

DK Truck & Plant seizes recycling opportunity with Finlay Screens

Tough economic conditions caused by lockdowns during the past year have hit the construction industry especially hard and has called for innovative thinking amongst its players to ensure survival.



'Out of the box thinking' by its owner has seen a Gauteng-based plant hire and material supply business thrive with world-class Finlay screening equipment from Bell Equipment.

Donovan Chetty had worked in the transport industry until 2009 when a life-long dream to be self-employed came to fruition and he started his own company, DK Truck & Plant (Pty) Ltd, in the eastern Johannesburg suburb of Edenvale. "We started out conservatively hiring tractor loader

backhoes and other small plant to clients in the immediate vicinity of our Edenvale base," says Donovan. "Steady growth brought about by new and return business throughout the last decade has seen us grow our yellow machine fleet to now number 30 and we've expanded into civil construction and bulk earthworks as well."

The latter business has seen DK Civils and Earthworks (Pty) Ltd venture into, amongst other projects, building roads in Harrismith, low-cost

housing in Vereeniging and mine houses in Lydenburg.

"During the last year, we've established a branch of our plant hire business in Waterfall to service our clients in the north of Johannesburg, Midrand, Kyalami and surrounding areas. This is where we noticed that often contractors doing bulk earthworks and excavations have nowhere to dump excavated material due to strict municipal bylaws or environmental legislation," he explains.

"This led me to thinking that there could be a gap in the market to have contractors pay to dump their excavated or waste material on our site, process it and resell it into the construction market as clean processed and sized material."

Donovan and Josiah Manyara, his manager at the Waterfall branch, set about researching the market for suitable screening equipment and soon got to speak to Ebrahim Astree, Sales Representative at Bell Equipment whom Donovan

had known for some time. "With his extensive knowledge of crushing and screening equipment, and realising what we wanted to do, Ebrahim quickly pointed us in the right direction when he recommended that we consider a Finlay 683 Double-deck Inclined Screener," Donovan says. "This machine would give us three grades of material and be ideally suited for the market in our area."

DK Truck & Plant's Finlay 683 Double-deck Inclined Screener was delivered in February 2020 before the first lockdown and has subsequently clocked 1 200 hours. It gets used for screening mainly sand and is fed by a 25-ton excavator. "As the reduced lockdown periods have allowed the economy to open, we've seen this Finlay 683 Screener coming more into its own even though we're still only producing 160 tonnes of material an hour, which is far less than the machine's design capacity of 275 tonnes an hour," Josiah Manyara explains. "Considering though that obtaining the raw material costs us nothing, coupled with the Finlay 683 Screener's frugal fuel burn of between 13 and 15 litres of diesel an hour, it really is a win-win situation for us."

Josiah adds that he is especially impressed with the length of time wear-parts such as mesh and piano-wire last.

The high machine availability of the Finlay 683 Screener resulted in sustained operations and profitability, prompting Donovan to buy a second similar machine that was delivered in February 2021. "When Josiah and I spoke about expanding this side of our business we had no hesitation in contacting Ebrahim at Bell Equipment again as we were comfortable that both he and his company understood and appreciated our business and the challenges we have," Donovan says. "Bell Equipment's favourable payment terms and legendary solid technical backup beyond the standard 12-month warranty made it an easy decision."

"And we're not done expanding this business yet," the pair echo. "We're now looking for a cone crusher to use as a secondary crusher and to also hire out, and Bell Equipment's Finlay C-series crushers seem to be calling us – watch this space!"



Bell Equipment Sales Representative, Ebrahim Astree, with DK Truck & Plant owner, Donovan Chetty.