



General Engineering Inc

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MB General Engineering, Inc. Continues Steady Growth and Success with the Help of Hawthorne Cat and Hawthorne Rentals

By Brian Hoover, Senior Editor

MB General Engineering, Inc. was officially established in 2016 by Corey Maher, who had previously been operating as an owner-operator for several years, working primarily on residential projects. Maher started his new heavy civil engineering construction business with renting equipment from Hawthorne Rentals in Escondido. "I acquired an "A" license in 2016 and started out working for local general contractors while gradually moving into heavier civil engineering projects," says Maher. "It was slow rolling at the beginning, and I rented the equipment as needed from Larry Thayer at Hawthorne Rentals. Larry and I built a great working



Above: MB General Engineering, Inc. demos house on Pacific Beach Drive, followed by over excavation and recompacting of pad for new multi-unit dwelling.

relationship, and directed me to Hawthorne Cat for the purchase of my first machine, a Cat 314E excavator with a thumb attachment."

Maher used his newly purchased Cat 314E with thumb attachment for many applications, including demoing houses. As he continued to rent other Cat equipment, Maher applied them to operate in tight quarters on foundation over excavations and to perform grading, excavating, demolition, and underground projects. "Ownership of just one Cat machine made me realize just how great the product support was at Hawthorne Cat, and I quickly recognized that owning Cat equipment was going to be a

good thing for my business," says Maher. "We have experienced tremendous growth these past few years, and that success has allowed for the purchase of several new machines from Hawthorne Cat. This includes our Cat 950M wheel loader, Cat 323 excavator, a D6T dozer, a 308 CR mini excavator, a Cat 262D skid steer loader, and most recently, our new Cat 259D3 compact track loader, Cat 303.5E2 CR and Cat 302 CR mini excavators."

Maher explains that his experience with Hawthorne Cat was immediately both productive and rewarding. "Matt Higgins is our Hawthorne Cat Sales Representative

out of Escondido, and he is a very professional and patient individual. Matt has spent countless hours with me to determine what machines are best for my company at each stage of our development,” says Maher. “He is someone that I can call on for anything at any hour of the day or night. I love working with Hawthorne Cat because they are a large, organized company that can meet our every equipment need. Hawthorne Cat is also a company that has the heart of a small business and cares about me as an individual. We are in good hands and have just ordered a new Cat 303.5 CR mini excavator from Matt

and are looking at purchasing a new Cat 289D3 compact track loader soon.

According to Maher, the equipment distributor he chooses to work with comes down to product support, customer service, and parts availability. “I can say that I have never had any issues with customer service or product support at Hawthorne Cat and that is one less thing to worry about in this complicated business. “They have great people, awesome machines, and attractive financing programs. They offer an incredible sales and service package that really can’t be beat.” Maher points

out that his heavy equipment purchases were initially based on previous equipment rental experiences. “We look at repeat applications and rental usage to determine when owning makes more sense over renting. Our Hawthorne Rentals representative, Larry Thayer approached me a few years ago to say that we were spending more than \$80,000 a year on rental equipment and that we might want to start looking at ownership. I took his advice, but what is particularly interesting is that we are still spending a bundle on rental equipment. That means we are growing, which is certainly



Left: Grading pad for tasting room at Jack Simon Winery in Valley Center.

Below: Grading remote house site and pad at Hidden Meadows near Escondido.





Above: Installation of biofiltration basin and drains in San Marcos.



Left: Excavating basement/underground living space to expand square footage of new home after demolition of existing structure in Coronado.

not a bad thing. I will continue to buy and rent equipment as we transition and seek out the trending markets and follow the money.”

Maher clarifies that he remains conservative when it comes to purchases and growth but also welcomes any opportunity for advancement as it comes along. “I have to say that my biggest area for improvement would be replicating myself and training others to do my job. Everything is going well, and I have moved around from one market segment to the next freely. Now, I must learn to work smarter through strategic hires and promotions so that I can

focus on the future growth of this company,” continues Mahe. “Right now, I like to stay out in front of each job by delivering and staging the equipment in advance for our operators. I get the projects rolling and then move on to the next job to do the same.”

The tremendous growth that MB General Engineering, Inc. has experienced over the past few years has taken them from smaller, short-term projects into larger jobs where they act as a subcontractor or even prime contractor. For example, MB General Engineering, Inc. is currently on a bioretention project for a condo developer in Carlsbad. They are excavating

several five-foot-deep gravel pits that will serve as bioretention basins. “Part of the job required our crew to excavate in the street to a depth of 13 feet to tie everything into the storm drain. Each basin is different, the size of which is determined by how much runoff there is in that particular location,” says Mahe. “The primary challenge on this particular job has been passing through and under the numerous utilities located throughout the jobsite. We even rented a vacuum trailer from Hawthorne Rentals to get through the very bottom of the excavation productively and safely. It has been

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Left: MB General Engineering, Inc. utilizing a Cat 326F long reach excavator from Hawthorne Rentals to perform lake restoration at Point X Camp in Aguanga.



Left & Above: MB General Engineering, Inc. performing a tie-in from a private PVC storm drain to public RCP storm drain in Carlsbad.

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a fairly technical dig with all the utility issues, and we are just now putting the final layers of gravel in place as we wrap up the job.”

Maier says that his company is on several of these finish grade and drainage projects right now. They are also taking on more custom home pad grading jobs for various general contractors and developers. “Part of our plan is to begin pursuing environmental rehab and land development projects. I did some of this work for

a company out at Camp Pendleton on the beach there, and this is a niche that fits in well with what we are already doing at this time,” says Maier. “We also have a job coming up in Lake Isabella where our crews will be pioneering a new road up the side of a mountain and constructing a building pad for a private individual.

Additionally, we have a five-lot subdivision road development project coming up in Valley Center where we will be performing everything from building pads,

grading, paving to underground utility installation.” MB General Engineering, Inc. also recently finished grading and paving a new parking lot in Temecula for Gosche Ford, demoed a home in Del Mar, and rehabbed a 7-acre pond in Anza. “Every day is different, and that is then way I like it,” says Maier. “Our capabilities and opportunities just keep getting better, and I can’t wait to see what 2022 has in store for MB General Engineering, Inc.” **CC**