

# Bell customer support is a major selling point for Progress Construction

**A building contractor, who operates out of Matsapha in Swaziland, has become accustomed to the high level of aftersales service he enjoys for his Tractor Loader Backhoes (TLBs) bought from Bell Equipment.**

Nathan Sussman was born in South Africa but grew up in Swaziland where his father ran a trucking business and sold building material. After school, he worked for several large construction companies, learning his trade while nurturing a strong desire to put his experience to good use for his own pocket.

"I started Progress Construction in the year 2000 and, working with one pickup truck, I undertook small projects such as building alterations," he says. "Over time, I grew the business and ventured into building housing and commercial properties before doing my own developments catering for the retail, wholesale and warehousing business sectors."



Charlie Boucher (left) Team Leader at Bell Equipment Swaziland in discussion with Nathan Sussman outside his company's office in Matsapha, Swaziland.

As the size of Progress Construction's projects grew, it became obvious to Nathan that plant hire eats into the company's bottom line and a better option would be to own some versatile earthmoving and material handling equipment such as a TLB.

"I first approached Charlie Boucher of Bell Equipment here in Swaziland and what impressed me more than the Bell TLB itself was the assurance I received that the original equipment manufacturer was represented right on our doorstep here in Matsapha," he adds. "Experience had taught me that any machine working in earthmoving and material handling will need attention at some time and having a fully-fledged Customer Service Centre, manned by competent mechanics, as well as a full spare parts complement, did much to bolster my confidence in the investment I would make."

"Since buying his first Bell TLB, Nathan has made a point of being the customer in Swaziland to buy the first model of any new range of the machines that Bell has produced," quips Charlie Boucher, Bell Equipment's Team Leader at Bell Swaziland. "He is a great supporter of our brand and the type of customer many dream of."

"The Bell TLB is a such a versatile machine and while we take good care of our Bell TLBs we work them hard in a variety of applications," Nathan says. "Allow me this example: instead of 10 labourers pushing wheelbarrows with concrete, we pour concrete into the bucket of a Bell TLB and decant it from there, saving time and money."

His Bell Equipment TLBs are used for a wide variety of tasks, which include digging trenches for foundations and services, backfilling, loading and unloading material and housekeeping.

According to Nathan, he bought his most recent two Bell 315SL 4x4 TLBs with air-conditioning as this has stopped the operators driving with the doors open, a practice which takes its toll on the doors and allows dust into the cab. He is meticulous when ensuring his operators adhere to the daily checklists that Bell Equipment supplies.

"We've put forks onto one of the new Bell TLBs, which is great for loading and unloading pallets with cement bags or any other building material," he adds. "These machines, depending on the task at hand, consume fuel

at between 7,6 and 8 litres an hour and that to my mind is as a result of their good design and the care we lavish on them with preventative maintenance."

Progress Construction relies totally on Bell Equipment Swaziland for the maintenance of the machines and has entered into a service contract with the company for labour only.

"I don't even employ a mechanic and I don't like spanners and grease-guns," Nathan says smiling. "What I do know is that I can call Charlie Boucher at any time, even after-hours, and I will get an immediate response and the action we require. It's because of this level of service that I won't buy opposition machines."

Nathan mentions his policy of replacing a machine after 5 000 to 6 000 hours of service. He easily sells them out of hand as he's built a reputation of having well-maintained equipment with a full service history from Bell Equipment, which makes his used equipment sought after in Swaziland and further afield.

Progress Construction also owns three Bomag BW75H Double Drum Walk-behind Rollers and a Bomag BW90AD-5 Double Drum Ride-on Roller along with several Bomag BT65 Tampers. All his equipment are bought with standard warranties and Bell Equipment still does the maintenance and repair when these expire.

"To us maintenance is key and, because of this thinking, we never get to a stage with the equipment from Bell that we own, that we need major parts," he says. "I've learnt that business relationships work both ways so I keep our account paid up and know because of that, I can rely on Charlie Boucher and his team to assist us at any time."

"But at the end of the day, I simply cannot live without my Bell Equipment TLBs and that's why I keep buying each new model the company produces."

