

An example of a successful PPP of this nature is the Msunduzi Municipality, which encompasses the city of Pietermaritzburg. Hewlett Aluminium has assisted with repairs to Umgeni Water infrastructure, playing a critical role in enhancing public services and infrastructure resilience. This collaboration not only improves access to essential water services but also demonstrates how effective partnerships can mobilise



resources and expertise to address urgent infrastructure needs.

By leveraging private sector strengths, PPPs can thus help address infrastructure challenges, accelerate development and improve service delivery, fostering economic growth and a better quality of life in South Africa.

Implementation challenges

However, the implementation of PPPs in South Africa is not without challenges. In some instances, public sector resources might not have a full comprehension of the PPP model or lack the political will to implement such partnerships, which could delay implementation.

One of the biggest challenges facing infrastructure development in South Africa is extortion by so-called "construction mafias," which could lead to some projects being disrupted. Fortunately, there are indications that government is formulating an approach to tackle these issues.

Ultimately, for PPPs to succeed, both the private and public sectors need to be open to and embrace this form of partnership. PPPs should be viewed as a solution to some of the major infrastructure challenges faced by South Africa.

However, PPPs must also involve civil society. One of the major shifts that happened with the advent of democracy 30 years ago is that everything related to infrastructure development has been left to government, with civil society choosing not to get involved. Unfortunately, not all expectations have been met and significant headway will only be made with the involvement of the private sector and civil society. ©

PPC calls for collaborative action, rigorous quality **CONTROLS AND LEVEL PLAYING FIELD**

Matias Cardarelli, CEO of PPC, the leading cement producer in Southern Africa, urges a unified approach among government, private sector and industry stakeholders to breathe new life into South Africa's cement and construction sectors. After more than a decade of stagnation and minimal infrastructure projects, a new opportunity is on the horizon as both public and private entities recognise the urgent need for enhanced infrastructure development.

“South Africa stands on the brink of a fresh start for the construction sector,” stated Cardarelli. “To achieve the economic growth necessary to tackle our staggering unemployment, it is vital that we collaborate in launching critical infrastructure projects. The construction industry has historically been one of the largest employers in our country, and reviving it is essential for reducing unemployment.”

With a government ready to take action, there's hope that pending infrastructure initiatives can finally be realised. However, for this revival to be sustainable, the local cement industry must operate under strict quality accountability measures. “Establishing checks and balances to ensure product quality is essential,” Cardarelli emphasised. “Public safety must always be our top priority, and the government must enforce quality standards across all producers, both local and international.

“Likewise, local companies that sell their cement to blending companies must be held accountable for the final end quality of the cement sold to end users. Quality tests have revealed substandard quality cement in the market from some blending producers who purchased the original cement from some well-known cement companies. This represents a public safety risk that should be controlled by both the government and the cement companies that supplied the original cement to blenders.”

Cardarelli further highlighted issues in market fairness, pointing out that imported cement must adhere to the same stringent environmental and labour standards as local products. “For imported cement, the government must not only guarantee quality but also ensure it is produced under the same environmental, labour and safety standards required of local producers. A double standard is not acceptable.

“For example, a carbon tax is being placed on local cement producers, which is worsening their financial situation. However, this tax does not apply to imported cement, giving foreign competitors an unfair advantage. As a result, importing cement becomes more financially appealing than producing it locally.”

As local companies grapple with high electricity and transportation costs and deal with the repercussions of inefficient management decisions over the years, a restructure is imperative for their survival. “It is critical for all stakeholders - producers, customers, suppliers,

and regulators - to engage in rebuilding efforts. Sustainable success is dependent on collaboration and proactive measures.”

Cardarelli also advocates for the adoption of non-fossil energy sources within the cement industry. “Transitioning to greener energy options will not only help reduce carbon emissions but will also lower production costs,” he explained. Achieving this transformation will require a committed partnership between the public and private sectors.

“The time is now for decisive action,” Cardarelli concluded. “We must break the cycle of stagnation and begin activating projects that can secure a successful future not just for the cement industry, but for the South African economy as a whole. Collective involvement is crucial - we must work together to create a prosperous and sustainable environment for generations to come.” ©



*Matias Cardarelli,
CEO of PPC.*



The impact of integrating AI in the QS **AND CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRIES**

The construction industry as a whole can benefit from the incorporation of artificial intelligence (AI) in quantity surveying in a number of ways. To remain relevant in the ever-evolving world, the quantity surveying profession cannot afford to overlook the technological advancements brought about by the adoption of AI. In this article, we will examine a few areas where AI is having an effect on the industry. By Nosiyabonga Mongane, Chief Quantity Surveyor

Cost estimates

By using machine learning algorithms and analysing past project data, the AI can significantly increase the accuracy of cost estimates. Quantity surveyors may produce precise budgets and prevent cost overruns by using machine learning algorithms to find patterns in past projects. Additionally, this will guarantee a more solid basis for planning and budgeting.

Automating complex projects

Quantity surveyors will be able to manage increasingly complicated projects thanks to AI. It will make time-consuming jobs more accurate and efficient. Despite being proven and established, the traditional quantity surveying approach has drawbacks, including human error, a lengthy procedure, a restricted ability to manage complexity, and an inability to keep up with the fast-paced, data-driven construction world of today. The construction sector will undergo a paradigm shift because of the incorporation of AI into quantity surveying, which will have an impact on project planning, execution, and approach.

Management of contracts

Document preparation and updating can take a lot of time. The application AI can expedite the process of creating financial reports and contract documents. AI can, for instance, automatically create standardised contract portions. By collecting information, doing calculations, and producing reports, AI can expedite the preparation of financial reports.

Risk control

By analysing data from several sources, such as project history and market trends, AI can help quantity surveyors evaluate risks. This would increase the effectiveness and efficiency of the

construction team or quantity surveyors. This makes it possible for quantity surveyors to foresee possible problems in advance and create solutions.

Monitoring and reporting in real time

AI is transforming construction site monitoring by offering real-time insights that improve project management, efficiency, and safety. For example, a quantity surveyor can monitor the status of building activities in relation to the project budget and schedule by utilising sensors and AI analytics. AI also makes resource optimisation easier by tracking labor productivity and equipment usage, which eventually minimises waste and reduces expenses. AI provides a thorough picture of project progress by combining data from multiple sources, which promotes better stakeholder communication and improves decision-making throughout the building process.

Integration of BIM

Building Information Modeling (BIM) and AI can be used together to expedite the design and construction process. AI is capable of analysing BIM data to optimise design and guarantee adherence to rules and industry standards. Costs will be reduced, and sustainable practices will be promoted by this combination.

In addition to improving accuracy and efficiency, the use of AI in quantity surveying and building spurs industrial innovation. Technology's influence will probably grow as it develops more, influencing how construction is done in the future.

The job of quantity surveying will not be eliminated by the AI; rather, it will change and develop. Nonetheless, to remain relevant to the market, quantity surveyors must upskill. ©

P R O J E

M A N A G E M

What must underpin successful **PROJECT MANAGEMENT?**

Gareth Robb, Contracts Director at GVK-Siya Zama Building Contractors in the Western Cape, has been described by his colleagues as inspiring. This is not only due to his vast knowledge and skills in project management, but also because of the wisdom he has gained through his own journey of personal growth, which he has injected into his work and team relationships. Robb discusses how people and process are central to getting projects to the finish line on time and within budget.

Effective project management requires structured processes and organisational consistency, which must be balanced with team members' need for individuality. Robb argues that companies often fail when they attempt to make everyone fit into a rigid mould, and stresses the significance of creating a respectful and caring environment that encourages collaboration. However, while it is essential for individuals to grow and reach their potential, this growth must occur within a well-structured framework, especially as

organisations become more complex.

