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Juan Martinez  
Technician  
Horizontal Boring & Tunneling Co.

# FROM TRENCHES TO TRIUMPH

Little company grows into big-name player in the tunneling industry

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By Ken Wysocky

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Horizontal Boring & Tunneling technician Juan Martinez inspects an auger boring machine (Barbco) on a tunneling project in South Dakota. Based in Exeter, Nebraska, the company travels throughout the U.S. offering auger boring, guided boring, horizontal directional drilling, pipe-jacking, utility tunneling, microtunneling and pipe ramming services. (Photography by Kyle Martin)

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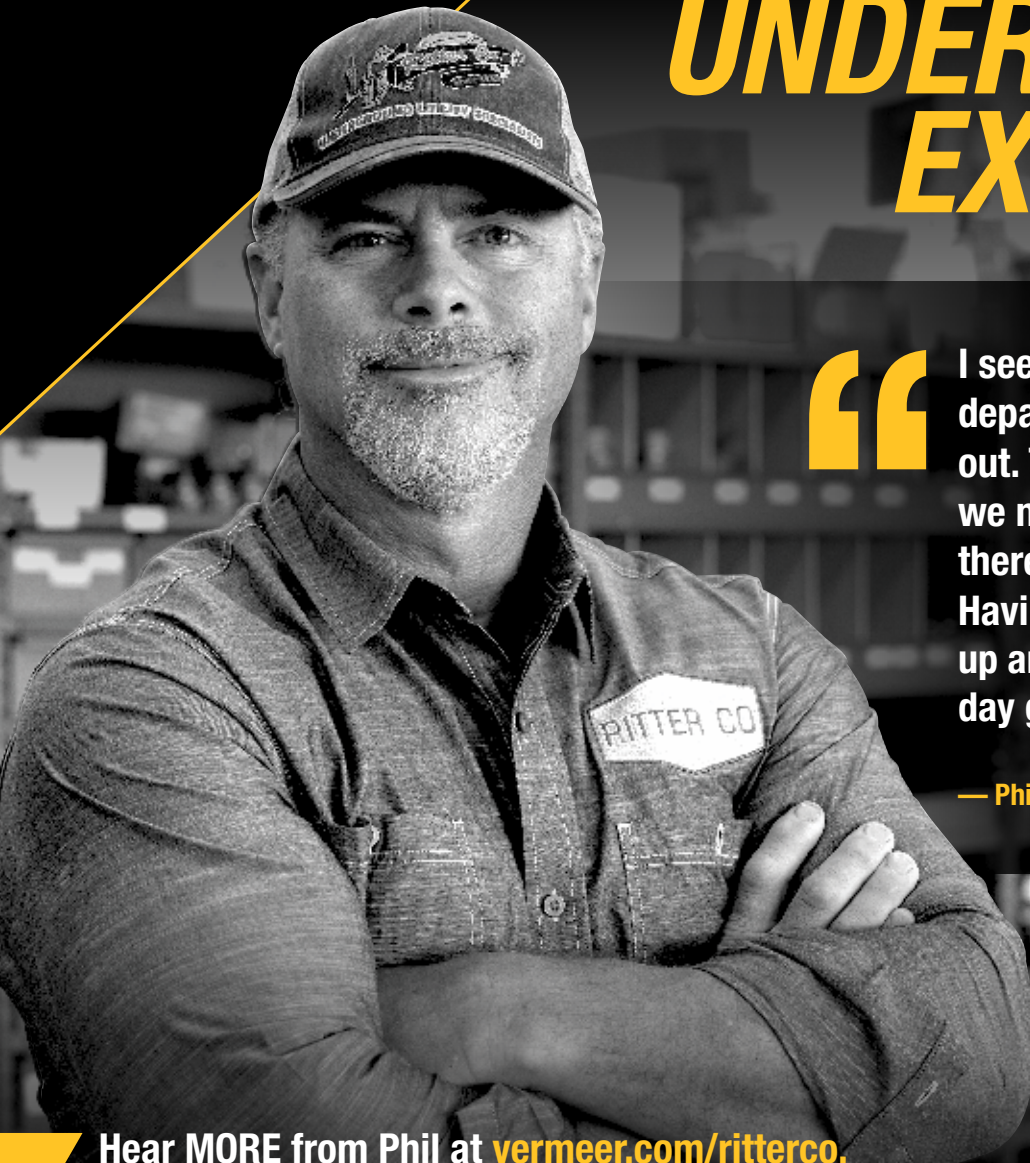


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# Time for Spring-Cleaning

## TAKING A MOMENT TO DECLUTTER AND CLEAN YOUR WORK AREA COULD HELP YOU GET A JUMP-START ON THE BUSY WORK SEASON

BY CORY DELLENBACH, EDITOR

**Y**ou smell that in the air. Spring is getting near and for many, this time of the year is spent on spring-cleaning at homes. Dust brooms are coming out, windows are getting scrubbed and years-old papers are getting recycled. It gives you a feeling of a fresh start and helps you prepare for the rest of the year.

Are you doing the same with your business though? It probably needs a little bit of a spring-clean — in a manner of speaking — itself. Look around your office, it probably needs some decluttering, but how about your website as well? It could probably use some cleaning up, same with accounting books and marketing plans and more.

As we transition from one season to another, this is probably the best time to do some spring-cleaning before you get so busy you don't even have five minutes to sit and breath. Here are six ways to spring-clean your utility construction business:

### Deep Clean Your Books

The tax season is quickly approaching, so one of the first things you can do is grab those accounting books or open that software and organize it. Review files and accounts, make sure the receipts are sorted. If you're one of those people still doing it on paper, consider making a move to electronic means to track transactions and make this part of spring-cleaning a little bit easier on yourself. By moving to electronic methods, it's easier to keep your books more organized throughout the year.

### Clean up Your Website

When was the last time you updated your company's website? It might be time to clean it up a bit. Ensure all the contact information for your company on the website — phone numbers, email addresses, fax numbers — are current. Nothing worse than realizing you've had a phone number or email listed that hasn't been used in years. How many jobs have you missed because of that?

Some smaller things you might need to update on your website or social media: your company's logo, listing of services offered or your current service area. Chances are it has changed since you last took time to go through your website.

### Spruce up that Marketing Strategy

Along those same lines, take a look at your marketing strategy and spruce it up a bit. Is there a different

advertising method that could work better for you? If you get feedback from your customers, see how they found you and move your marketing dollars to advertising in those methods.

### Wipe off the Business Plan

You needed a business plan when you first started your utility construction business, but it may not have been updated as needed over the years. Right now is the perfect time to dust off that business plan and see how well it has been followed and see where it needs to be updated. Maybe you've already surpassed all your goals from back then. Create a new plan with bold plans for the future.

### Straighten up the Inbox

We're all good at letting the email inboxes full up a little too much sometimes right? As I'm looking at mine right now it's at 226 emails. Go through those and see which ones you really need to keep or see if there is a better way you can organize your email. You will feel less stressed and ready to start each day with a bit of organization.

### Declutter the Office

Finally, do some real cleaning. Pick up those papers laying on the desks or counters. Straighten up the book shelves and even pull out the duster to get rid of some of those cobwebs. For customers that may come into the office, you want it to look nice and professional and if you have it cleaned and decluttered, it's also easier on you getting work done as well because you'll be able to find what you need easier.

### STARTING OFF RIGHT

Take this time to do just a little bit of this spring-cleaning and you'll feel like you're ready to start the busy season off like you should ... organized and prepared.

