

CASE STUDY



TRANSIT REDI-MIX
Buffalo, New York area
Cemen Tech 150s
transitredimixconcrete.com

According to Neil Bopp, owner of Transit Redi-Mix in Clarence Center, New York, there are basically two ways to profit in the ready mix business — sell a lot of yards at a low or discounted price or sell a smaller amount of yards at a higher price. With an average sale of four to five yards per pour at \$135 to \$150 a yard, Neil is delighted that he chose the second approach! He's doing so by focusing exclusively on mobile concrete production with volumetric mixers. Neil took some time out from his busy concrete mixing/delivery schedule to answer some questions about his unique approach to the ready mix business.

Why mobile volumetric mixers instead of conventional barrel trucks?

The decision to use mobile concrete mixers was an easy one to make when my father and I added concrete to our excavation business in the early 1980s. We had a relative in the concrete business in Pennsylvania who was sold on mobile concrete production, so we were familiar with the advantages of that business model. During a 200-mile drive to Binghamton, New York, to look at a dump trailer, we passed a crew using a mobile concrete mixer on a bridge deck project. That further solidified our decision to go with mobile equipment. We started out with a Daffin magnum unit.

Are you still running that Daffin?

The Daffin was a great way for us to get into the mobile concrete business. Today, Transit Redi-Mix serves the needs of contractors throughout western New York with five Cemen Tech mobile concrete production mixers. We will enhance our capabilities to do larger loads with the addition of a trailer-mounted Cemen Tech unit this year.

Tell us about a typical pour for Transit Redi-Mix.

Once we get a call to deliver concrete to a site, we fill the compartments of our mobile mixer with sand, cement, water and admixtures. The cement is stored in a closed, watertight bin behind the aggregates. Water is located in front of the aggregates. Admixtures are stored on the side of the truck and are integrated into the system. Upon arrival at the pour site, the operator sets the material "strike-off" gates and locks them to the desired specifications. Next the admixture and water flow rates are set. By engaging the conveyor and mixer hydraulic control levers, concrete production begins. The conveyor control operates a conveyor belt that extends beneath the entire length of the aggregate bins. As the material exits the bin, it passes under the "strike-off" gates. The material then travels to the rear of the mixer and cement is added. The materials then discharge into the continuous mixer where water and admixtures are accurately metered and introduced. The materials simultaneously enter the continuous mixer where they are thoroughly mixed. The concrete mixture is then carried to the discharge chute and into a wheelbarrow. The mix never varies until a new mix design is selected. The real advantage of mobile mixing is that our customers get the mix they need where and when they need it, and we can deliver it without the expense and maintenance of barrel trucks.

How have your customers responded to mobile concrete production?

We've been pouring for some of our contractors for more than 25 years, and they would not use anything else but our mobile concrete mixer for their jobs. They appreciate that we can mix on the job, putting them in control of their concrete. This eliminates costly waste and provides a quality product that can survive the area's frigid winter weather. Contractors also appreciate our ability to change mix designs between pours. For our customers, that's worth paying a little more per yard. Our customers are spoiled, and so are we. Mobile concrete production has definitely given Transit Redi-Mix a competitive advantage in our market area, and there was no better choice than Cemen Tech to help us carve this niche.

What's the big attraction to Cemen Tech?

From top-notch equipment to exceptional customer service, Cemen Tech gives Transit Redi-Mix what we need to succeed. When I call them with a question, I can talk to someone who is familiar with the equipment and my operation. They listen to my ideas when I want a little adjustment made on a piece of equipment I purchase. Parts are usually always in stock to reduce downtime. And anytime I come to Indianola for training or to pick up parts, I can count on them for lunch or dinner! Although I don't consider our operation to be that big, I have a feeling Cemen Tech treats me the same way they treat their largest customer, and that's important to me. Like any businessperson, we constantly evaluate other ways to do the job, and we have looked at competitive mobile concrete production systems in the past, but Cemen Tech has definitely proven itself to be the best in the business for us!

What about the training curve associated with mobile concrete production?

Whether you choose mobile concrete production or traditional barrel trucks, there is always a learning curve associated with making quality concrete. After all, no two pours are quite the same, and it could take a year for someone to be comfortable with the various situations they may face. I will say, however, that Cemen Tech's training program and associated materials and the ease of operating the equipment help flatten out the learning curve.

Is there one word you can use that is the foundation for your success?

Loyalty. Transit Redi-Mix is loyal to the idea of producing concrete on the job site. We're loyal to Cemen Tech, a trusted and respected partner who works closely with us to help ensure our success in the mobile concrete production business. As a result, our customers are loyal to us because they know we will be there with the quantity and quality of concrete they need when they need it.

What does the future look like for Transit Redi-Mix?

This part of the country will probably experience a decline in commercial work in the year ahead. When that happens, traditional ready mix plants will get more competitive with price. We feel we can offer contractors something better than a low price. We offer them the ability to control their concrete with mobile concrete production. Thanks to Cemen Tech, that's been our niche for the past 35 years and two generations of the Bopp family. I am proud to say that will continue to be the case as we transition to our third generation!



MARKET AREA: Buffalo, New York, and surrounding area

STARTED IN BUSINESS: 1981 (prior to 1981, the business focused on excavation services)

EQUIPMENT: Cemen Tech 150s mounted on Kenworth, Peterbilt and Western Star chassis

CUSTOMER PROFILE: 90% residential, 10% commercial (The residential business is 60% contractors and 40% homeowners.)