"Project management needs to be process-driven, because effective systems enable teams to achieve remarkable results, even when their skills are still developing," says Robb.

Ultimately, he asserts that success is attainable through careful organisation and connection among team members, and by fostering a culture that values humanity and respect while addressing challenges in a competitive market.

In terms of driving efficiency in project management, Robb



approach, particularly with new engineering contracts (NEC), which differ from traditional contracts by allowing for a shared understanding of risks. “Over time, our team’s involvement with SMEs has yielded remarkable results and we have, where possible, managed to considerably exceed SME targets on projects,” says Robb. “The potential for driving local economic development through engaging with communities is real and is the key to growth and shared value.”

He emphasises the importance of community engagement and support from clients in aiding the success of SMEs in construction projects. Successful outcomes depend not only on the efforts of SMEs but also on clients who are understanding and willing to collaborate.

SMEs face many challenges, including competing against larger companies with more resources, and even potential violence and gangsterism. “Imparting guidance and crucial management and administration skills can really benefit SMEs and help encourage their success,” he adds.

Having recently been promoted to Contracts Director, Robb discusses how his new role at GVK-Siya Zama aligns with his personal goals and vision for the future. After 10 years of service to GVK and a total of 25 years in construction, he aims to leverage his experience to enhance processes and ensure that employees reach their full potential.

“Fortunately, we have a solid company culture and strong values that have remained consistent even as GVK has grown. This is so important in achieving a process-driven, people-centric system,” he adds.

“This kind of system contributes to a company’s success on every level. It’s not just about delivering a successful project; it’s about applying a diligent approach to every challenge,” he says. Robb’s philosophy of consistently addressing problems through careful problem-solving and organisation not only leads his team to deliver successfully on projects, but also allows team members to feel that their contributions are valued.

In his new role, he will focus on implementing and maintaining process-driven structures and integrating these with the upliftment of people as they grow within the organisation. Already considered an inspiring leader and visionary, Robb will continue to instil the value of hard work and thorough preparation, and support the philosophy that success is achieved through dedication and effort. ☉

clarifies that efficiency is often misunderstood. He argues that simply being present at a desk does not equate to productivity. Key to efficiency is understanding and managing processes effectively. This involves careful planning and minimising waste – both in time and resources, with a ‘next action step philosophy’, which focuses on identifying actionable steps to keep projects moving forward.

Passionate about people-centricity, Robb raises the concept of ‘compassionate anger’, which he describes as an occasion when one recognises injustices within a process, especially in project management, and feels an impassioned need to help those affected by these injustices.

An example of this is when one sees how small and medium enterprises (SMEs) struggle due to unclear information given to them about a project or their subjection to unfair contracts. He himself feels motivated to rectify issues to ensure fairness and success for all involved.

Robb shares his experience collaborating with SMEs, particularly on the West Coast and in the Cape Flats. He emphasises that the success of SMEs relies heavily on the willingness of the local community to engage in projects, as many have felt marginalised in the economy. Effective collaboration requires an open-minded approach, recognising that both parties may have misconceptions about each other’s motives. Engaging SMEs involves a dynamic and flexible



Gareth Robb, Contracts Director at GVK-Siya Zama Building Contractors in the Western Cape.

SANY Southern Africa: expanding **HORIZONS IN CONSTRUCTION**

Construction World recently spoke to Hennie Louw, Marketing & Branding Generalist, and Jay Moodley, General Manager – Sales, both from Sany Southern Africa, SANY Group. This insightful discussion illuminated SANY's journey in South Africa, its steadfast commitment to the region, and its growing impact within the construction and mining sectors.



Hennie Louw, Marketing & Branding Generalist, SANY Southern Africa.



Jay Moodley, General Manager, Sany Southern Africa.



Since establishing its regional headquarters in Johannesburg in 2006, SANY has grown significantly, positioning itself as a key player across South Africa, Zambia, Mozambique, and Zimbabwe. Hennie Louw explains that the company's presence is underpinned by its commitment to growth and sustainable development in the region. "SANY is proud to formally commit to the South African market and its clientele," he shares, "This commitment is underscored by our strategic decision to establish a firm presence on South African soil."

In a bold move that underscores SANY's ambitions, the company recently announced a substantial investment into the South African market: a new R300-million headquarters in the East Rand. According to Louw, this investment "symbolises our long-term vision and steadfast commitment to fostering growth

and prosperity within the South African business landscape." This new facility is expected to solidify SANY's role as a leader in the region, providing ample space to support its wide-ranging operations and customer base.

Commitment to quality and community impact

SANY's growth in South Africa reflects a global mission to change perceptions of "Made in China" products, with a focus on quality, innovation, and reliable support. "SANY's journey from humble beginnings to continual breakthrough innovations has fundamentally altered the global perception of 'Made in China,'" Louw emphasises. This dedication to quality is paired with a strong sense of social responsibility; SANY aims to serve both its clients and the communities where it operates, creating

jobs and contributing to local development.

With branches strategically positioned across South Africa - including Boksburg, Durban, Richards Bay, Middelburg, Kimberley, and Rustenburg - SANY ensures that it is close to the heart of its primary industries: mining and construction. "Our Parts Distribution Centre is a vital hub for SANY's operations," Louw says, adding that this facility is "meticulously designed to guarantee the timely and effective supply of spare parts across 14 countries in Southern Africa." Additionally, SANY's Central Warehouse, a 20 000 m² facility, enables reliable support for clients in the mining and construction industries, which often require immediate access to machinery and parts.

Advancing in construction projects

SANY's machinery plays a prominent role in several major construction and mining projects throughout South Africa. The company is deeply involved in road construction, government infrastructure, and large-scale projects such as the N3 upgrade, container handling at the Durban port, and material handling at the Richards Bay port. "Our SY210s are currently being used along the coastal belt in plant hire and civil works," says Jay Moodley, who highlights that the SY210 has been instrumental in delivering robust and efficient solutions to diverse clients.

Moodley elaborates on the SY210, one of SANY's leading 20-ton excavators, which boasts a unique set of features that sets it apart in a competitive market. "Our SY210 boasts a 6-cylinder engine, much preferred by clients, where our competitors have opted to use a 4-cylinder engine," he explains. Additionally, the SY210 is piped, which adds versatility, and it "has one of the lowest fuel consumptions in the market." These features are especially valuable in the South African landscape, where projects often demand durable and fuel-efficient machinery.

Engineering for local conditions

Adapted specifically for the demanding conditions of Southern Africa, the SY210 combines robust engineering with advanced technology to withstand the challenges of rugged terrains. "Its robust design and robotically welded frame give the SY210 added integrity to withstand African conditions," Moodley notes, "together with 6-cylinder reliability and the best-in-class hydraulics." This thoughtful engineering has been met with high praise from SANY's clients, who often highlight the SY210's durability, fuel efficiency, and overall value.

The feedback has been overwhelmingly positive, with recent clients emphasising how well the SY210 performs in terms of fuel consumption and durability. "Recent sales of our SY210 have yielded positive customer feedback," Moodley

shares, "with comments on the robustness, fuel consumption, and overall value for money." This glowing feedback serves as a testament to SANY's commitment to delivering reliable machinery that meets the specific needs of the South African market.

Supporting long-term partnerships

Beyond providing reliable machinery, SANY has established a robust support network to assist clients with maintenance, parts, and troubleshooting. With branches in strategic locations, SANY ensures that it can respond quickly to customer needs. "Each location has the necessary manpower and equipment to react to our customers' needs," Moodley confirms. In addition, SANY offers competitive warranties and extended service packages, which allow clients to enhance the longevity and performance of their equipment. "Apart from our standard warranties, customers can also top up with our extended warranty packages and service plans," Moodley explains, offering flexibility and peace of mind to long-term owners of SANY equipment.