Are there ways you try to get the busy time started off right? What are your suggestions? Email me at [editor@digdifferent.com](mailto:editor@digdifferent.com).

Enjoy this issue! ▼



**RIGHT NOW IS THE PERFECT TIME TO DUST OFF THAT BUSINESS PLAN AND SEE HOW WELL IT HAS BEEN FOLLOWED AND SEE WHERE IT NEEDS TO BE UPDATED.**

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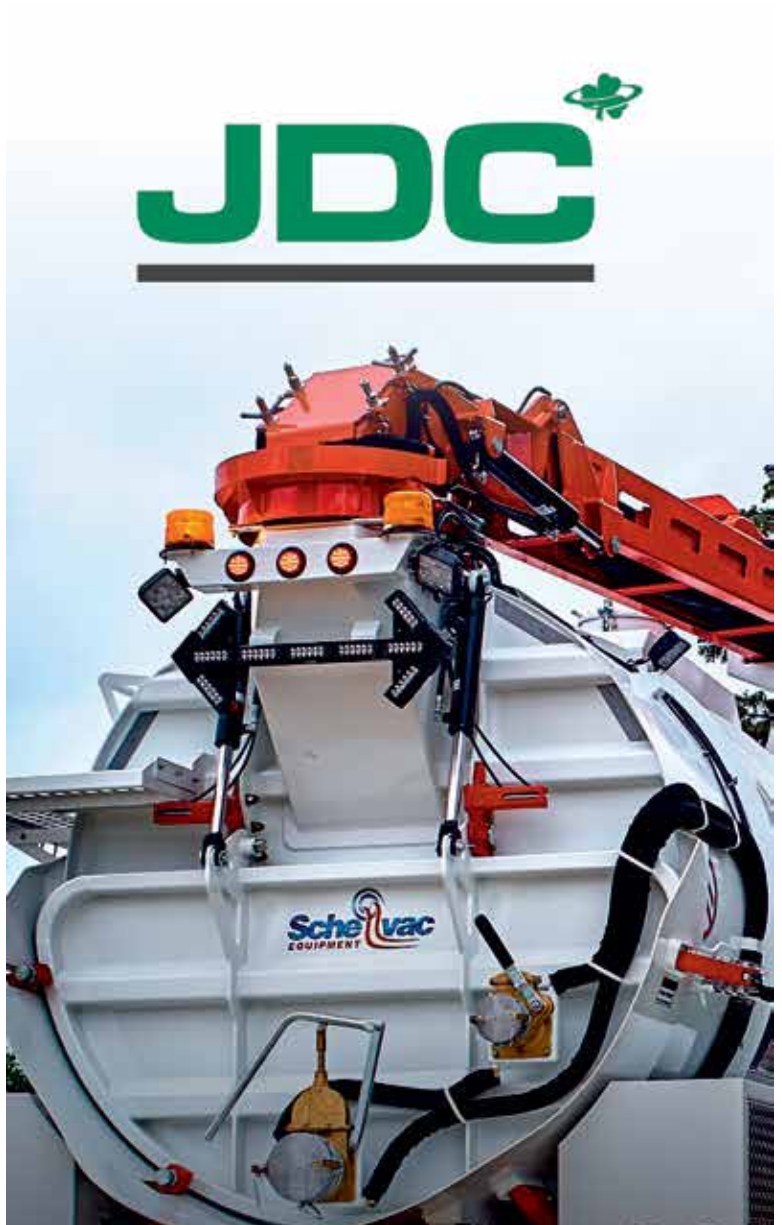
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# FROM TRENCHES TO TRIUMPH

**BUILDING RELATIONSHIPS AND ADDITION OF SERVICES HELPS LITTLE TUNNELING COMPANY BECOME A BIG-NAME PLAYER IN THE INDUSTRY**

STORY: KEN WYSOCKY PHOTOS: KYLE MARTIN



Technicians Alan Rodriguez (left) and Juan Martinez use Sonetics headsets to communicate as they operate the auger-boring machine (Barbco).

In 1982, Brent Moore had a hunch that boring and tunneling services just might be the keys to a lucrative and successful business venture.

During the ensuing four decades, his instincts proved to be as accurate as a laser-guidance system on a microtunneling machine.

Today, the company Moore established some 40 years ago — Horizontal Boring and Tunneling Co. in Exeter, a tiny town about 40 miles west of Lincoln in the southeastern corner of Nebraska — is a multimillion-dollar-a-year company with about 100 employees.

Every week, work crews fan out from Exeter, as well as the company's two other locations in Tulsa and Des Moines, to perform services ranging from auger boring, horizontal directional drilling and pipe-jacking to pipe-ramming, tunneling and microtunneling. They primarily work throughout the Western and Midwestern United States, Moore says.

"We probably work in about 16 or so different states every year," he explains. "A couple of weeks ago, we had crews working in 10 states at one time."

Most of the time, HBT is hired by general, utility and highway contractors, as well as railroads and state transportation departments, to bore underground paths for everything from sewer and water pipes and pipelines to culverts and fiber-optic lines.

The keys to the company's growth and success? Building relationships with general contractors, companies and utilities and continually expanding services to meet their ever-growing needs. A willingness to keep investing in new technologies. Providing great customer service. And never saying no, says Moore.

"Our array of services allows us to be the go-to trenchless contractor that people want to use," says Moore. "A lot of our growth came from doing nothing more than growing along with our good customers and doing quality work in a timely manner. And never saying 'no' to customers.

"When people need something done, we find a way to do it."

**"THERE'S ALSO A LOT OF INFRASTRUCTURE THAT NEEDS TO BE UPGRADED. SO THERE'S DEFINITELY A BRIGHT FUTURE AHEAD."**

Brent Moore

## Horizontal Boring & Tunneling Co.

Exeter, Nebraska

**OWNER:** Brent Moore

**FOUNDED:** 1982

**EMPLOYEES:** About 100

**CORE SERVICES:** Auger boring, guided boring, horizontal directional drilling, pipe-jacking, utility tunneling, microtunneling, pipe ramming

**SERVICE AREA:** Central and Western United States

**WEBSITE:** [hbtrenchless.com](http://hbtrenchless.com)





Juan Martinez at an auger-boring tunneling project in South Dakota. The company has also branched out into other trenchless technologies.

**“A LOT OF OUR GROWTH CAME FROM DOING NOTHING MORE THAN GROWING ALONG WITH OUR GOOD CUSTOMERS AND DOING QUALITY WORK IN A TIMELY MANNER. AND NEVER SAYING ‘NO’ TO CUSTOMERS.”**

Brent Moore

trenchless work separate from the owner’s operations. An opportunity became reality in 1982 when the

owner agreed and Horizontal Boring & Tunneling Co. was formed. HBT purchased some auger-boring equipment, plus a couple of trucks and an excavator from the owner.

“I felt it was an important and specialized service with good growth opportunities,” he explains. “It was a service that growing numbers of contractors needed.”

In addition, there wasn’t much competition in the trenchless infrastructure arena at the time. It also was a specialized service that required expensive equipment, which provided barriers to market entry, he notes.

“It slowly became a more common practice, which led to even more work,” Moore points out. *(continued)*



Craig Gunther (back) operates a Cat 336 excavator, providing leverage to a Barbco 48-950 auger-boring machine as Martinez (left) and Alan Rodriguez prepare it for operation.

