

# MANITOU

## SOUTH AFRICA

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CORPORATE BROCHURE



# When the going gets rough

Lindsay Shankland, MD of Manitou, the market leader in rough terrain handling solutions, talks to Jayne Alverca about getting a handle on the heaviest loads in the most awkward places

It sounds like a young boy's dream come true: a single Manitou telescopic handler can lift, dig, load, clean, scoop, tow and carry. But these are not toys for boys. Manitou's name may be synonymous with versatility, but its range of rough terrain handling equipment is destined for the most demanding applications that industry has to offer.

Manitou is headquartered in France, but has had a presence in southern Africa for almost 40 years and has operated a fully incorporated subsidiary, based in Johannesburg, for over a decade. "Here in South Africa, rough terrain forklifts and telescopic handlers are our main focus," explains MD Lindsay Shankland. "When we first incorporated we were working principally with the construction and mining sectors, but now Manitou has a much broader reach and we have made inroads into many other sectors."



Today, Manitou can be found within timber operations, civil engineering, warehousing, timber, mining, construction, steel, agriculture, defence forces, ports etc—in fact anywhere that has a requirement to lift and move heavy items, particularly within the context of a harsh and demanding environment. A typical Manitou Telescopic destined for the construction industry can effortlessly elevate materials weighing from 2.3 to 22 tonnes to 5/25 metres, but it can also perform a host of other tasks. A standard machine is sold with 38 different attachments which can be changed in exactly one minute. Its makers declare that a single Manitou can carry out the work of two to four other machines in a fraction of the time and at a fraction of the cost.

Shankland is unequivocal about the key factor that underpins Manitou's success in the southern Africa region. "We are known for selling a superior product with superior aftermarket support and backup, 24/7. Manitou is recognised worldwide as the market leader in this field," he states.

However, it is not enough to sell an excellent product:

productivity is key to profitability in all industries and this depends upon downtime being kept to an absolute minimum. "Our entire focus is on keeping our customers happy from the point of sale throughout the lifetime of their equipment. Aftersales care is critical and we offer 95 per cent availability of parts on a 24/7 basis for 365 days a year. This is how we sell second, third and then fourth machines," he says.

As MD, Shankland has strived to create a workplace culture which places the customer at its core. "Our people must be committed to offering the service that we promise the client. If we can get that right, then we cannot fail," he states.

Shankland also points to the fact that Manitou benefits from a distribution and dealership network that far exceeds those of its competitors. This means that service is always close at hand, whenever it may be needed.

The company currently operates across the southern Africa region, with dealerships in Botswana, Namibia, Mozambique, Zimbabwe and Zambia. "It is very important to be properly established in the markets we serve and that is why we have extended our dealership network. If a customer is not within reach of a dealer then we will put our own people on site if necessary," he says.

Uniquely, Manitou has its own fabrication workshop in South Africa. If a customer has a special or unusual requirement, it can be accommodated by customising any standard Manitou machine. Says Jannie Smith, project engineer for Manitou: "We are very innovative in coming up with creative solutions to the challenges