As SANY looks toward the future, the company's Research and Development division remains focused on continuous product improvement and adaptation. "SANY's R&D division works tirelessly to continuously improve its products," Louw shares, "allowing our products to evolve in and with the markets it serves." This dedication to advancement ensures that SANY's machinery remains at the cutting edge, capable of meeting the evolving demands of South Africa's mining and construction sectors.

Alongside its established product lines, SANY is exploring new segments and innovations, including plans to enter the forestry sector with the SY210. "We will soon be entering the forestry segment," Moodley reveals, an expansion that demonstrates SANY's commitment to adapting its offerings to better serve diverse industries.

SANY has already expanded beyond traditional construction and mining equipment, now offering full microgrid solutions, and renewable energy. Additionally, its road trucks, popular in other African counties such as Nigeria, will be made available to the South African market soon.

Through a combination of strategic investments, innovative products, and a strong commitment to local communities, SANY Southern Africa has cemented its reputation as a reliable and forward-thinking partner in the construction and mining sectors. As Louw succinctly puts it, "SANY introduces a very wide array of products and services as we aim to service our clients as a holistic solutions provider." ©



Thrive student living to ease KZN's **STUDENT ACCOMMODATION SQUEEZE**

Thrive Student Living has started its largest student accommodation development yet. Representing a significant R800-million investment, the new purpose-built student accommodation development has commenced immediately adjacent to the main gate of the Howard College Campus of University of KwaZulu-Natal in Berea, eThekweni.

Undertaken by Growthpoint Properties' specialist development division, the project will add 2 400 student beds in the region, which research shows has the biggest shortage of student beds in South Africa.

"Proprietary research commissioned by our team revealed that KZN remains undersupplied with student beds," says Kobus Blom, Growthpoint's KwaZulu-Natal Regional Development Manager. "The province has significant demand, and most students live in environments that are not conducive to student outcomes."

In response to this need, Growthpoint has commenced the two-year development programme for the new building which is set to welcome its first students in January 2027 under the Thrive Student Living banner.

The new development was celebrated with a sod-turning ceremony, attended by the Honourable Mayor of eThekweni, Cllr Cyril Xaba, and the Chief Financial Officer of eThekweni, Dr Sandile Mnguni, as well as representatives of Thrive Student Living and the Growthpoint development team and its partners. This massive investment puts into action Growthpoint's commitment made at the recent KwaZulu-Natal Investment Conference for R800-million of investment in the province over two years, which it is executing through this development for Thrive Student Living.

Amogelang Mocumi, Fund Manager of Growthpoint Student Accommodation Holdings, which operates under the Thrive Student Living brand, expresses the company's commitment, "By prioritising student accommodation that supports better education outcomes, we are not only enriching lives but supporting employment and fuelling a more competitive economy. This investment highlights the transformative power of strong partnerships and underscores what is possible through collaborative efforts. To grow these achievements, we need a unified approach across all levels of government, together with private sector investment to support economic growth. Together, we can build a brighter future for young people and our nation."

Growthpoint develops purpose-built student accommodation located and designed around students to help them succeed and make the most of their university experience.

In line with Thrive Student Living's ethos of fashioning vibrant campus communities, each unique in its architecture and design to reflect and foster its specific community, it has shaped a beautiful contemporary design for the new 12-storey building incorporating the red face-brick that is an architectural signature in the Berea area.

The design also includes all the added amenities that Thrive Student Living accommodation offers, like study areas and games rooms, gyms and IT rooms, and backup power and water. Uniquely, it has also been designed to include a



small element of ground-floor retail tailored towards daily convenience, which will serve building residents, other students, and the immediate community, as there is nothing else in the area fulfilling this need.

The development will also benefit from Growthpoint's recognised green building leadership, creating healthy, sustainable environments and operating with a social consciousness that adds value to communities. Growthpoint's developments boost job and economic opportunities, in addition to having long-term positive socioeconomic impacts of education support.

While this is its first purpose-built student accommodation project in KZN, Growthpoint has a proud track record of leading purpose-built student accommodation developments in the university cities of Johannesburg, Pretoria and Cape Town.

It was recently named the winner of the SAPOA Property Development Award for Innovative Excellence in Student Accommodation for its development of Thrive @ Horizon Heights, also for Thrive Student Living, at the bustling heart of Johannesburg's student community. Thrive @ Horizon Heights opened for the 2024 academic year and was well let, proving popular with those from the nearby University of Johannesburg as well as the University of the Witwatersrand.

The Growthpoint development team is currently completing two new properties for Thrive Student Living for the 2025 academic year: Thrive @ Crescent Studios, a R300-million 900-bed property located in Braamfontein, and Thrive @ Arteria Parktown, a R200-million 500-bed located in Parktown, both ideally positioned for Wits University students.

Piling commenced at the eThekweni site in the first week of October 2024 in preparation for the main building contractor, which moved onto site on 18 November 2024, to begin construction. ©

10-years property investment partnership **DELIVERS SOLID GROWTH**

This month marks the 10th anniversary of the property investment partnership between Futuregrowth Asset Management and Capital Land Asset Management” in the growth of the Community Property Fund.



Above and left: Aerial images of Boitekong Mall and Sam Ntuli Mall.

In October 2014 Futuregrowth and Capital Land joined forces to reposition and grow Comprop, a flagship fund of Futuregrowth. For almost 30 years Comprop has pioneered investment in township and rural shopping centres, developing and supporting the needs of underserved communities throughout South Africa. In 2014 the Fund held 17 shopping centres with a combined value of R1,8-billion. Competition in this area of the property market had intensified as institutional investors recognised the growth potential of the sector.

A decade later this strategy has yielded excellent returns for the investors. The Comprop portfolio is now valued at over R8-billion, comprising 25 shopping centres with a total gross lettable area of more than 438 000 m². Comprop has achieved an impressive 10 year annualised return ending 30 September 2024 of 12,4% despite ongoing loadshedding, poor municipal service delivery, COVID-19, the July 2021 riots and generally weak economic conditions.

The Comprop growth strategy has focused on acquiring quality shopping centres with strong income growth potential that deliver essential goods and services in township and rural areas. Key acquisitions in the portfolio include Eyethu Orange Farm Mall (Orange Farm, Gauteng), Heidelberg Mall (Heidelberg, Gauteng), The Crossing Shopping Centre (Mahikeng, North West), King Senzangakhona Shopping Centre (Ulundi, KwaZulu-Natal), Murchison Mall (Ladysmith, KwaZulu-Natal), Sam Ntuli Mall (Katlehong, Gauteng), KG Mall (Kwa-Guqa, Mpumalanga) and most recently Boitekong Mall (Rustenburg, North West).

The vacancy rate in the Comprop portfolio has decreased from 8,6% in October 2014 to 3,9% in September 2024, as a result of active management and deliberate enhancement of the tenant mix. Additional value has been unlocked through the expansion and redevelopment of Thulamahashe Plaza (Thulamahashe, Mpumalanga) and Motherwell Shopping Centre (Motherwell, Eastern Cape), and the inclusion of Boxer as an additional anchor at several shopping centres.

Management of township and rural property is highly challenging and Comprop has faced many challenges over the years. The Bridge City Shopping Centre (KwaMashu, KwaZulu-Natal), one of Comprop’s flagship assets, was recently reconstructed following complete devastation in the July 2021 riots to create a dominant, superior regional centre and to further enhance and integrate the transport nodes with the centre.