## OPPORTUNITY KNOCKED

The seeds for Moore’s career were planted during his teenage years when he worked for a local water- and sewer-pipe installation company on Saturdays and during school breaks and summers. Then he went to college to study construction management at the University of Nebraska.

“I really enjoyed the work,” he says.

During summers in college, he worked on an auger-boring crew for the same contractor. Between semesters during his sophomore year in 1976, the owner asked Moore if he wanted to work full-time for the company and manage a crew.

“I realized that I’d make more money that year than what I would’ve earned after four years of school,” he says. “So I quit school and went to work.”

Sensing the potential to grow the trenchless work, Moore and a partner offered to purchase some equipment from the contractor and perform



Martinez (left) and Rodriguez fit piping to a culvert extension.

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## GEOGRAPHIC EXPANSION

The company started out with about five employees and two auger-boring machines and worked primarily in Nebraska. Business dried up when a recession hit in the early 1980s, which proved to be a blessing in disguise because it forced the company to look further afield for work, which transformed it into more of a regional company and exposing it to new customers.

“We did a lot of projects in Texas and Oklahoma,” Moore says. “We built good business relationships with contractors and went wherever they went.” Providing great customer service was a big driver of growth.

## A Safety-Centric Culture Spurred Growth at Nebraska Boring Company

A great on-the-job safety record also contributes to growth. In 2018 and 2019, the National Utility Contractors Association presented HBTC with the William H. Feather Safety Award (in the 200,001 to 500,000 work-hours category).

“Our culture of safety is the number one thing,” Moore emphasizes. “If you can’t work safely in this industry, you just can’t work. Creating a culture of safety requires a constant focus.

“Our mantra is ‘no injuries today’ — that’s always our goal every day and on every work site,” he adds.

The company employs a safety director who holds an annual weeklong safety-training class.

“We close down for that week every year — it’s that important,” Moore notes.

Every Monday, all field employees at each job site are required to participate in a safety meeting to get the work week started on the right foot.

“It’s a chance for employees to be accountable and to grow themselves and each other,” Moore says. “It reinforces our safety culture through employee engagement.

“On a daily basis, crews start the day with a job-hazard analysis briefing and they

also conduct task briefings to communicate with their team members what they need to do in order to ensure safety with the task at hand,” he says.

Furthermore, the company recognizes employees with safety awards at an annual company banquet. “Honoring safety is a big part of that event,” Moore says.

An emphasis on safety also serves as an employee-retention tool. Other retention efforts include an emphasis on ongoing skill-enhancement training, laying out career tracks for employees and promoting from within, he reports.

“We want to provide opportunities for everyone to grow, gain new skills and be an important part of our team,” Moore notes. “We’ve had people with few skills advance to an equipment operator and then to foreman.

“Teaching new skills also makes employees more productive,” he continues. “By always offering them chances to learn new skills they see that there’s no end to opportunities if they want to keep growing.”

“We always act like we’re a part of the contractor’s team,” Moore explains. “They want things done efficiently and done right, so we don’t delay their work. So we constantly focus on providing great service — meeting their schedules and deadlines, which often are variable.

“Staying ahead of them and staying out of their way is critical.”

## BUILDING DIVERSE SERVICES

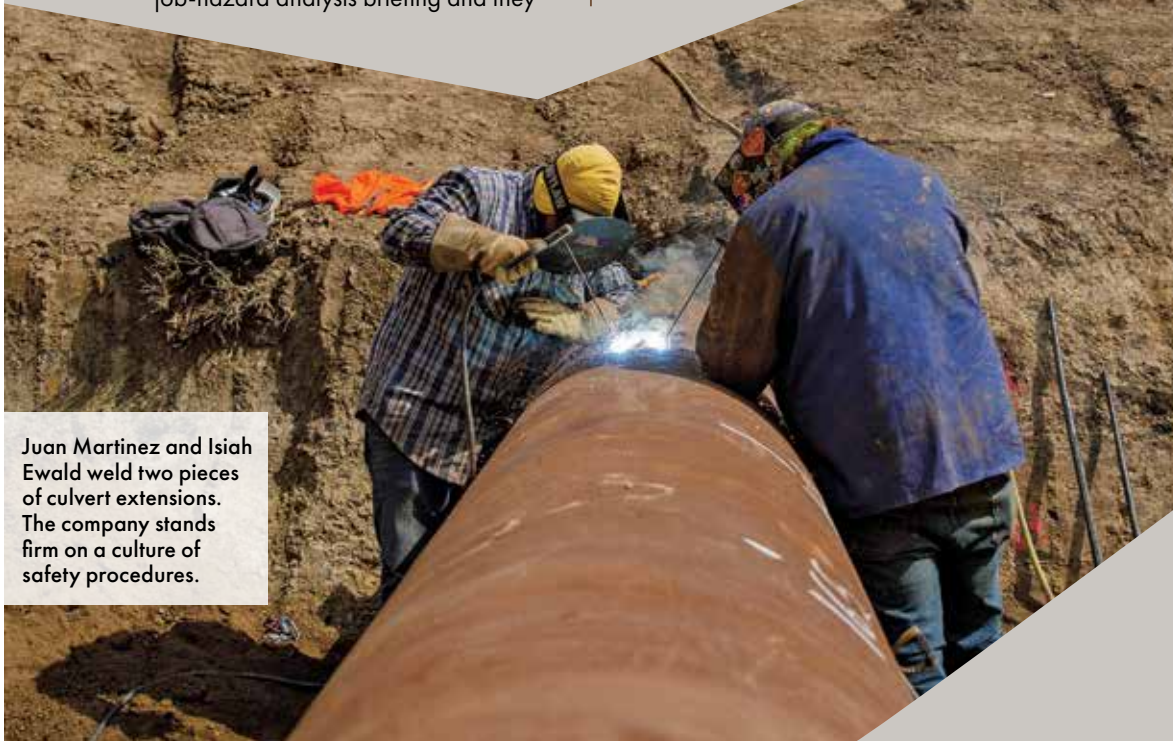
The company originally only did auger boring. But over the years, it branched out into other trenchless technologies.

To accommodate those expansions, the company now owns Akkerman tunnel boring machines; horizontal directional drilling machines from American Augers and Vermeer; low-boy trailers made by Trail King and Load King; Peterbilt semi-tractors; excavators and front-end loaders made by John Deere and Caterpillar; and bulldozers from Caterpillar.

The large equipment fleet also aided growth because many companies don’t have enough machines to handle large projects, Moore says.

“Our capacity helps us because we can supply multiple crews equipped with multiple pieces of equipment on larger jobs, which helps us stay ahead of contractors’ operations,” he says, noting the need to quickly bore paths for pipelines and other infrastructure. “Each of our crews has a fair amount of equipment.

“The sheer size of our equipment fleet gives us an advantage,” Moore says. “We can afford to leave some



Juan Martinez and Isiah Ewald weld two pieces of culvert extensions. The company stands firm on a culture of safety procedures.



Horizontal Boring & Tunneling Co. focuses on good business relationships with contractors on a willingness to travel to their project sites.



**"WE'RE ALWAYS UP TO A CHALLENGE AND WE'VE NEVER WALKED OFF A PROJECT. WE ALWAYS FIND A WAY TO BE SUCCESSFUL AND TAKE PRIDE IN TAKING ON THE DIFFICULT JOBS THAT OTHER COMPANIES WON'T DO."**

Brent Moore

equipment in Texas, for instance, and then pick up work there later that needs that equipment.

