

# Leica Geosystem's MC200 Digger is a Full-Featured Excavator Guidance System



**C**lay Badenoch knows something about guidance systems for excavators, having owned two and trialed various others. So his enthusiasm for Leica's MC200 Digger supplied by CR Kennedy is based upon experience.

The Digger is recently released, so you could call it a second-generation product. But some of these products have an outwardly similar appearance, disguising the fact that they have quite different capabilities—so you need to get a thorough briefing before you put your hand in your pocket.

In the case of the MC200 Digger, Leica gives you a full range of useful features and we understand that upward mobility to plug in GPS is just around the corner. So that's two very good reasons to take a close look at it.

## User Friendly

What Clay likes about the product can be put down to user-friendliness. That is, it's powerful but intuitive and easy to work with. And for the extra productivity it delivers, it's not expensive.

To a certain extent he has been able to recover the cost through an add-on to his normal hourly rate when the customer agrees that the technology is essential to the job. At other times he uses it anyway, and just believes that it makes life easier.

When we saw him on site, his company, Baden Plant Hire of the Gold Coast, was trenching for a 150mm water main on a subdivision. Clay was a mile ahead of the pipe layers.

Apart from speed, the obvious saving on this job was that a grade checker wasn't necessary, since the detailed display shows the location of the bucket teeth in relation to a preassigned grade. It also shows the orientation of the bucket, drawing information from a rotation sensor in the hitch.

## Extensive Capabilities Compared to Others

More importantly, the MC200 Digger can provide guidance for the execution of complex profiles. For example, a drain with batters each side (obviously) but also with a bench raised above the bottom with its extra batter in the design. In all, five elements of the profile to create.

On a simple batter you can key in the slope as an angle. But you can also touch two points with the bucket and it will calculate and display the slope, which can't be done with some other systems. The MC200 caters for ten separate buckets by way of an ID code for each.

beam, which on this unit is quick and easy. And I like the display itself, which is very clear and shows you precisely where the bucket is in relation to the grade, unlike others that just have a series of indicator lights."

You've heard it before, but these systems are becoming commonplace because of skill shortages as much as anything else. They can make a bad operator competent, a fair operator excellent, and a top operator quicker.

Now that translates into money. That's what Clay Badenoch believes—initially he bought an MC200 for his twenty-tonner, and liked it so much he put another on his thirteen-tonner. **PK**



## Weighing your Load

Optionally, the unit can use transducers to compute weights being loaded by the bucket. It also has a self-checking function that'll tell you, for instance, "Sensor 1 Disabled".

"Simple things can be important," says Clay. "For instance, ease of removal of the unit after each day's work. And adjusting to allow for wear on the bucket's teeth. Or re-acquisition when you lose the laser