A key emphasis is placed on the use of local service providers and local employment. Over 14 800 people are employed at the shopping centres in the portfolio, of which 80% live in the local communities surrounding the shopping centres.

Over the past 10 years, operations in the portfolio have advanced through a compliance driven, technology focused approach aimed at reducing risk and maximising efficiencies. The development of Capital Land’s cutting-edge proprietary software is a differentiator which has further enhanced the management of the Comprop portfolio.

A commitment to environmental sustainability has resulted in the successful implementation of renewable energy projects, waste management and recycling initiatives. A total of 12 solar energy projects, with a cumulative output of over 14 000 kWp, have been completed in the Comprop portfolio since 2014, contributing to utilities savings as well as reducing the carbon footprint. Notably, a 3,2 MWp, 3,1 MWh hybrid power project was recently completed at Heidelberg Mall.

Smital Rambhai, the Portfolio Manager of Comprop said: “Futuregrowth and Capital Land share the same culture and values, which is one of the key drivers behind the success of Comprop. Both institutions have a high focus on accountability and transparency, which ensures that our investors interests are always put first.

What sets this partnership apart from many is that we are excited to make a contribution together, to change South Africa for the better in a meaningful and tangible way.” ©



Jan Hnizdo,
CEO at Teraco.

Teraco commences construction on **120 MW UTILITY-SCALE SOLAR POWER PLANT**

Teraco, a Digital Realty company and provider of interconnection platforms and vendor-neutral colocation data centres, announced today that it has started construction of its 120 MW utility-scale solar PV power plant in the Free State province of South Africa.

In a world first for data centre operators, Teraco will own the 120 MW solar PV plant and wheel the renewable energy to its data centres, with the plan to create its own sustainable energy source to power the next generation of client cloud and AI computing applications. The plant is expected to come online in late 2026.

“Driving renewable energy infrastructure investment at a time when computing applications such as artificial intelligence are using increased power is an industry imperative. The need is even more acute in South Africa, given its electricity generation constraints and current levels of renewable energy penetration. This is a significant step toward meeting our renewable energy ambitions and those of our clients. It is also only the first phase of our longer-term renewable energy commitment, with the construction commencement marking an important milestone in what has been a long journey over the last several years, and we are now looking forward to driving the project to completion,” says Jan Hnizdo, CEO at Teraco.

“In South Africa, we have various energy challenges, and this presents an incredible opportunity to support the needs of our broader community through the addition of generation capacity to our constrained grid, while meeting Teraco’s near term renewable energy objectives. This represents a unique holistic approach since Teraco plans to not only own its data centres, but also to power them with a renewable energy source, creating a sustainable path to growth. This initiative aligns with Teraco’s long-term vision of powering digital transformation across Africa. South Africa’s solar power represents a competitive advantage for data centres relative to other locations,” he adds.

Teraco successfully secured grid capacity allocation from Eskom for the solar plant in February and has spent the last eight months finalising plant design and the wheeling arrangements between Eskom and the municipalities of Ekurhuleni and Cape Town, within which several of Teraco’s data centres are located.

Wheeling renewable energy across electrical grids enables power to be moved from a renewable energy producer in outlying areas via existing transmission and distribution systems to end users in urban areas. It also allows the deployment of renewable energy projects to areas with high energy yields to maximise their generation potential. Wheeling to multiple municipalities marks another first for renewable energy projects in South Africa.

Bryce Allan, Head of Sustainability at Teraco, says, “Teraco considers this project essential to achieving its



renewable energy ambitions and believes it will pave the way for other municipality renewable energy wheeling projects. This will ultimately assist municipalities in attracting new investments and remaining competitive as local and international companies become increasingly sensitive to the carbon intensity of their electricity supply.”

Teraco has partnered with JUWI and Subsolar to develop the 120 MW solar PV plant, with JUWI appointed to design and manage the procurement, construction, and commissioning.

“Our strategy is to control our own solar project, and together with our partners, directly drive its development. This project delivers on our commitments to clients and shareholders,” he adds.

Teraco will also be upgrading Eskom’s transmission infrastructure to allow the electricity generated to be successfully transmitted through the national grid. When fully operational, the 120 MW solar PV plant is expected to produce more than 354 000 MWh annually. ©

About Teraco

Teraco, a leading carrier-neutral colocation provider in Africa, is the first provider of highly resilient, vendor-neutral data environments in sub-Saharan Africa. With its world-class data centre infrastructure and network-dense ecosystems, Teraco forms a vital part of the African internet’s backbone and is essential to the modern enterprise’s digital transformation strategy. Teraco is majority-owned by Digital Realty – offering customers a global data centre platform designed to enable digital businesses to scale within a highly connected data community across 300+ facilities in 50+ metros across 25+ countries on six continents – and a consortium of private equity investors, including Berkshire Partners LLC and Permira.

10th 6 star green star design RATING FOR A LIFESTYLE CENTRE

Balwin Properties has secured its 10th 6 Star Green Star Design Rating on a lifestyle centre for the Thaba Eco-Village Lifestyle Centre and Montessori School, located within the Thaba Eco-Village residential estate in Gauteng. This prestigious recognition, awarded by the Green Building Council of South Africa (GBCSA), also includes a Net Zero Carbon Level 1 Design rating.

This milestone further solidifies Balwin Properties' commitment to sustainable development, joining an impressive portfolio of 6 Star Green Star Design Rated Lifestyle Centre properties at developments Greenlee, Greenbay, Greencreek, Greenpark, The Reid, Fynbos, The Huntsman, Ballito Hills, and De Zicht, as well as the Balwin Properties head office.

The Green Star certification, developed by GBCSA, serves as a trusted mark of excellence for sustainable building design, construction, and operation across South Africa. The Net Zero Carbon rating reflects a building's commitment to minimising carbon emissions throughout its lifecycle, from design and construction to operation.

The Thaba Eco-Lifestyle Centre and Montessori School's green building strategy emphasised on the specific areas of: Management, Indoor Environment Quality (IEQ), Energy Efficiency, Transport, Water conservation, Materials, Land Use and Ecology, Emissions Reduction, and innovative practices.

The project's overall score was significantly enhanced by the efforts of Solid Green Consulting, an accredited professional and sustainable building consultant who worked side by side with Balwin on all 10 Lifestyle Centres.

Jennifer Dean, Lead Accredited Professional, noted that the project exemplifies green design as a foundational principle that promotes greater environmental awareness and behavioural change.

Sustainable features

Spanning 1 928,1 m² for the Thaba Eco-Lifestyle Centre and 660,1 m² for the Montessori School, these facilities seamlessly blend modern educational and community amenities with sustainable design. The Lifestyle Centre features wellness and recreational spaces, serving as a social hub for the community, while the Montessori School incorporates sustainable materials in its single-floor structure to support holistic child development.

The architectural approach also aims to connect occupants with nature. Indigenous xeriscape plants have been introduced to minimise irrigation and promote local biodiversity, complemented by green spaces that encourage relaxation. Active facilities, including a gym, six padel courts, skateboard parks, half basketball court, mini soccer fields, kiddies play area, bike and hiking trails and Thaba paws dog park promote fitness and community engagement.

The project utilised eco-friendly, locally sourced, non-toxic, and recyclable materials to reduce carbon emissions and enhance the building's durability. A green roof over a portion of the Montessori school provides natural insulation, mitigate urban heat, and support biodiversity while managing stormwater effectively.

Windows were strategically placed to maximise views and natural ventilation and minimise reliance on HVAC systems to ensure optimal indoor air quality. Energy-efficient LED lighting with smart controls reduces electricity usage, while high-performance insulation and Low-E windows help maintain comfortable temperatures with minimal energy consumption.