"That way we don't always have to mobilize to move things cross-country," he continues. "And we have employees based in different states, too."

**PROVIDING GREAT SERVICE**

Was there one particular project that dramatically enhanced the company's reputation and provided a stepping stone to more customers?

"Not really," Moore says. "It always came from just being able to do whatever needed to be done, even if it involved doing something different that required us to buy different kinds of equipment."

For example, as employees' expertise and experience grew, the company expanded into longer directional drilling for pipe crossings under highways and rivers — projects that also required bigger machines, he says.

"We're always up to a challenge and we've never walked off a project," he adds. "We always find a way to be successful and take pride in taking on the difficult jobs that other companies won't do."

How else does HBT differentiate itself from competitors? Experience is a big factor, Moore says.

"We've been at this a long time," he notes. "Our employees are what makes us go. They do it all. Our workforce is knowledgeable and skilled and works with a get-it-done attitude."

"When you combine that with all our different kinds of equipment, it provides a big advantage."

**MORE GROWTH EXPECTED**

Looking back, Moore says he's often amazed at not only how big the company has become.

"I never could've anticipated we'd reach this kind of size and scope, nor handle so many different kinds of projects," Moore says.

"But that's not because of me," he emphasizes. "It all stems from our employees — the work they do, the problems they solve and the skills they learn and develop."

"It truly has been amazing to watch."

As for what lies ahead, Moore envisions good things for his company — and the industry at large.

"With the way technology has advanced and the way I think it will continue to advance, the opportunities are unlimited in this industry," he says. "Trenchless techniques continue to play a larger and larger role and everyone seems to be getting more productive and cost-effective at doing the work."

"There's also a lot of infrastructure that needs to be upgraded," Moore adds. "So there's definitely a bright future ahead." ▼

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# Digging Deeper

## THE CRITICAL ROLE OF MAINTENANCE IN AUGER BORING EQUIPMENT FOR SEAMLESS UNDERGROUND CONSTRUCTION

BY CORY DELLENBACH

**A**uger boring equipment plays a pivotal role in underground construction, allowing for the precise installation of utilities without disturbing the surface.

To ensure optimal performance, safety and longevity of auger boring machines, regular and thorough maintenance is essential. If regular maintenance is not performed, this could lead to job site downtime and loss of revenue.

Auger boring involves using a rotating helical screw, or auger, to create a borehole for the installation of the utility. The equipment typically includes a drilling rig, auger, casing and various support systems.

### REGULAR INSPECTION

The foundation of effective maintenance is regular inspection. Operators and maintenance personnel should conduct thorough visual inspections before and after each use.

Look for signs of wear, damage, or misalignment in key components, such as the auger, casing and drilling rig. Pay close attention to hydraulic hoses, electrical connections, and lubrication points.

Identifying and addressing issues during the early stages can prevent major breakdowns and extend the lifespan of the equipment.

### LUBRICATION AND HYDRAULIC SYSTEM MAINTENANCE

Proper lubrication is essential for the smooth operation of auger boring equipment. Regularly check and lubricate all moving parts, including bearings, gears, and the auger itself. Follow the manufacturer's guidelines for the type and frequency of lubrication.

Adequate lubrication not only reduces friction and wear but also helps prevent overheating, ensuring that the equipment operates at its optimal efficiency.



PHOTOGRAPHY BY MARK HENLE

A crew works around a 36-inch auger boring machine on a job site in Arizona. Regular maintenance of the equipment like lubrication, auger inspection, electrical components and even operator training will help keep the equipment running smoothly.

The hydraulic system is a critical component of auger boring equipment, responsible for powering the drilling rig and controlling the movement of various components. To maintain the hydraulic system, check for hydraulic fluid leaks, inspect hoses for wear or damage, and monitor fluid levels. Regularly change the hydraulic fluid and filters according to the manufacturer's recommendations to prevent contamination and ensure proper system function.

### CHECKING THE ELECTRICAL SYSTEM

Auger boring equipment often relies on complex electrical systems for control and monitoring. Regularly inspect all electrical connections, wires, and sensors for signs of wear, corrosion or damage.

Ensure that safety features, such as emergency stop buttons and alarms, are functioning correctly. Regular calibration of electronic components is also crucial to maintain accuracy in depth and alignment control.

### AUGER INSPECTION AND REPLACEMENT

Inspect the auger regularly for signs of wear, damage or misalignment. If any issues are identified, it's essential to address them promptly. Depending on usage and wear, auger replacement may be necessary.

Investing in high-quality, durable augers and replacing them as needed will contribute to the overall efficiency and effectiveness of the auger boring equipment.

### ALIGNMENT AND CALIBRATION

Maintaining precise alignment and calibration is crucial for achieving accurate borehole place-

ment. Regularly check and adjust the alignment of the drilling rig, auger, and casing to ensure that the equipment operates within specified tolerances.

Calibration of electronic systems, including depth and alignment controls, should be conducted regularly to maintain accuracy and prevent deviations that could lead to errors in underground utility installation.

## THE FOUNDATION OF EFFECTIVE MAINTENANCE IS REGULAR INSPECTION.

### DON'T FORGET YOUR CREW

You can do all the equipment maintenance you want, but proper equipment maintenance truly starts with well-trained operators. Ensure that personnel responsible for operating auger boring equipment are adequately trained in both its use and maintenance.

Training programs should cover safety protocols, routine inspections, lubrication procedures, and emergency response measures. Well-informed operators are more likely to identify potential issues early on and follow proper maintenance practices.

By prioritizing maintenance and investing time and resources in care and attention, operators can enhance the reliability and efficiency of auger boring equipment, ultimately contributing to successful and trouble-free underground construction projects. ▼

