

BULLETIN

ROBIT PLC CUSTOMER MAGAZINE 1/2021

Swerock puts new drill bit series to test

Robit introduces
tubeless DTH hammer

ProTALK: outlooks
on the industry

Robit

DEAR READER,

the world seems to be opening up again with the easing of the coronavirus situation. It is great news both for our everyday life and for business, as we have finally been able to meet our customers across the world face-to-face again. Makes you appreciate personal encounters on a whole new level!

Our Top Hammer business has been developing at a brisk pace. Both the Korea and Finland plants have broken monthly production records during the spring. Highly automated, the production runs in three shifts. Our new expansion in Lempäälä, to be completed in the autumn, will also help meet the growing demand, with 750 m² of new manufacturing space for both TH and DTH products. Investments are also progressing at our Korea plant.

This year we have made breakthroughs in new target markets together with our excellent and truly professional distributor partners. New distributors in the Robit family include M. BAR in Israel, Eurasian Machinery in Kazakhstan, and Cimertex in Portugal, to name a few.

As for our domestic market in Finland, special credit must be given to the well drilling segment, where our R&D team has succeeded in developing very high-performance and reliable products. The results are excellent, as is the feedback from our customers.

All in all, it has been great to see our business make strides throughout the spring as a result of determined, committed, and professional collaboration between our personnel, our distributors, and customers. Let me extend my warmest thanks for that! Have a great summer, or for our friends south of the equator, a great winter!

Tommi Lehtonen, CEO



Tommi inspecting the new production facilities at Lempäälä with Production Manager Jorma Pyykkö.

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Swerock put the Rbit™ drill bit series TO THE TEST

Swerock is one of the largest producers of aggregates, concrete, and quarrying services for the Nordic construction and earthworks markets.

Swerock provides quarrying, crushing, and screening services across Finland. It produces some 13 million tonnes of aggregates per year with 15 drill rigs and 21 crushing plants. In addition to production mining, Swerock also quarries on building, road construction, and wind farm sites.

"We upgrade our drill rig fleet at a steady pace. Now almost all our rigs have 3D machine control, and drill patterns can be transferred remotely, which makes drilling significantly easier and more efficient", says

Antti Sipola, Site Manager for Swerock in Northern Finland, where aggregates are being produced on seven quarries.

Robit is the preferred partner for wear parts
In terms of drilling consumables, Swerock works in close cooperation with Robit.

"Robit is our main supplier for drill bits, shanks, and rods, with a good quality-price ratio and reliable deliveries.



*Robit Sales Manager **Kimmo Kangas** (left) is getting feedback on the new Rbit™ bits from Swerock drill rig operator **Mikko Palovaara**.*



We order drilling consumables on a per-need basis, making sure we always have sufficient stock. We are also involved in a number of product development projects, testing new products, and giving feedback to Robit," Sipola says.

New drill bit series proved convincing

in late 2020 Robit launched the new Rbit™ drill bit series, which was thoroughly tested by Swerock before mass production.

"The new Rbit drill bits showed improved durability and good penetration rates already at the test stage. In addition to hard granite, we also drilled on quartz rock, which causes the most abrasion on the drill bit. Rbit bits give you more drill meters and straighter holes, enabling a good quality drill bench. Smaller borehole deviation enables more efficient, safer, and higher quality excavations", Sipola points out.

Rbit bits bring several advantages

Thanks to an optimized button pattern, the Robit Rbit bits provide maximal contact on the impact surface. Thanks to a new impact surface design the impact energy on the rock is more efficient.

Faster penetration is achieved through better flushing. Rbit bits are also available in Heavy Duty versions which provide even more drill meters in certain rock conditions.

"We have largely shifted to Rbit bits now that they are in mass production, as they provide a clear advantage in drilling. We are also planning to test the Robit Diamond Button Series bits whose buttons are coated with industrial diamonds to maximize durability", Sipola reports.

Fruitful cooperation in product development

In addition to drill bits, Swerock has tested, among other things, a sturdier line of Robit rods as well as the Robit M Sense system designed for measuring borehole deviation.