A solar photovoltaic system with a capacity of 66,2 kWp generates an annual production of 111 MWh, actively reducing the building's peak electrical demand. A thorough energy model was developed to benchmark performance against a notional building, demonstrating a 100% improvement in net zero operating emissions.

Water conservation measures include low flow fittings, rainwater harvesting and dual flush toilets which are flushed with either rainwater or treated water from a future wastewater treatment plant.

Tinney explained that achieving a Net Zero Carbon rating requires a holistic approach to efficiency in carbon, water, waste, and ecology. "Sub-metering of major energy-consuming systems allows us to collect data essential for understanding and managing building systems and identifying energy-saving opportunities." ©





BOLD MOVES IN EARTHMOVING: ELB EQUIPMENT PARTNERS WITH LIUGONG

Construction World recently spoke with Keon Kardolus, ELB Equipment's Divisional Director for Earthmoving and Construction (EMC), about the company's new partnership with LiuGong, a globally acclaimed construction equipment manufacturer. This collaboration is set to reshape the Southern African construction and mining equipment landscape, bringing innovative solutions, improved after-sales support, and increased competitiveness to the region.



Keon Kardolus, ELB Equipment's Divisional Director for Earthmoving and Construction.

Expanding horizons

The partnership is a strategic alignment of LiuGong's renowned product range with ELB Equipment's extensive network and customer-centric approach. "ELB Equipment partnered with LiuGong to expand its product portfolio with a globally recognised brand, addressing the growing demand for reliable, cost-effective machinery," explains Kardolus. He emphasises that this move is aligned with ELB's strategy to strengthen its market presence and increase unit sales in Southern Africa.

Under the leadership of Desmond van Heerden, CEO of ELB Equipment, the company has experienced significant growth. "The equipment industry of today is very different from five or ten years ago. The ELB Equipment of today needs to embrace change and become a more focused and leaner organisation," says Kardolus.

Why LiuGong?

LiuGong, one of the world's leading manufacturers in the global construction equipment market, offers a comprehensive product range that includes excavators, wheel loaders, graders, and mining trucks to tackle earthmoving and backhoes, skidsteers, compaction, and road building equipment to serve the construction industries needs. This aligns perfectly with ELB Equipment's vision of

delivering tailored solutions for diverse industries such as mining, construction, and general industry.

"We took our time researching this decision," Kardolus states. "LiuGong, officially Guangxi LiuGong Machinery Co., Ltd., is a prominent Chinese multinational construction machinery manufacturer headquartered in Liuzhou, China. Established in 1958, LiuGong has grown into one of the world's leading heavy equipment producers, offering a diverse range of machinery for various industries. Recognised as the world's largest manufacturer of wheel loaders, LiuGong offers models like the 835H, 856H, 877H, and 890H, known for their reliability and durability. With a workforce of over 16 000 employees, LiuGong operates more than 20 global manufacturing facilities and maintains a robust global presence. The company has established a vast network of more than 500 dealers across over 180 countries, ensuring comprehensive sales and service support worldwide. It was crucial to us to partner with a company of this calibre."

Customer-centric approach

Both companies share a commitment to exceptional customer service, a sentiment echoed by Pu Yonghua, LiuGong Africa's Sales Director: "With ELB Equipment's extensive network and customer-first approach, we are



confident that this partnership will strengthen our position in the region.”

Kardolus highlights the importance of robust after-sales support. “Our customers will benefit from LiuGong’s high-quality equipment, backed by ELB Equipment’s proven expertise in maintenance, parts availability, and technical support,” he says. This includes product familiarisation training, ensuring operators are well-versed in the functionality and daily maintenance of their equipment.

Addressing bias and building trust

Despite the proven quality of Chinese equipment, there remains some bias among consumers. Kardolus acknowledges this but remains optimistic: “It’s similar to how Japanese products were once viewed. Over time, perceptions shift as people experience the quality firsthand. Partnering with a trusted name like ELB helps bridge that gap.”

He believes offering robust warranties and unmatched service turnaround times will help overcome these biases. “Confidence in the brand is key. Customers need to know that when something goes wrong, we’ll be there to fix it promptly,” he asserts.

A vision for the future

This partnership represents more than just a business deal – it’s a long-term strategic alignment. “Our relationship with LiuGong is built on mutual trust and a shared vision for growth,” Kardolus emphasises. He believes this collaboration will enable ELB Equipment to not only serve

existing markets better but also explore new opportunities across Southern Africa, starting with Namibia.

LiuGong has always been committed to striving for excellence in product development, which ensures that its machinery remains efficient and reliable in Africa’s unique environments.

Expanding footprint and infrastructure

With its network of 11 branches and sub-dealers, ELB Equipment is well-positioned to support the anticipated growth in demand for LiuGong products. Kardolus shares plans for further expansion: “It’s clear this partnership will necessitate growth, and we are well positioned and welcome the opportunity for future expansion.”

ELB is also investing heavily in parts inventory to minimise downtime for customers. The company has adopted LiuGong’s three-tier parts model, ensuring fast-moving items are always available locally.

Bold steps forward

“This partnership underscores our commitment to providing innovative, reliable, and cost-effective solutions,” Kardolus says. He describes the decision to partner with LiuGong as a bold move, one that demonstrates ELB Equipment’s dedication to adapting to market needs and staying ahead of the curve. With their combined expertise, ELB Equipment and LiuGong are set to redefine industry standards, creating a new era of growth, collaboration, and exceptional service in Southern Africa. As Kardolus puts it: “This is more than a business deal; it’s a partnership for the future.” ☉





Philip Saunders, Product Sales Manager for Astec's Materials and Infrastructure Solutions divisions.

ASTEC cold planer makes its debut **IN SOUTH AFRICAN ROAD BUILDING AND REHABILITATION**

A durable, powerful, high-performance machine is making its debut in South Africa and is poised to set new standards in road construction and rehabilitation. The Astec RX-600ex cold planer was used for the first time ever in South Africa on the rehabilitation of the R21 highway in Gauteng.

Cold planing, also known as asphalt milling, is the removal or milling up of an asphalt surface to provide an improved surface for repaving or resurfacing. It ensures smooth and uniform roadways. The amount of asphalt removed depends on the condition of the original surface and the intended use. According to Philip Saunders, Product Sales Manager for Astec's Materials and Infrastructure Solutions divisions, cold planning is a cost-effective and sustainable process that can be repeated as needed. He notes that in addition to motorway rehabilitation and milling, the RX-600ex's applications include urban road projects. Its lighter weight and versatility ensure manoeuvrability in urban locations. It is also suitable for lane profiling and maintenance, Saunders explains.

Powered by a 630 horsepower Cummins QSX 15Tier III engine, the Astec RX-600ex has a 2007 mm wide QX1 asphalt milling drum with 16 mm tool spacing. Its key features include a dust extraction system, hydraulically folding conveyor, Astec's ACE Grade & Slope Automation with auto-cut entry, dual water spray bars and bolt-on track pads – all of which are standard on the machine. It also boasts an Astec QX1 quick change cutter drum, integrated dual operator platform with simplified intuitive

controls and dual water spray bars. Saunders expands on the benefits that these features deliver: "A standard dust extraction system improves operator comfort and safety. The dust extraction system removes dust and debris from the milling operation through a hydraulic fan at the primary conveyor. The dust is ejected at the end of the secondary conveyor into the dump truck. As the dust is ejected, the material exiting the secondary conveyor belt helps to channel the fine material into the dump truck.

"The folding secondary conveyor available on the Astec RX-600ex as 'standard' simplifies transport and loading. A boost function, also offered as a standard feature on the machine, temporarily speeds up the conveyor should it become overloaded."