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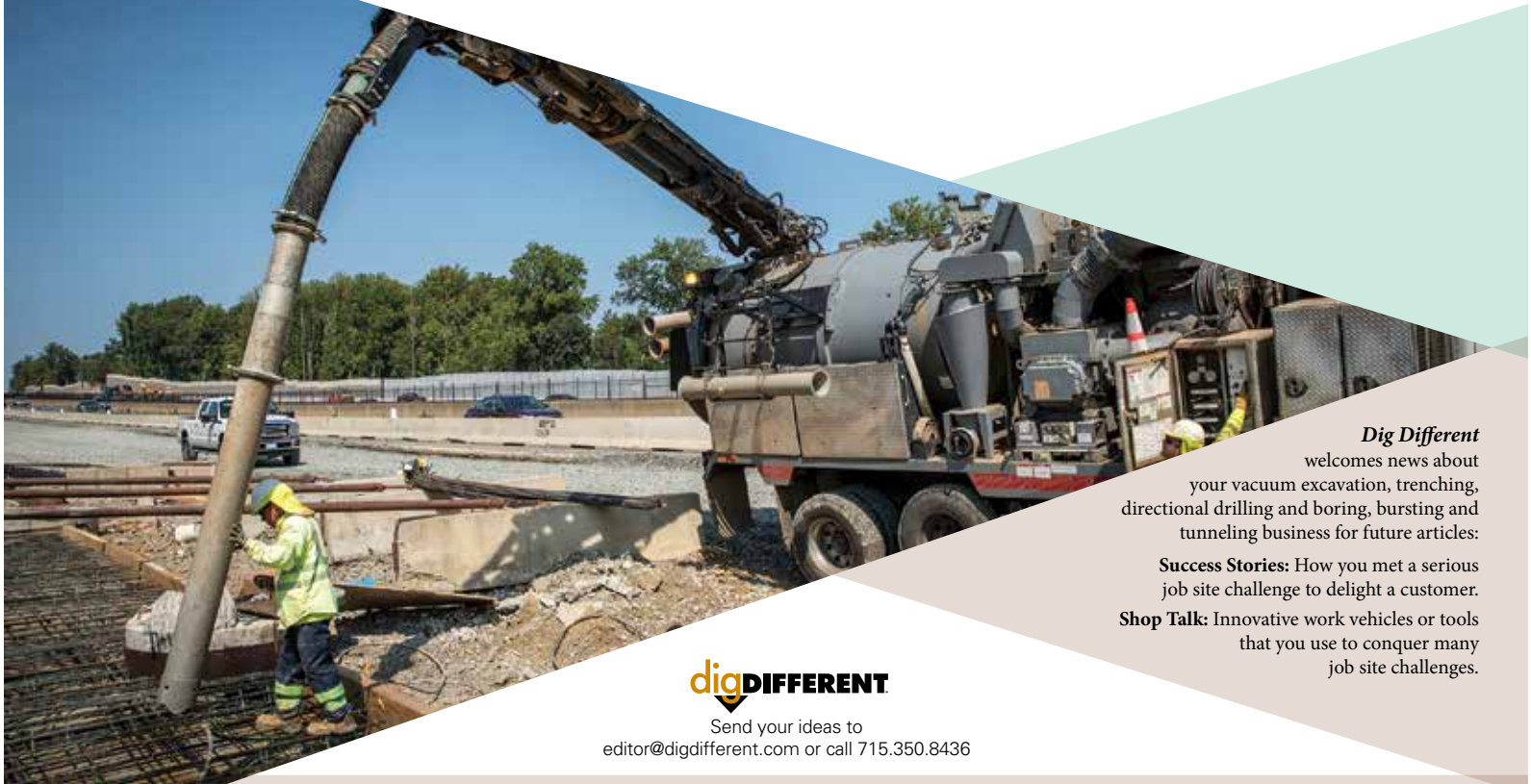
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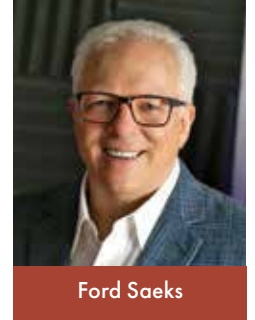
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# Revitalizing Your Digital Presence

**DON'T BE ONE OF THOSE BUSINESS OWNERS THAT MAKES THE MISTAKE OF LAUNCHING A WEBSITE AND THEN NEVER UPDATING IT FOR A BETTER USER EXPERIENCE**

BY FORD SAEKS



In today's digital world, your online presence is crucial to the success of your business. That goes for companies large and small, including small businesses in the utility construction industry. Are you struggling to stand out among the competition? It's always a good time to review your digital footprint and make adjustments as technology quickly changes.

In the same way you would buy new shoes to step up your style or your game, it's time to step up your online presence with these five tips: Optimize your website for search engines, create valuable content, leverage social media, use email marketing, analyze data to drive more traffic to your website and improve your online visibility. You can dive deeper into any of these strategies through your own online research; then take action.

First, these are common mistakes businesses make with their digital footprint:

**Believing that having a website is enough:** A website is just one aspect of a business's digital footprint. It is important to have a presence on multiple platforms and actively engage with customers on social media.

**Ignoring mobile optimization:** With more and more people accessing the internet on their mobile devices, it is crucial to ensure your website is optimized for mobile viewing.

**Focusing solely on quantity over quality:** Having a large number of followers or likes does not necessarily translate to success. It is essential to focus on building a dedicated and engaged audience.

**Believing that social media is a one-way street:** Social media is not just about promoting your business, it is also about engaging with your audience and building relationships.

**Believing that paid advertising is the only way to reach a wider audience:** Organic reach can be just as effective as paid advertising, by creating valuable and engaging content, utilizing SEO and building relationships on social media.

Step up your digital game with these five tips to improve your online presence:

## 1. OPTIMIZE YOUR WEBSITE FOR SEARCH ENGINES AND VOICE SEARCH

Ensure that your website is optimized for search engines by using relevant keywords, meta descriptions and alt tags. Additionally, consider optimizing for voice search by including long-tail keywords, conversational phrases and using natural language. This will help your website rank higher in search engine results, making it more likely that people will find your business when searching for relevant products or services.

## 2. CREATE HIGH-QUALITY, ENGAGING CONTENT

Produce valuable and informative content that speaks to your target audience. This could be in the form of blog posts, infographics, videos, webinars, podcasts and social media posts. The more value you provide, the more likely people will return to your website and share your content with others.

## 3. LEVERAGE SOCIAL MEDIA AND USER-GENERATED CONTENT

Social media platforms are a great way to reach a wider audience and drive traffic to your website. Make sure to create a consistent brand voice and regularly post engaging content. Use social media ads and influencer marketing to reach even more people. Also, leverage user-generated content, like customer reviews, case studies and testimonials to build trust and credibility.

**SOCIAL MEDIA PLATFORMS ARE A GREAT WAY TO REACH A WIDER AUDIENCE AND DRIVE TRAFFIC TO YOUR WEBSITE. MAKE SURE TO CREATE A CONSISTENT BRAND VOICE AND REGULARLY POST ENGAGING CONTENT.**

## 4. USE EMAIL MARKETING AND AUTOMATION

Email marketing is still one of the most effective ways to reach your target audience and drive traffic to your website. Make sure to segment your email list and send targeted messages to different groups of customers. Additionally, use automation to streamline your marketing efforts, such as sending abandoned cart emails, welcome emails and birthday emails.

## 5. ANALYZE YOUR DATA AND OPTIMIZE FOR CONVERSION

Track your website traffic, bounce rate and conversion rate using tools like Google Analytics. Use this data to see what works and what doesn't and make adjustments accordingly. Optimize your website for conversion by A/B testing different elements, like headlines, call-to-action buttons and layout.

## IN CONCLUSION

Just like your shoes need an upgrade to keep up with the latest technology, trends and styles, your digital footprint needs fresh new strategies to stand out in today's digital world. Building a strong online presence takes consistency, time and effort. To gain the competitive edge, you need to step up your game with an improved digital footprint. And just like slipping on a new pair of runners, watch as your business takes off.

## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

*Ford Saeks is a business consultant and host of the Business Growth Show podcast. Visit his website, [profitrichresults.com](http://profitrichresults.com).* ▼



## Horizontal Directional Drilling

### American Augers DD600

The DD600 maxi-rig directional drill from American Augers is equipped with a 755 hp Stage V/T4F/T3 CAT C18 engine that does not require diesel exhaust fluid, making it the only machine of its kind in this class. The simple exhaust system increases uptime and reliability, eliminating daily job site struggles with DEF. Additionally, the 755 hp engine allows for higher demand loads without challenging the engine capacity, and the Stage V engine classification meets emission standards for engines in Europe. The weight meets standard transportation requirements, meaning no special permits are required. It can also be transported without removing the wrenches, saving hours in assembly and disassembly time. A hydraulic catwalk helps expedite the time required to set up and teardown, as well as the number of people it takes to do so.