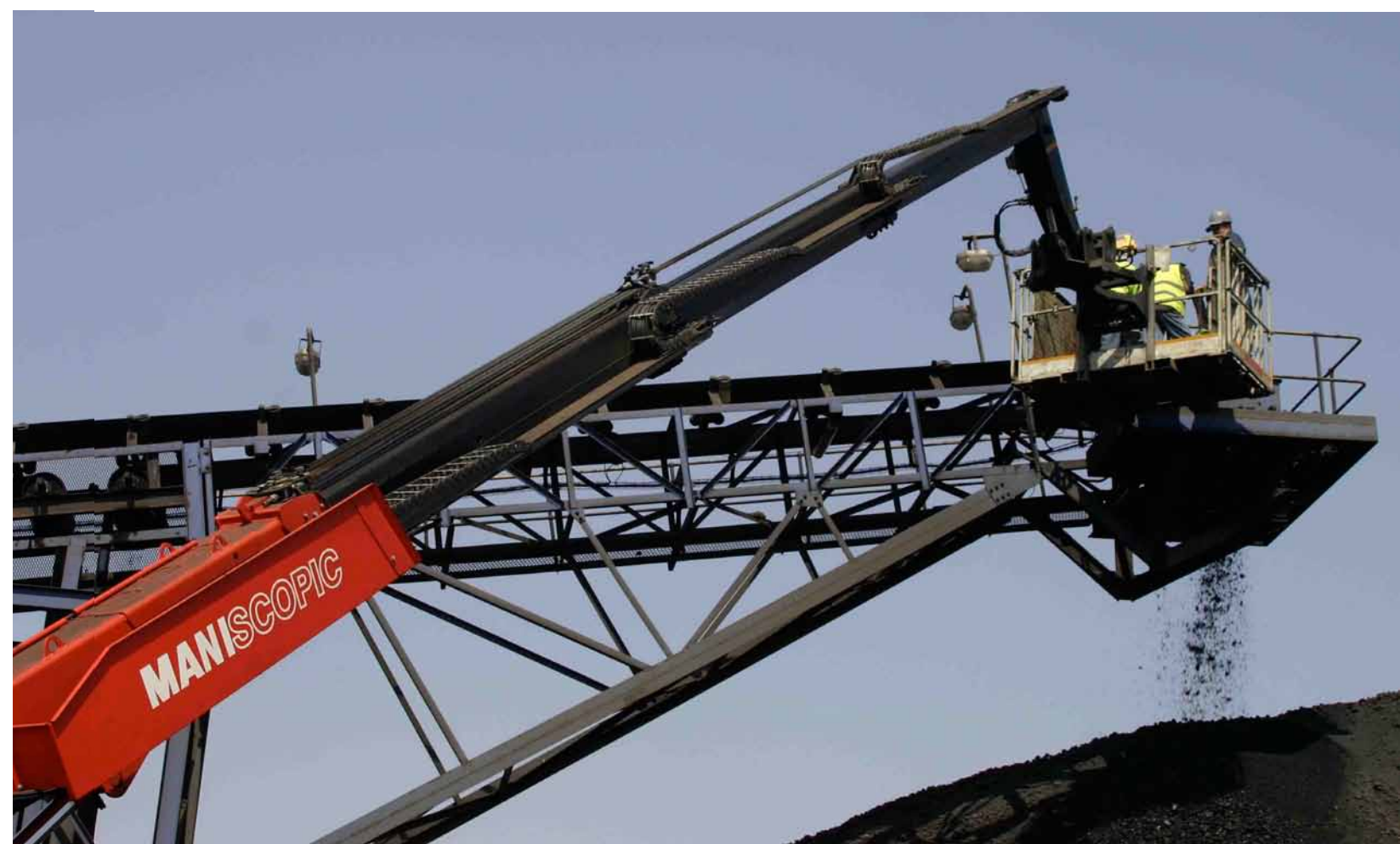
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faced by our customers. Safety is paramount and always the key factor to any modification we undertake. All our modification work is undertaken in collaboration with the South African Engineering Council to make sure we meet the highest possible standards. Once safety is assured, we are also always on the lookout for ways to make our machines more economical to operate.”

Two machines—a utility vehicle for hard rock mining and a flameproof utility vehicle for soft rock environments—have been specifically adapted for the mining industry in an initiative that began as a local response to a regional challenge, says Smith. Such was the success of the venture that in future these machines will be distributed on a worldwide basis through Manitou.

Each year, Shankland sets a target of penetrating two new markets. This year, he has his eye cast





towards South Africa's agricultural businesses, where mechanisation is enabling great leaps in productivity; and also towards the potential for a new addition to the product portfolio. Manitou France recently purchased Gehl, a highly regarded American manufacturer of the Gehl skid steer loader. This is a small machine renowned for its manoeuvrability in tight spaces; and the Gehl format is at the forefront of performance.

Thornecroft Dairy Farm is cited as an example of Manitou's potential contribution to the agricultural sector. The farm has seen reduced maintenance costs and increased efficiency since replacing three tractors with a single Manitou MLT 735 120 LSU, rough terrain telescopic handler. Previously, the tractors were used as loaders but were restricted in reach, slow and costly in fuel. Even worse, they were regularly out of service as their clutches quickly burnt out.

Says Thornecroft's Richard Newcombe: "With the Manitou, we can stack more bales of hay or silage higher and faster than we ever could with tractors. It is such an efficient machine that it has reduced the amount of movements needed to load the feeder from up to 30 to four. We are also using much less storage space as a result of being able to stack bales six-high in the warehouse or yard, sealing the inside bales from the elements and so maintaining feed quality.

"On top of all these benefits comes the machine's versatility," he enthuses. "You can hook it up to a trailer and perform tasks normally left to the tractors. The Manitou has improved our overall productivity and reduced operating costs—we offload trucks quicker, and there is no more undue downtime on our tractors, which are now used just for groundwork, harvesting and maintaining pastures."

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