He notes that the cold planer's Astec QX1 cutter drum improves access for bit and insert removal. "It has notches in the seating face, which allows for the use of a small wedge to remove inserts. Notches in the nose are for front bit removal with a fork tool. Shorter base blocks provide additional space at the end rings while the machine's shorter shank allows for easier bit removal from the rear of the shank," Saunders explains.

Astec cold planers like the RX-600ex have two independent spray bars to inject water in the cutter



platform. “With multifunctional joysticks and accessible controls, operating the cold planer is clear and intuitive. The controls are designed to be operated with one hand to allow for truck signalling.

“When your track pads are ready to be replaced, you can simply unbolt the old ones and bolt on new ones, saving road builders time and money,” he asserts. Because the bolts are not exposed to the surface, there is also the benefit of no asphalt build-up. “Traditional track pads utilise ‘through bolts’ which build up with asphalt and take longer to remove and replace,” Saunders explains.

The RX-600ex is part of Astec’s expansive Rock to Road range, which includes equipment for every phase of road building - from quarrying, crushing and processing the aggregate to concrete production and road construction. Astec supplies more than 100 products to a global customer base in the aggregates, construction, infrastructure and mining sectors, and offers worldwide training, education, service and support. The group’s operations are divided into two primary business segments. Materials Solutions includes aggregate and other material handling and processing solutions, including crushers, screens, apron feeders and rock breakers. Infrastructure Solutions includes road building, asphalt and concrete plants, thermal and storage solutions. High-performance, fuel-saving machines like the Astec RX-600ex are ideally suited for infrastructure programmes in Africa. ©

housing. The front spray bar is primarily for dust suppression. The rear spray bar cools the drum.

The ACE system provides the ability to automatically calibrate specific hydraulic parameters ensuring the machine consistently achieves the precise milling depth, while the grade and slope sensors maintain the prescribed parameters when in full operation. New graphic displays allow the milling crew to easily select, calibrate, and control sensors with minimal time and effort. The ACE Auto-Cut Entry system automatically controls the drum's depth when initiating a cut, rather than requiring the operator to do so manually. It ensures that the drum connects with the pavement at the required depth and angle for the milling task. This machine’s operator platform is conveniently accessed from the right or the left side. Two control stations allow machine operation from either side. Saunders states that the simplified controls allow for easy operation from either side of the



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BUILT TO CONNECT

Overnight bridge demolition highlights **IMPRESSIVE PRECISION AND PLANNING**

In an impressive feat of precision and planning, Jet Demolition recently carried out the overnight controlled demolition of the Rockdale Road Bridge, a vital step in the N3 highway and EB Cloete Interchange upgrade.

“The biggest challenge we face with rapid overnight bridge demolitions is the tight timeframes imposed by road closures and the planning demands and project costs associated with them,” highlights Johann Weinmann, Structural Engineer & Project Manager at Jet Demolition. In the case of the N2 and N3 highway upgrade projects in KwaZulu-Natal, most bridge demolitions are completed under total motorway closures, typically between from 18:00 on a Saturday and 05:00 on Monday. “Beyond the extensive hourly lane penalty, you can only imagine the chaos and economic losses that would arise if the N3 highway between Pietermaritzburg and Durban was only reopened late on Monday evening instead of early in the morning as scheduled,” notes Weinmann. During these projects, the requirement to reopen highways promptly is non-negotiable for Jet Demolition.

The company employs exhaustive planning and operational strategies to meet these critical deadlines. “From developing multiple demolition methodologies to having double execution teams and backup mechanics on standby, we leave no stone

untuned. Jet Demolition’s comprehensive service model, which includes specialised craning and rigging subcontractors, is essential to the success of these time-sensitive demolitions. Weinmann notes: “Full cooperation between all team members is crucial.

For example, a recent incident saw a mobile crane delayed due to industrial action. This delay was promptly mitigated via cohesive teamwork during execution, ultimately meeting the project deadline and the clients’ satisfaction.”

Another challenge frequently encountered in these types of critical infrastructure projects is the absence of up-to-date structural drawings, which can cause delays during execution.

Through strategic planning, resource allocation, and a steadfast commitment to precision, Jet Demolition ensures that its bridge demolition services meet South Africa’s infrastructure demands, providing safe, timely solutions that mitigate economic impact and enhance connectivity for all road users. ☺



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**Providing quality products
to the South African
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Nationwide pledge for workers IN THE CONSTRUCTION SECTOR

Decent work is a movement, a movement for promoting labour rights and improving business productivity.

The Department of Employment and Labour (DEL), together with its social partners, the International Labour Organisation (ILO), the Federated Employers Mutual Assurance Company (FEM), and the Compensation Fund (CF), have united to support labour rights and ethical business practices in the construction sector. This collaborative effort launches a nationwide initiative aimed at promoting decent work for all in South Africa's construction industry. The partnership focuses on advancing labour rights, eliminating exploitative practices, and enhancing productivity in a sector vital to the country's economic growth.

The Construction Health and Safety Accord plays a vital role in advancing the Decent Work agenda in the sector. This agreement between the Government, Organised Labour, and Organised Business aims to create safer, healthier working environments. It also promotes collaboration among all parties to prioritise workers' safety while enhancing business efficiency.

The construction sector is one of the largest employers in South Africa, generating thousands of jobs annually. However, it is also an industry where decent work challenges, such as safety risks, informal labour practices, and wage exploitation, are prevalent. The objective of this initiative is to change this narrative by promoting fair, compliant, and fulfilling work conditions for construction workers, while simultaneously boosting productivity for businesses.

Decent Work advocates for employment that respects the dignity, safety, and rights of all workers. It defines decent work in the construction sector as employment that is fulfilling, compliant with regulations, and free from exploitation.

Establishing a foundation for meaningful transformation within the construction sector, the Decent Work in Construction campaign promotes:

- Advocacy efforts aimed at raising awareness among employers, workers, and the public about the importance of decent work. This includes ensuring all stakeholders understand their rights and responsibilities in creating fair and productive workplaces.
- Regular workplace inspections to ensure compliance with labour standards and health and safety regulations. There will be an increase in inspections within the industry to ensure companies adhere to legal requirements, safeguarding workers' rights and well-being.
- Strict enforcement of labour laws, with DEL and its social partners holding violators accountable and ensuring corrective actions are swiftly

implemented. This will deter exploitative practices and encourage ethical business conduct.

- Capacity building through regular training programmes, workshops, and other resources to empower both employers and workers. Businesses will improve compliance and productivity, while workers will gain skills for personal development and job security.

As part of the national drive to promote Decent Work in Construction, DEL, ILO, FEM, and CF encourage the public and all construction industry stakeholders—including employers, workers, and unions—to join the movement by signing the Decent Work in Construction Pledge. By signing, businesses and individuals commit to promoting fair, safe, and compliant working conditions. Workers and the public are also urged to report any instances of exploitation, non-compliance, or unsafe conditions to their nearest labour centre. These reports will help identify and address unfair practices, ensuring workers' rights are upheld.

To further support the Decent Work initiative, DEL, in partnership with key stakeholders and social partners, will embark on a roadshow aimed at directly engaging stakeholders and the public. The events are open to all construction industry participants, including business owners, employees, unions, and the general public. ©

DECENT WORK IN CONSTRUCTION
Join the Movement.


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 MAKING A DIFFERENCE TOGETHER


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John Rammutla, Associate:
Highways, Transport &
Infrastructure, WSP in Africa.