**800-324-4930; www.americanaugers.com**

### Underground Magnetics Echo 75XF

As utility easements continue to get more congested, the need to work in these areas with precision is critical. Low Sub-kHz frequencies have always been the best solution for drilling in these environments. The Echo 75XF from Underground Magnetics is a 19-inch transmitter that offers 16 frequencies from Sub-kHz .325, up to 41 kHz. It has three power levels, enabling it to run for up to 100 hours on a single charge in low power. It is suitable for crossing 10-lane highways to drilling under heavy rebar and wire mesh.



**515-505-0960; www.umaghd.com**

## Hydroexcavation Equipment

### Brandt HX120 Hydrovac

In response to the increasing need for hydrovac that combine full-size capacity with maneuverability in tight urban spaces, Brandt offers the HX120 Hydrovac. This high-pressure performer helps contractors work more efficiently with maximized legal load weights, quicker debris loading and unloading time, and the capacity to take on larger jobs without load weight concerns. The real-time measurement of water and overall truck weight enables operators to make quick, informed decisions, which reduces the risk of damage or overweight penalties. The unit has a 1,150-gallon water tank capacity and 11.6 cubic yards of debris tank capacity, as well as a 28-foot boom reach with 340-degree rotation. It also operates quietly, which is a benefit in urban settings.



**866-427-2638; www.brandt.ca**

### Dynablast Pratisoli KTX24A

Pratisoli KTX24A direct-drive water pump packages, distributed by Dynablast, offer 13.5 gpm at 3,625 psi at 1,450 rpm, or are available in the KTX28A that offers 18.4 gpm at 2,900 psi at 1,450 rpm. They have a 30 mm male shaft, a 420 stainless steel manifold for protection from cavitation and run dry seals with Kevlar Graphite rope. They are built into a compact mini skid design with a KTR coupler with purple spider between. They fit onto a SAE B flange with any 1-inch keyed shaft hydraulic motor of choice.



**905-867-4642; www.dynablast.ca**

### GapVax HV33

Designed to safely transport water and debris in urban areas, the GapVax HV33 is shorter, smaller and more compact than its predecessor. It is 30 feet long overall on a medium-duty chassis and includes a 600-gallon water tank, 6-cubic-yard debris body, 6- or 8-inch top-mounted telescoping boom with a 14- to 17.5-foot reach, 4,000 cfm power and an inverted, full-opening tailgate.



**888-442-7829; www.gapvax.com**

### Hi-Vac X-13

Contractors, municipalities and utility service providers depend on Hi-Vac X-13 hydroexcavators to safely and efficiently trench for new sewer and wastewater lines with minimal disturbance to surrounding areas. They combine surgically precise hydroexcavating power with low-maintenance components that help minimize downtime. Simple, intuitive controls and quick access to all critical systems mean jobs get done faster. A 13-cubic-yard debris tank, with up to 24,500-pound payload capacity and 1,140-gallon freshwater capacity, helps reduce the number of costly job site returns. Power is provided by a 5,800 cfm, 27-inch Hg high-performance blower and a run-dry water pump that delivers 20 gpm at 2,500 psi. The 360-degree, top-mounted boom provides full accessibility in every direction, and a heavy-duty hydraulic vibrator provides fast and efficient unloading of the debris body. Designed for safe and easy operation, it only requires a short learning curve.



**800-752-2400; www.x-vac.com**

### HotJet USA Vac'n Jet Series

The HotJet USA Vac'n Jet Series of vacuum trailer jetties are compact and specially engineered to haul equipment and the spoils load, perform hydroexcavation, and clean valve boxes, storm drains and drain/sewer lines. They feature hot and/or cold water operation with a choice of engine options ranging from 23 to 70 hp and gas or diesel operation. They are equipped with premium triplex pumps, a 500-gallon spoils tank, up to 440-gallon water tanks, Gardner/Denver vac/blowers, a 4-ton hydraulic dump and a dual filter, centri-clean filter system. They can also be custom engineered and designed to meet specifications.



**800-624-8186; www.hotjetusa.com**

### Pressure Lift HydraBore

The HydraBore equipment attachment from Pressure Lift fits on the end of any vacuum hose for a simple, more cost-effective approach to hydroexcavation. To use it, first place the stinger on the far end of the tool, then hook the HydraBore to the end of the snorkel. Connect the air supply and high-pressure water supply systems, turning air on first, then the water supply, open the vacuum system and begin hydroexcavating. Contractors no longer need to have additional manpower holding a lance-powered high-pressure water supply. It also removes the need to wear a rain suit to remain clean, as the user begins every job from several feet away using the lanyard or from the safety of the side of the rig at the other controls. Once hydroexcavation begins, the user can control the boom in an up-and-down motion, then when the HydraBore becomes submerged, can excavate faster and go deeper than before, reducing wear and tear on vacuum equipment.



**866-504-6596; www.pressurelift.com**

## Presvac Systems Hydrovac

The Presvac Systems Hydrovac is designed for versatility and cold-weather operation with optional full compliance with U.S. Department of Transportation specifications for collection or transportation of hazardous materials. The high-vacuum blower allows extraction of all types of soils, gravel, rock, clay, water and silt material, with knockout features in the debris tank to minimize carryover. Modular filtration configured to blower size provides blower protection and minimal maintenance. It comes with a heavy-duty, 8-inch boom that extends up to 25 feet with six-way hydraulic power and wireless controls for all boom functions, a soft-start water pump, vacuum breaker and truck engine speed.

**800-387-7763; [www.presvac.com](http://www.presvac.com)**



## RAMVAC by Sewer Equipment HX-12

The HX-12 hydroexcavator from RAMVAC by Sewer Equipment has a 12-yard debris tank and a heated, secured equipment locker that contains the entire water system, including water tanks, for cold-weather application and tool security. This machine touts a directional discharge system with the ability to offload debris back into the excavation site when done, without the mess of dumping the tank. This system also allows operators to blow any obstructions out of the dig hose and get back to work. It includes a long-range wireless remote, NEMA 4 electrical system, an 800,000 Btu water heater and a three-stage cyclonic filtration system. The standard 4,400 cfm blower will match the performance of larger blower machines while delivering fuel economy with the ability to go up to 5,400 cfm. The series offers debris capacities from 3 to 15 cubic yards while maintaining a short overall footprint.

**888-477-7638; [www.ram-vac.com](http://www.ram-vac.com)**



## Rival Hydrovac T7 Tandem and T10

The T7 Tandem from Rival Hydrovac was designed primarily to be loaded with debris and drive within legislated road limits with most types of debris on board. The unit comes standard with a scale that reads real-time weights in the cab and on the wireless remote. The T10 is built with the same features and operating system, but with larger capacities and components. It is for both utility and industrial work. It is available in three chassis layouts to meet weight restrictions in a given area. An air compressor option allows for excavating with air when required, while a truck-mounted coring system allows for removal of hard surfaces prior to non-destructive excavating.

**403-550-7997; [www.rivalhydrovac.com](http://www.rivalhydrovac.com)**



## Super Products Mud Dog 700

Mud Dog 700 vacuum excavators from Super Products are designed to meet the challenges of compact, urban projects as well as large-scale excavation projects. They offer a compact footprint for excavation in urban environments while maximizing payload and maintaining the power and precision that larger units offer. The unit features a 7-yard debris body and 600-gallon water tank. This model comes standard as a dump body with an electric vibrator offering a 50-degree dump angle with the capability of dumping into a 48-inch container. Additionally, it is equipped with a rear-mounted, extendable, 8-inch-diameter boom that reaches 18 feet, has 270-degree rotation and pivots 10 degrees downward, which minimizes job site restoration and eliminates traffic congestion near roads.

