

Frugal fuel burn on Finlay Screen impresses Virtigo Sand & Stone

In South Africa, the year 2010 will be most remembered as the year the country successfully hosted the Soccer World Cup.

Should you be in the business of supplying construction materials, you may also recall that around this time engineers became prescriptive about the quality of materials that went into making cement bricks. To add insult to injury, good quality building sand became scarcer.

Two people who are very aware of this scarcity are the father and daughter team of Jannie and Lejandi Burger, owners of Virtigo Sand & Stone outside Malmesbury in the Western Cape. Jannie learnt about construction material and its transport at his father's knee.

"My late father, Slabbert Burger, was a bit of a legend in the supply of construction material and especially its transport as he ran a business to this effect for 57 years," Jannie tells us. "He was known to still have laid paving at the age of 85 and even after suffering a stroke he diligently went to work each day."

Virtigo Sand & Stone was founded in 2013 and the company mines sand and stone, which is sold and distributed across the Western Cape. "Malmesbury is known for the quality of its sand and stone and especially the colour of the sand which is held in high regard these days," says Lejandi Burger. "Our sand's cube-shaped crystals adhere better to cement which means that less sand is necessary when mixing concrete."

Lejandi adds that the Winelands District Municipality sees laterite gravel from Malmesbury as being the benchmark of quality and that deeper red tones emerge as older gravels are extracted, which makes it a more sought-after commodity.

"Mining sand and gravels would tell you that we'd need a screen to do that successfully and we hired in screens until we could buy our own equipment in 2015," Jannie says. "We found an older Finlay 683 Screen on the pre-owned equipment market that



From left: Lejandi Burger (Director of Virtigo Sand & Stone), Alistair Bobbejee (Virtigo Sand & Stone's Marketing and Sales Manager), Fiona Johnson (Bell Equipment Sales Representative) and Jannie Burger (Director of Virtigo Sand & Stone).

we kept going by, replacing parts when we needed. It worked well for us, helping us to establish owning the whole value chain in our business from mining the product to delivery to our clients."

According to Jannie, Bell Equipment's Sales Representative, Fiona Johnson, had been in contact with them regularly and when they decided to go the Finlay Screen route, Fiona was the first person he called.

"Because of our experience with the Finlay Screens we had hired in, and owning the older machine, we knew how to fine-tune the equipment for it to perform optimally for our needs," Jannie adds. "These are the reasons we bought the new Finlay 683 Screen as we knew what it could do and our faith in the brand along with the fact that Fiona Johnson, the Bell Sales Representative, had stayed in touch with us, made the choice of machine and supplier easy."

With finance in place, the Finlay 683 Screen was delivered in April 2021 within three weeks of being ordered.

"We operate on two sites and are in production for five-and-a-half days a week with the Finlay 683 Screen in operation for up to nine hours a day,"

Lejandi explains. "When screening out the sand, we also take out two gravel sizes equal to G5 and G7 and this material is sold for road construction."

"We have however also built a name for ourselves in being very client-centred which sees us blending certain types and coloured sands for specific clients and those blends are distinguished by carrying that clients' name. We really believe that going the distance for our clients breeds loyalty and brings repeat business, a precious commodity these days."

Fed using either a 21-ton excavator or a wheel loader, both Jannie and Lejandi have been impressed with the frugal average fuel burn of 8,5 litres an hour that they are achieving with their Finlay 683 Screen. "We've also been really impressed by how well the Finlay 683 Screen can be set up to meet our expectations and those of our clients," Lejandi says smiling. "These days it's all about colour and the Finlay 683 Screen really allows us to deliver on what our clients demand."

Virtigo Sand & Stone's Finlay 683 Screen was bought with a standard 12-month, 2 500 hour warranty and mechanics from Bell Equipment in Cape Town do all the servicing during the warranty period.