Building pathways to digitally transformed, **SUSTAINABLE AND SAFER ROADS**

*People often overlook the importance of road transport systems, but their smooth functioning relies on the interaction of various elements within the built environment. **John Rammutla, Associate: Highways, Transport & Infrastructure, WSP in Africa***

The growing digitisation of system components offers opportunities to tackle transport-related challenges, such as road congestion and accessibility, by integrating technology and data to develop digital transport solutions.

Mapping the scene

The performance of road transport infrastructure is facing a range of ever-increasing demands, fuelled by steady population growth, rising urbanisation rates, the adoption of more connected and automated vehicles, and more frequent extreme weather due to climate change.

Driving the need for change, today's transport systems face several challenges, including but not limited to:

- **Safety performance plateauing:** A general plateauing of safety metrics is limiting progress toward Vision Zero (the aim for zero traffic fatalities and severe injuries as well as ensure safe and equitable transport for all).
- **Environmental challenges:** The environmental impact of road transport infrastructure poses a significant threat to ecosystem health and human wellbeing through contributions to air and noise pollution.
- **Accessibility and inclusivity:** Road transport infrastructure continues to act as a barrier to mobility for marginalised communities, thereby contributing to inequity.

- **Urbanisation and population growth:** Cities are swelling as more people move to urban centres in pursuit of economic, social and personal benefit; overall global population growth and associated urbanisation is predicted to continue until at least 2050.
- **Financial constraints and material shortages:** Governments are facing a challenging financial situation with high interest rates and rapidly increasing costs in labour, materials and general service delivery.

These myriad of challenges also underpin the areas to be addressed on the journey to digitalisation.

Digitally transformed road infrastructure

The digitisation of system components provides opportunities to solve transport related challenges, including road congestion and accessibility, for example, by integrating technology and data to create digital transport solutions. However, implementing system-wide digitalisation is not a simple solution, but one that requires a vision centred around three core principles. The first of these is implementing the goals of digitalisation through a whole-system perspective, strategic investment and a willingness to embrace continuous change. Secondly, it requires those who advise, design, engineer and operate road infrastructure to prioritise the provision of



deliver whole-system outcomes driven by customer needs and policy objectives. Our concept offers a holistic perspective that supports enhanced outcomes and transforms the way we all use our road transport networks. To deepen this understanding we have also identified ten pathways to guide government and regulatory bodies, policymakers, road authorities and infrastructure operators, solution and service providers, and transport organisations/operators to successfully navigate their digital transformation journeys.

- Policy and regulatory framework: Establishing policies and regulations that incentivise the adoption of Digital Transport Infrastructure. This includes setting standards for digital systems, data privacy, cybersecurity, and interoperability.
- Governance and enterprise framework: Creating a structured framework to coordinate activities among diverse stakeholders from both public and private sectors.
- Research and Development (R&D): Particularly investing in R&D to develop innovative technologies and solutions for Digital Transport Infrastructure.
- Infrastructure delivery: Including upgrading existing road infrastructure to support digital technologies, such as installing sensors, cameras, and communication networks. This also involves integrating digital infrastructure with existing transportation systems.
- Data collection and analytics: This means implementing systems for collecting, processing, and analysing data from digital infrastructure. This data can be used to optimise traffic flow, improve safety, and enhance transportation planning.
- Public awareness and education: Educating the public about the benefits of Digital Transport Infrastructure and promoting behaviour change.
- Capacity and capability building: Building the technical capacity and capability of government agencies, transportation professionals, and other stakeholders to plan, implement, and manage Digital Transport Infrastructure effectively.
- International partnerships: Collaborating with other countries and international organisations to share best practices, standards, and technologies for Digital Transport Infrastructure.
- Demonstration pilots and trials: Launching pilot projects to demonstrate the feasibility and benefits of Digital Transport Infrastructure.
- Continuous monitoring and evaluation: Continuously evaluating the performance of Digital Transport Infrastructure and making adjustments as needed.

Each pathway offers specific strategies to leverage technological and data-driven components ensuring that Digital Transport Infrastructure aligns with customer needs and policy objectives.

When we look at our roads, change is unavoidable. Gone are the days when vehicles and infrastructure function as separate entities. Today, the boundaries between vehicles, roads, communication networks and the users themselves have blurred, creating a dynamic, evolving ecosystem. Looking ahead, the synergy between technology, infrastructure and users will continue to drive innovations in road transport, especially as transport data becomes ubiquitous and more accessible. Acting upon a focused vision, and implementing these pathways above, can ensure that change is meaningful, and lead us to the evolution of our roads and a road infrastructure that is safer, more inclusively accessible and sustainable for all. ©

inclusive, equitable and accessible digitised systems, so as to make the benefits of digital transformation available to all. Thirdly, system wide digitisation requires collaboration across all accountable government portfolios, industries and disciplines to break down siloes and build resilient and adaptable transport networks for current and future generations.

While this may seem like a tall order, it is entirely achievable, due in no small part to the digital revolution of the recent decades. Advanced computing, telecommunications and data analytics have merged with traditional transport infrastructure through Intelligent Transport Systems (ITS), enabling cities to greatly improve the operational capabilities of transport systems.

The success of these innovations, and whether they facilitate the development of safer, greener and equitable transport systems, will greatly depend on the adoption of a whole-system approach that considers the interdependencies between technology, infrastructure and people.

With that in mind, Digital Transport Infrastructure is an emerging international term used to highlight the evolution of the digitalisation journey, building on historic global developments in ITS that have led to changes in how we perceive the convergence of technology, digitalisation and transportation.

The road to Digital Transport Infrastructure

Underpinning digital transformation of road transportation are four key megatrends. These are driving changes across all aspects of society but form an integral enabler to realising Digital Transport Infrastructure and include developments in: connectivity, data processing and computing; energy, artificial intelligence (AI) and automation.

To examining how to develop modern, sustainable transport networks, our evolving definition of Digital Transport Infrastructure refers to mobility-related infrastructure shaped by technological and data-driven components, utilised to

Chryso's green solutions pioneer Africa's **CONSTRUCTION FUTURE**

Africa's construction landscape is set to become greener as Chryso unveils its new brand identity focused on eco-friendly innovation.

The recent rebranding of Chryso – as it combines forces with GCP Applied Technologies under the Saint-Gobain banner – has led to a new green logo and identity highlighting the company's strong sustainability focus. According to Sibhu Hlatshwayo, Managing Director of Chryso Southern Africa, this positions Chryso to better serve African markets through tailored solutions that meet the continent's unique construction challenges.

“With our mission to ‘Pioneering the future of construction, now’ – we signal that we are equipped to make even more impact, building on our market reputation,” says Hlatshwayo. “In this quest, we are guided by four core pillars: innovation, proximity, partnership and sustainability.”

Innovation at Chryso, he explains, means continuously developing new methods to reduce our customers' CO₂ emissions, with advanced products designed for local needs.

“We believe anything is possible when it comes to our research and development achievements,” he says. “Our innovation pipeline includes a range of products developed to address Africa's raw material scarcity and environmental vision.”

The Chryso® Quad Range, for example, is tailored to help contractors work with difficult raw materials, enabling the use of local aggregates that may not meet traditional standards. The range allows contractors to achieve quality results in regions where high quality aggregates are hard to source. Doing this reduces the carbon emissions and costs associated with long distance transport of materials.

There is also a Chryso® Quad app that can guide the user on the products relevant to their application, based on information on their specific aggregate characteristics. This is further enhanced by Chryso's testing kit for clay content, making it easier for customers to achieve quality results using difficult aggregates.

“Another breakthrough has been our Chryso® EnviroAdd Range, which also allows customers to lower their carbon footprint,” he says. “By reducing clinker in cement, it reduces a primary and energy-intensive component in cement production.”