**800-837-9711; [www.superproducts.com](http://www.superproducts.com)**



## TRUVAC Paradigm

The Paradigm sub-compact vacuum excavator from TRUVAC is designed for safe and efficient digging around utilities. Its compact, low-profile, and tough non-CDL design allows for easy maneuverability, making it a suitable choice for any excavation job. With its quick setup design, operators can begin operations with just a flip of a switch using the Park-N-Dig feature.

**815-672-3171; [www.truvac.com](http://www.truvac.com)**



## Vac-Con Mudslinger MS800

The Mudslinger MS800 trailer-mounted hydrovac from Vac-Con is designed to provide the same power, suction and capacity of a truck hydroexcavator on a portable, pull-behind trailer. It includes the choice of Tier 4 diesel or gas engine options providing up to 1,190 cfm and 16 inches Hg with a PD blower and 325 gallons of water. It has an 845-gallon debris tank and a 9-foot boom with 24 inches of hydraulic extension providing a full range of motion. It is designed to be a standalone unit but can also provide support to construction, HDD and public utility fleets. A variety of applications include daylighting, potholing, culvert and manhole cleaning, and utility locating.

**904-284-4200; [www.vac-con.com](http://www.vac-con.com)**



## Vacall AllExcavate and AllExcavate2

Vacall AllExcavate and AllExcavate2 machines feature standard intelligent controls and easy startup operation. Both models are designed to efficiently remove dirt around utility lines and foundations. Water pumps generate 24.5 to 120 gpm and pressures to 3,000 psi. The AE2 model adds air excavation at 185 cfm and dual psi of 110 and 150. Water system, wand, control panel, tools and worker apparel are protected in a heated compartment. An AllSmartFlow CANbus control system features a programmable LCD that monitors engine, water flow, air pressure and vacuum performance for precise boom and reel adjustments. Aluminum water tanks with lifetime warranty carry 1,000 to 1,300 gallons. Galvanized debris tanks have a supreme finish and are available with 8-, 10- and 13-cubic-yard capacities. They use one engine to power the chassis and excavation functions, designed to reduce service and operation costs.

**800-382-8302; [www.vacall.com](http://www.vacall.com)**



## Vermeer VXT600

The Vermeer VXT600 vacuum excavator has a 12-cubic-yard elongated spoil tank design and 1,200-gallon freshwater tank capacity, but weighs in at just 40,000 pounds. It has a low profile with a height (with boom) of 12.25 feet so that it can maneuver under trees, power lines and bridges. The VXT600 is a powerful digging machine that operates quietly while on the job. It features a vacuum system that is powered by a 6,400 cfm Helical tri-lobe Jurop blower. With a 23-foot boom, an 8-inch diameter dig hose, a vacuum level of 27 in Hg, and a water pump that produces 10 gpm of flow at 3,000 psi, the truck can dig quickly and deeply. Additionally, the boom dig hose can be stowed with the dig tube attached to minimize setup time between digs. Additionally, the VXT600 includes a hand-washing station for operator convenience.

**352-728-2222; [www.vermeer.com](http://www.vermeer.com)**

*(continued)*



Check out more manufacturers and dealers at [digdifferent.com](http://digdifferent.com)

## Piercing Tool

### Ditch Witch HammerHead Catamount

Designed for short-shot utility installation projects, the HammerHead Catamount pneumatic piercing tool, distributed by Ditch Witch, offers a trenchless solution ready to excel in a variety of ground conditions. It allows contractors to install gas, water, cable, irrigation, fiber and electrical service lines under existing landscapes or structures with minimal disruption. It specializes in bores ranging from 2 1/2 to 5 1/8 inches in diameter, with depths from 2 to 5 feet. Its Power Port quarter-turn reverse feature locks the tool into forward or reverse gear to prevent accidental direction changes during operation. Its reciprocating head is easy to start regardless of ground conditions, making it effective in both hard and soft soils. Its small footprint combined with fast on-site setup time improves productivity across job sites for operators needing a straightforward yet durable trenchless solution.

**580-336-4402; [www.ditchwitch.com](http://www.ditchwitch.com)**

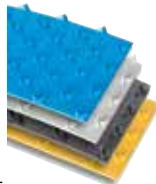


## Pipe Bursting

### AGRU America Sure-Grip

Sure-Grip liners from AGRU America are made of HDPE, HDPE-el, PP, PVDF or ECTFE, and serve as a long-term alternative to spray-applied concrete protection products. The liners prevent concrete corrosion and degradation, can substantially extend the lifetime of a structure, and by preventing exfiltration and infiltration, provide direct protection for the environment. The liners have anchoring systems that enable construction in areas of significant backpressure. Unlike spray-applied liners, which have to be reapplied regularly due to cracking or delamination, these liners are long-lasting, and are designed to avoid the residual costs often associated with concrete spray-on liners, which require tank emptying and cleaning every few years for reapplication.

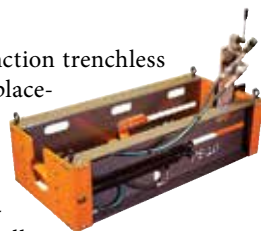
**843-546-0600; [www.agruamerica.com](http://www.agruamerica.com)**



### PE Equipment PE-10

The PE-10 from PE Equipment is a multi-function trenchless machine, primarily built for water and lead line replacement, utilizing a single chassis with interchangeable modules, and a no-weld structural design. The modular chassis allows it to perform the functions of multiple machines, providing speed and flexibility when on job sites with difficult situations typically requiring multiple machines. The no-weld structural design allows for the replacement of any part by the user. It has the ability to change functions from a pipe-bursting to rod-pushing module in 10 minutes. It has a small footprint under 4 by 2 feet, along with a lightweight chassis that can be carried by two people. It has a fast push/pull speed, capable of up to 13 feet per minute depending on conditions.

**406-499-8136; [www.pe-equipment.com](http://www.pe-equipment.com)**



### Pow-R Mole Trenchless Solutions PD-33M

The PD-33M pipe bursting machine from Pow-R Mole Trenchless Solutions is designed to replace existing underground pipes 2 to 6 inches in diameter. Its nonslip, cylinder-activated jaws prevent cable damage while providing 60,000 pounds of pulling force. It offers a cost-effective alternative to open-cut excavation, reducing customer disruption and increas-



ing company profits. The process replaces the existing pipe with a fused HDPE pipe, which eliminates all joints and allows the operator to pull through bends such as 45-degree fittings. This system is modular and can be easily disassembled and reassembled for manhole and basement applications. With a compact design and very small footprint of only 20 by 20 inches, this unit can be used in tight locations.

**800-344-6653; [www.powrmole.com](http://www.powrmole.com)**

### RODDIE R8

The R8 pipe bursting system from RODDIE is easy to use and lightweight, can be set up vertically or horizontally, and can also be adjusted to use three different size cables. This unit can replace 1-, 2-, 3-, 4-, 6- and 8-inch pipes with ease and speed. Inexpensive cable-grabbing inserts last 70 to 120 jobs, which reduces costs. High-quality tool steels on articulating bursting heads promote rare resistance for long-lasting service. The pulling rate is 8 feet per minute and is hydraulically powered from your tractor, providing a pulling force of 30 tons. The wireless remote system is reliable and has a signal strength that moves through any cellar wall. Maintaining the system is simple, as the user only needs to rinse off and re-grease six Zerk fittings.