"Cooperating with Robit makes sense to us: a local manufacturer with a strong presence listens carefully to our feedback, which is also reflected in the final products. Robit's design expertise is cutting edge and their innovative thinking generates solutions that improve the efficiency and quality of drilling while also cutting costs," Sipola says.

Robit lands exclusive contract in Portugal

The early 1960s saw the Portuguese economy and industry take rapid leaps forward, with new steel mills, shipyards, oil refineries, and paper mills being established almost yearly. A threesome of men in the city of Porto saw a business opportunity, pooled their funds, and launched a company called Cimertex in 1964. Its business idea was to sell compressors and pneumatic tools for the Portuguese industry.

The economic boom also meant heavy investments in infrastructure. It did not take long for Cimertex to discover another area of promising growth potential: earthmoving equipment. After distributing machines regionally for a couple of years, they hit a major milestone in 1968 by signing an exclusive national distribution deal with Komatsu, the Japanese giant in construction and mining equipment. That was the beginning of a solid partnership that continues to this day.

Today, Cimertex is a leading distributor of industrial equipment in Portugal, representing world-renowned brands across the country as well as Italy and Angola. In March 2021, a new brand was added to their roster: Robit Group and Cimertex signed an exclusive agreement where Cimertex represents and distributes all Robit products in Portugal.

The initiative came from Cimertex.

"We got to know Robit from personal contacts in Finland", says **Mr. Álvaro Bastos**, Executive Director at Cimertex. "Portugal is a small but very diversified market with quarries for dimensional stone and aggregates, construction, underground mining, tunneling, water well drilling, foundation works – all with a high level of know-how. The challenge is to serve all these industries professionally".

"As far as our cooperation with Robit goes, we expect to be no less than the market leader in three years in Portugal!" Mr. Bastos concludes.





Introducing A TUBELESS DTH HAMMER

Sharing many components from the Robit WH range of hammers, the high-performance WH TL (Tubeless) series is the first of its kind for the Robit DTH product group. By creating a Tubeless hammer range, Robit has expanded its offering to give drillers the widest choice on the market.

The foot valve, or exhaust tube, is sometimes deemed as the weak part of a DTH bit. A failure is more likely to occur either in wet drilling applications, where the force of the water being compressed by the piston can shear the foot valve, or in soft, fractured conditions, where it is difficult to keep sufficient weight on the drill bit. The foot valve is an inexpensive sacrificial component, manufactured from a polymer, ensuring that any failures that do occur, do not damage the piston or drill bit.

In the new Robit WH TL range, the hammer has been designed to operate without the foot valve, resulting in less downtime in the most demanding conditions. Designed for blast hole and well drilling applications, the hammers use four types of standard shanks across the 4", 5" and 6" hammer ranges with the foot valves either removed or cut flush with the strike face of the drill bit. This gives the driller the flexibility to use the hammer without the need for a special shank drill bit, thus eliminating the need for purchasing additional drill bit models. It also allows for the use of standard, commonly available Robit DTH bits.

Other advantages of the tubeless design mitigate the need to replace foot valves during bit sharpening which, for some high usage mining customers, can be a significant saving in cost and time. No foot valve means no risk of damage through storage or transportation.

For deeper hole well drillers, the advantage is the peace of mind and reduced risk of downtime. Should a foot valve failure occur when deep hole drilling, it can be labour intensive and costly to bring the drill bit back to the surface for replacement.

”

“I am excited for Robit to offer this new range, something that an increasing number of customers have been requesting from us. The WH TL range continues to allow Robit to be competitive in key regions and demonstrates our commitment to provide quality products whilst reducing overall drilling costs. Some customers never experience issues with hammers fitted with foot valves. However, for end-users drilling in conditions where foot valve failure is more common, this product development will save significant costs and provide peace of mind.”

Adam Baker

VP Down the Hole Products, Robit

Robit ProTALK

An executive view into the industry



**GEORGE
APOSTOLOPOULOS**
VP, Global Sales
*Head of Global
Sales & Marketing*

What do you think are the key market trends in the industry for the next few years?