Chryso has also focused on limestone calcined clay cement (LC3) which offers a more sustainable alternative to conventional cement – by using a combination of limestone and clay. These innovations align with Africa's pressing need to balance infrastructure development with environmental preservation.

“Beyond our product innovations, Chryso leverages digitalisation to improve service delivery and customer interactions,” says Hlatshwayo. “Our Field Services App, developed in South Africa, equips sales staff to conduct on-site assessments of dosing systems and equipment; they can instantly report conditions and handle customer requests more efficiently.”

The second strategic pillar, proximity, reflects Chryso's belief in close collaboration, ensuring each regional team understands and responds to local material characteristics and market requirements. With the company's multinational



LC3 cements will make a huge advance in making cement greener around the world.

footprint, it also considers itself a ‘multi-local’ business.

“We ensure that our African subsidiaries and networks are fully equipped to serve local markets with laboratories, sales and technical support teams,” he explains. “The result is that our after-sales support and technical assistance is unique to each customer's needs, and we can tailor our solutions.”

The localisation of laboratories further strengthens Chryso's support capability in Africa. In Kenya, for example, a new laboratory enables customers to test local raw materials, reducing the time required to develop optimised solutions.

“We have exciting plans to expand this model, setting up labs across various African countries to better serve customers with quick and accurate testing for customised solutions,” he says. Chryso differentiates itself in Africa through speed, flexibility and focus on customer satisfaction – taking a “speedboat” approach that is unmatched by competitors.

Chryso is also leveraging its infrastructure to further localise production and distribution. It recently began local production of cement additives in Ghana, allowing customers to buy in local currency and reducing logistical costs and complexities. With Saint-Gobain's support, Chryso aims to strengthen its local presence across Africa, ensuring that its innovative products and services are readily accessible to customers in each market, he says, giving customers the same high quality customer experience across the continent.

“Partnership is our third pillar, and underscores Chryso's dedication to creating solutions through partnerships across the construction ecosystem,” he explains. “The challenges of climate change are more than what one company alone can address, so we partner proactively so that our projects and solutions have more impact.”

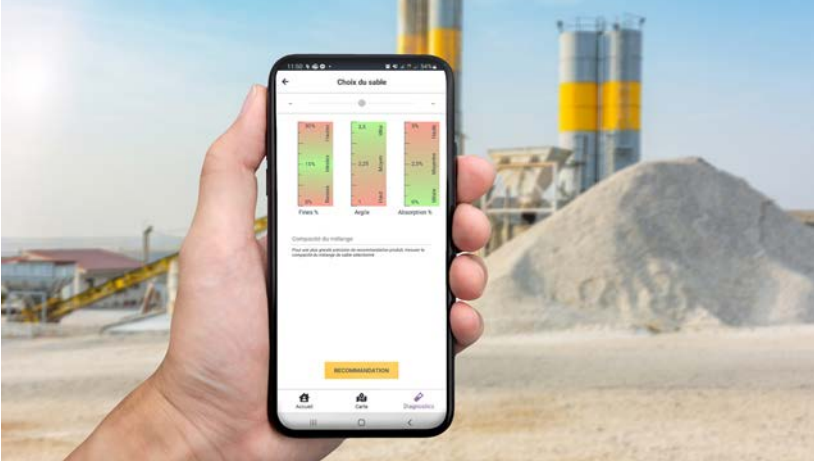
With sustainability as its fourth pillar, Hlatshwayo reiterates



New Chryso laboratory in Nairobi, Kenya.



Chryso® Quad empowers the construction industry to overcome construction and sustainability challenges.



Chryso® Quad App is simplifying mix design optimisation with real-time insights for better concrete performance.

Chryso’s efforts to support customers in reducing their environmental impact. This is achieved not just through innovative production and solutions, but through upskilling people – inside and outside of the business.

“Our Chryso Academy serves as a cornerstone for capacity-building initiatives, offering courses and workshops to universities, contractors and customers,” he says. “Educational outreach allows us to empower our customers and build local knowledge about sustainable construction practices. We also launched a ‘Sustainability Day’ last year, where we present strategies to customers to help them work more sustainably.”

These educational initiatives highlight that Chryso is fostering a sustainability-conscious construction sector across Africa that increasingly embraces responsible building practices, he explains.

“With Africa’s rapid urbanisation and increasing infrastructure demands, Chryso’s offerings are especially relevant,” explains Hlatshwayo. “As cities expand and even rural areas become more developed, there is a greater need for sustainable construction materials and methods.”

To protect scarce natural resources, some African countries are requiring that a certain proportion of recycled concrete be included in the manufacture of concrete, he notes. This could create a challenge regarding water demand, but Chryso has an answer to this too.

“Our innovative product range allows contractors to use recycled concrete successfully, making construction feasible and cost effective in areas where it would otherwise be impossible,” he says. “The growth of African cities means they are further from quarries, so we must re-use existing material more effectively; we promote recycling as a central focus of the circular economy.” ©

The ultimate readymix solution for **MODERN CONSTRUCTION**

AfriSam Starmix®, a premium readymix concrete solution, answers the need for high quality, reliable and efficient building materials. Available from leading construction materials company, AfriSam, this product is designed to cater to a wide range of construction applications.

This versatile, high performance readymix concrete combines the finest raw materials with advanced technology to ensure superior quality and consistency. It is specifically formulated to meet the stringent demands of modern construction projects, offering unmatched durability, workability and strength.

One of the standout features of AfriSam Starmix® is its



exceptional workability. The mix is designed to flow easily and settle smoothly, making it ideal for a variety of applications. This improved workability also reduces the time and effort required for

placement, ultimately speeding up the construction process. AfriSam Starmix® is engineered to provide outstanding durability and strength, ensuring that structures built with this concrete can withstand the test of time and harsh environmental conditions.

Another key advantage of AfriSam Starmix® is its versatility. The product is highly adaptable and can be customised to meet specific project requirements.

AfriSam is committed to sustainable practices, and Starmix® is no exception. The product is designed with environmental considerations in mind, incorporating eco-friendly materials and production methods that minimise the carbon footprint. This aligns with AfriSam's broader commitment to sustainability and responsible construction.

AfriSam not only provides a superior product but also offers exceptional customer support and service. The company's team of experts is available to assist with mix design, technical advice and on-site support to ensure that every project runs smoothly and efficiently. ☺

Sika® Ucrete® Polyurethane cementitious **HYBRID FLOORING SYSTEMS**

Sika® Ucrete® offers a range of high-performance flooring solutions that stand out for their durability, mechanical strength, and chemical resistance, all while delivering cost-effective, low-maintenance benefits.

Its unique core technology blends a resilient resin binder with cement-based fillers, providing resistance to high-temperature fluctuations and even thermal shocks in specific designs. Unlike other options, Sika® Ucrete® can be installed directly on damp concrete surfaces, saving installation time and reducing project delays.

Typical installations include light or heavy anti-slip finishes for wet areas, or full mortar builds to withstand the toughest environments. For dry areas, Sika® Ucrete® offers a smooth or lightly textured finish for added aesthetic and functional versatility.

The latest addition to the Sika® Ucrete® family is Sika® Ucrete® Gloss, featuring a glossy finish that significantly simplifies floor cleaning. With a smooth surface in low to medium thickness, Sika® Ucrete® Gloss can also serve as a viable alternative to certain Sikafloor® MultiDur products.

Common Applications of Sika® Ucrete® Flooring:

- Food and beverage processing facilities
- Professional kitchens
- Cold storage areas
- Heavy-duty wet processing areas

This solution is designed for South African projects demanding resilience and longevity in tough conditions, maximizing both time and cost efficiency while enhancing environmental sustainability. ☺

