



Moving a wall of dirt: GPS-equipped dozers ran side-by-side to form a 57-foot-wide and 9 feet-high wall of dirt.

Learning technology just a matter of 'want to'



Grant Garrett of Garrett Excavating, Inc., in Hot Springs, Arkansas won a bid in the fall of 2006 to move 800,000 yards of dirt on a 122.5-acre plat where a multi-purpose development is being constructed. The project presented 30-foot-cut and 25-foot-fill challenges on what was once a hilly dairy farm in west Little Rock. As Garrett said, it "put a whole meaning to the concept of moving dirt." And, it had to be done quickly.

"We slapped GPS+ on the D9 and one of the D-11s and got to work." In a 30-day period, Garrett's crew had moved more than 170,000 yards of dirt for a 200,000 square foot church to be located in the middle of the development. "Without using GPS technology,

Company: Garrett Excavation
Location: Hot Springs, Arkansas
Project: Multi-purpose development
Location: Little Rock, Arkansas
Scope: 800,000 yds
Topcon Products:
 2D, 3D machine control
 HiPer RTK GPS+

Topcon Dealer:
 Trench Safety, Little Rock, Arkansas

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AT WORK

Learning technology just a matter of 'want to'

'...more work, quicker, with fewer men on the site. If you are in business, how could you not love that arrangement?' - Grant Garrett

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the 30-day limit to finish the pad would have been impossible," he said. "But using satellite positioning, ingenuity and the right people on the crew gave us a big productivity edge."

With 170,000 yards down and 630,000 more to go, having the "right people on the crew" was not a minor point. Garrett relies heavily on technology to secure the level of bids that he does, using a mix of Topcon positioning technologies including four rotating slope lasers, two pipe lasers, three HiPer RTK GPS packages; four 2D and/or 3D machine control systems utilizing sonic laser and GPS+ sensors.

One of those "right people" is 25-year-old Joe Kilzer, Garrett's job superintendent who manages a crew of 15. "When Joe came looking for a job, he had some construction experience, but not the kind that we really needed, which was real dirt work," Garrett said. "As far as I know, he had no computer training at all."

With a little training, Kilzer was quickly using the technology and applying it to the job. "Without GPS+, I wouldn't be where I am," Kilzer admits. "I was given a chance and grabbed it. Anybody can learn satellite technology; it's a matter of using common sense and 'want to.'"

Garrett admits that there have been some technologies that he was a "little hard-headed and initially scared of," namely the topographic capabilities of GPS. But he said, experience taught him not to fear technology and he moved on to Millimeter GPS+ equipment. The firm has won a bid for an apartment complex with "60 pads with 60 different elevations. We'll need Millimeter GPS+ for that job, guaranteed."

As Garrett explains his adoption of positioning technology, "In a nutshell, it allows us to do more with less – more work, quicker, with fewer men on the site. If you are in business, how could you not love that arrangement?"



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Topcon's 3D GPS+ Machine Control

Topcon's 3D-GPS+ system has the ability to track both GPS and GLONASS and can be integrated with your sonic and/or laser system.

The one overwhelming advantage to Topcon GPS+ it's this – we provide access to 33 percent more satellites than ordinary GPS. That's because GPS+ has the ability to track not only both frequencies of all 24 GPS satellites, it can also receive the signals from the 14 GLONASS positioning satellites giving you precision accuracy around-the-clock.

Topcon has long set the standard of accuracy, durability, and affordability in machine control and the automation of construction equipment. All Topcon machine control products are scalable and upgradeable.