"The ongoing pandemic has made the markets more volatile than usual and I believe this will be the new norm. This means we should, as a Group, be extremely proactive and agile. The mining business is more stable and resilient as we seem to be in another metals prices super-cycle. However, construction looks 'slow' now. There are opportunities in both sectors, and we must be close to benefit the most we can."



JORGE LEAL
VP, Top Hammer
*Head of Global
Top Hammer business*

"When speaking to our customers, productivity is the main key market trend that I would like to highlight. More than ever, customers are interested in this topic and how we can help them to improve this."



ADAM BAKER
VP, DTH
*Head of global
DTH sales*

"Reduced operational costs, improved efficiency, and availability remain key for our customers and drill contractors. Our commitment to continuous improvement and product development ensures we can deliver tools in line with their requirements."



VILLE POHJA
VP Geotechnical
*Head of Geotechnical
(foundation drilling
and well drilling)*

"In foundation work, piling with DTH tools is increasing. This is a positive trend for us and the industry in general. The method is recognized as fast and extremely reliable. The current political atmosphere is also favorable for geothermal energy and thus for well drilling tools."



KARI ALENIOUS
VP Finland
*Head of sales for
Finland and Estonia*

"Finland is one of our direct sales areas, which means most of the sales take place directly with the end-user. In this business, there are few cornerstones that all customers want to rely on, and a key one is availability."



What is Robit ProTALK?

Robit ProTALK is an ongoing series of articles on robitgroup.com where Robit executives share their insights on the industry and Robit's role in it. Here's a summary of the first entries in the series.

How can Robit best support their customers with their challenges?

"By staying as close as possible to our distributors and eventually the end-users of our products. We support with product and application training, we conduct product trials and prove our worth in the field, respond quickly to filed issues and ensure that our products do get the deserved recognition in the market."

"We are committed to delivering the "best in class" button bits. By listening to our customers, and always thinking about how we can generate value to them, I am confident that our offering will develop even further to address their needs."

"All product development initiatives are led by market trends or customer requirements. Testing and validations are carried out in conjunction with the customers the product has been designed for. When the pandemic started, we were quick to roll out remote technical support, and we are extending it through the coming years. This has had the benefit of directly connecting end-users with the Robit technical support staff."

"We are known for reliable products with the best cost per drill meter in varying conditions. Continuous product development is key here. We also need to maintain high technical hands-on know-how to ensure we can always help and support our customers on-site."

"We are committed to being the best in class in terms of product availability. As I said, this is key in winning and retaining customers. Committing to product development is also crucial. For example, our success in the geotechnical sector is a result of our efforts in button bit development."

How do you see the short-term outlook for Robit in your field?

"We are getting ready for the time when the pandemic eases or is over, so we can travel again and be close to our distributors, partners, and end-users for support. Our strategy is based on growth. That is our main expectation. We want to grow our dealer network and together with them gain market share account by account – a simple and proven method."

"I see a great opportunity for growth in the TH segment. We have gradually gained market share in mining, and we are stepping into the bigger leagues there with top customers and new key areas such as Australia and West and Central Africa."

"This year is an exciting time for Robit and DTH in particular. Our product development work is starting to show extremely good results. Increased manufacturing capacity and improved product availability actions have been put in place and we are seeing the benefits of this already. We have many tender and testing opportunities planned for 2021 and I am expecting a positive outcome based on our performance and success over the past six months."

"2021 will still be affected by COVID-19 but hopefully by the end of the year, things will start to normalize. We expect stimulus packages to accelerate infrastructure and construction projects. Outlook for 2021 is good at the moment and I expect Robit to grow in the geotechnical business – especially in well drilling."

"As long as we deliver on our promises, working seamlessly together to serve the customer to the last detail, procurement, production, OPEX, sales, customer service, R&D, etc, we will have a great year in 2021 and beyond."