**888-406-3821; [www.rodдиеunderground.com](http://www.rodдиеunderground.com)**



### TRIC Tools E24

The E24 revisits the essential TRIC Tools 4-inch lateral bursting package that created the industry of trenchless home sewer replacement decades ago. Redesigned with economy and practicality in mind, it is geared primarily toward residential bursting jobs up to 4 inches in diameter. The standard system includes a portable and reliable 10,000 psi electric pump, plus lightweight 5/8-inch compact swaged cable. It is suitable for indoor use, difficult backyard easements, and very tight spaces with limited access.

**888-883-8742; [www.trictools.com](http://www.trictools.com)** ▼



## What's Your Story?

*Dig Different* welcomes news about a tough excavation, pipe bursting, trenching, boring or tunneling job you just completed for the Down & Dirty column.

Send your news to [editor@digdifferent.com](mailto:editor@digdifferent.com) or call 715-350-8436

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## 1. Cat Pumps Model 3560 for hydroexcavating

The Cat Pumps Model 3560 has been the choice of OEMs and truck fabricators for over 20 years. Enhanced durability makes it perfect for mobile and industrial applications, including hydroexcavating, jetting and washdown. Every detail has been optimized to produce a reliable pump with excellent service life. The solid block 316 stainless steel discharge manifold safeguards against high-pressure spikes, cavitation and flaking. Meticulously designed components like solid ceramic plungers, higher-quality seals, and machined 316 stainless steel valves and seats keep pumps running longer. The 3560 is dual-rated for 25 gpm at 3,000 psi or 20 gpm at 4,000 psi and can be driven by a belt, PTO shaft or a hydraulic motor with a bell housing and flexible couple assembly. Inside and out, the company's pumps are built to keep working under the most demanding conditions. See why professionals worldwide have trusted Cat Pumps for over half a century. **763-780-5440; www.catpumps.com**



## 2. Vermeer VX75 trailer vacuum excavator

Vermeer has introduced the first model of its next generation of new trailer vacuum excavators, the Vermeer VX75. The 75 hp machine is equipped with a 1,500 cfm vacuum blower capable of generating 15-inch Hg of suction force. It is available with a 5-inch hydraulic boom option for standard units and a 4-inch hydraulic boom option for air and jetter versions. The control panel and full-function remote control allow operators to start and stop the machine and control everything from the boom to the water system and spoil tank. The remote control feature is especially useful for contractors using the excavator for slurry management, as they no longer have to manually restart the unit when draining a pit, potentially saving time and fuel. Powered by a 74.3 hp Kubota diesel engine, the VX75 can be equipped with either a 500-gallon spoil tank with two 125-gallon freshwater tanks or an 800-gallon spoil tank with two 205-gallon freshwater tanks. It also has an 8 gpm, 3,000 psi water system, a dual cyclone filtration system and a full open cam over the spoil tank door. **641-628-3141; www.vermeer.com**

## This Issue's Feature:

### Multipower system for service trucks is quiet and powerful

BY TIM DOBBINS

VMAC had heard enough requests from their dealers across North America for a multipower system with a gas engine to realize it was a product they needed to manufacture.

"They wanted a quiet, powerful, and lightweight multipower system for their service trucks, but powered with a gas engine," says Mike Pettigrew, marketing manager for VMAC. "This allows fleets to simplify their fuel needs."

Using feedback provided from their dealer network, VMAC's engineering team designed the **5-in-1 Multifunction Power System**. True to its name, the unit includes five power sources in one machine. Powered by a Honda engine, it supplies users with an air compressor, generator, welder, booster and charger.

When new VMAC products like the 5-in-1 are developed, Pettigrew says it all starts with a need. "When product development begins, VMAC works closely with dealers and their customers to understand modern fleet needs," he says. "From there, an ideal product is imagined, and the most important specs are clearly defined, and it's up to the VMAC team to turn the vision into a reality."

After engineering, the 5-in-1 Multifunction Power System was sent out to operators for real-life testing. "Only after the field trials have been completed and given a stamp of approval from our field users do we release the product," Pettigrew says.

The unit features an air-cooled Honda iGX800, 779 cc gas engine with electronic fuel injection, an electronic control system with integrated configurable electronic control unit and a self-tuning regulator.



5-in-1 Multifunction Power System from VMAC

Users will find an air compressor with output capabilities of 40 cfm at 100 psi, an 8 kW AC generator, 250-amp DC adjustable welder, 300 amp adjustable booster at 13 volts and a 100-amp, 12- and 24-volt adjustable battery charger.

"This system is commonly installed on service trucks used by heavy-duty mechanics and equipment-repair technicians," Pettigrew says. "The compact package fits on the side pack or behind the cab of most trucks."


Pettigrew says they've heard positive feedback with many dealers reporting excitement for a system that's so quiet in all operations. "It's designed to reduce noise levels on the job site with noise reduction panels, automated idle controls and a standby mode."

National sales representative Darren Darnley says people appreciate that the system is powerful enough to push 40 cfm and that the removable side panel and lifting lids make servicing the unit quick and easy.

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# Happenings

- March 6-13**  
**Ohio Contractors Association Annual Convention**, Fairmont Grand Del Mar San Diego, California. Visit [ohiocontractors.org](http://ohiocontractors.org).
- March 19-21**  
**Underground Construction Technology International Conference & Exhibition**, Oklahoma City Convention Center. Visit [uctonline.com](http://uctonline.com).
- March 20-23**  
**National Utility Contractors Association Annual Convention & Exhibit**, Hyatt Regency Indian Wells Resort & Spa, Palm Springs, California. Visit [nuca.com/convention](http://nuca.com/convention).
- March 19-21**  
**Global Excavation Safety Conference**, Ernest N. Morial Convention Center, New Orleans. Visit [globalexcaavationsafetyconference.com](http://globalexcaavationsafetyconference.com).
- March 21-23**  
**Mid-America Trucking Show**, Kentucky Expo Center, Louisville. Visit [truckingshow.com](http://truckingshow.com).
- March 27-28**  
**Atlantic Heavy Equipment Show**, Moncton Coliseum, New Brunswick. Visit [ahes.ca](http://ahes.ca).
- April 11-12**  
**National Heavy Equipment Show**, International Centre, Mississauga, Ontario. Visit [nhes.ca](http://nhes.ca).
- April 14-18**  
**NASTT's No-Dig Show**, Rhode Island Convention Center, Providence. Visit [nodigshow.com](http://nodigshow.com).
- April 14-18**  
**Common Ground Alliance Conference & Expo**, The Broadmoor, Colorado Springs. Visit [cgaconference.com](http://cgaconference.com).
- April 19-25**  
**World Tunnel Congress 2024**, Shenzhen World Exhibition & Conference Center, China. Visit [wtc2024.cn](http://wtc2024.cn).
- May 22-24**  
**NUCA 2024 Washington Summit**, Hyatt Regency Washington on Capitol Hill, Washington, D.C. Visit [wedigamerica.com](http://wedigamerica.com).
- June 2-5**  
**Electric Utility Fleet Managers Conference**, Williamsburg Lodge and Conference Center, Virginia. Visit [eufmc.com](http://eufmc.com).
- June 23-26**  
**North American Tunneling Conference**, Music City Center, Nashville, Tennessee. Visit [natconference.com](http://natconference.com).

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