Robit Family went virtual

Robit's annual distributor event gathers together industry professionals from all over the globe to meet face to face, hear about new products and industry news, share experiences and success stories, and of course, general networking and socializing. This time, it was a bit different.

Since meeting face to face in December 2020 was not an option, the event was organized entirely online over the course of two days, with presentations streamed from the showroom-turned-to-live-stream-studio at the Robit headquarters in Finland, as well as Teams events which enabled two-way communication for all participants.

Global online events are, of course, a bit of a challenge for participants from distant time zones. That's why the events were organized as separate four-hour sessions for different regions: evenings were dedicated for North and South American distributors and the morning sessions for other regions.

The theme for the first day was Mining & Blasthole, covering both Top Hammer and DTH products and applications. It was attended by 331 people from 34 countries, along with Robit management, sales and R&D.

The second day, dedicated to Construction, drew 293 participants from 35 countries and covered topics such as piling and micropiling, well drilling, and tunneling. Distributors shared their success stories in each session and discussions over Teams were lively.

Despite the limited possibilities of virtual meetings, the distributor event proved once again to be fruitful, productive, and successful, and received positive feedback from participants around the world. Although teleconferencing has inevitably taken great leaps forward during the COVID pandemic, both Robit and the distributors share the hope that the next event could be a happy face to face reunion.

DISTRIBUTOR AWARDS 2020



Distributor of the Year 2020

Norsk Pumpeservice (Norway)

New Distributor of the Year 2020

Pioneers for Mining Trading (Oman)

Special Performance of the Year 2020 (Mining & Blasthole)

Atrium (Russia)

Güriş Endüstri (Turkey)

Full Safety (Chile)

Rock Bits Tools (Mexico)

Special Performance of the Year 2020 (Construction)

Euro Drilling Center (Sweden)

Abbas & Company (Pakistan)

South Mining Supply (Chile)

Pinnacle Drilling Products (Canada)



The Korean factory celebrating a thousand days without accidents.

A global team is TACKLING HSE ISSUES AT ROBIT

Ever since its foundation in the 1980s, Robit has given special attention to health and safety in its operations. Protecting the environment has become another focus area. From July 2020 Robit has been having a Global HSE (Health, Safety, and Environment) Team in place.

The purpose of the team is to jointly define and develop HSE-related practices at Robit, with emphasis on further strengthening the safety culture in all Robit facilities across the globe. The team aims to create common HSE standards for all Robit units, encourage communication on HSE topics, and share best practices.

The team has been working on the following topics:

- writing out safety instructions for common work tasks in Robit units
- creating a standard format for training materials so each Robit unit can effectively make use of them in their daily work
- creating global HSE reports for incidents and actions taken to prevent them, as well as instructions for sharing information.

Materials produced by the HSE team are mostly published on Robit's intranet. The first batch of instructions and training materials covered handling of heavy loads, minimum requirements for PPE (personal protective equipment), safe driving, and bit-sharpening work.

The Global HSE team is led by **Ritva Haavisto**. "The core team has been meeting regularly over Teams,

developing and discussing topics we find important. There's also an extended team supporting the work and its implementation in practice", Ritva explains.

"It's great to be able to work with this group of people sharing their expertise, perspectives, and best practices from different locations. The teamwork has been going really well", says Ritva.

ROBIT GROUP GLOBAL HSE TEAM



Location	Core team	Extended team
Australia	Joanne Reid	Luke Newling / Steve Landreth
Finland	Ritva Haavisto	Jorma Pyykkö / Arto Halonen
Korea	Youn Seong Lee	James Kwack
Peru	Romina Dioses	José Cisneros
Russia	Svetlana Galina	Pavel Timofeev
South Africa	Nancy Wittes	Alfranco van Deventer
UK	John Dickerson	Mick Wagstaff / Andrew Walsh
USA	Kaye Wallace	Mikko Vuojolainen
HR	Sanni Vallittu	Jaana Rinne



The Robit folks are wishing you

A SPECTACULAR SUMMER!

... or winter, as the case may be!

Robit

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