



EMERGING ENTREPRENEURS

When Utah-based entrepreneur Ryan Bowden discovered a struggling aggregate recycling company going out of business during the economic downturn in 2009, he saw not failure, but opportunity.

Already a successful business owner for more than 17 years, Bowden possessed the skills to turn a business around, although he knew little about aggregates at the time. But after researching the industry and finding a need for recycled materials, Bowden knew he could make it a profitable venture, and ConRock Recycling was born.

Situated on a 30-year-old landfill in the Wasatch Front region of Utah, ConRock Recycling specializes in custom crushing and recycling. The company produces a number of products, including road base, aggregates, drainage, bulk fill, recycled concrete aggregates, sand and top soil. It also provides contract crushing and screening of rock, concrete, gravel and soil, as well as mobile crushing and screening using track-mounted jaw crushers and impactor plants.

Recycling aggregate is an increasingly popular method of using aggregate that is left behind when structures or roadways are demolished, Bowden said. Compared to virgin quarry products used to make concrete, crushed concrete weighs 10-15 percent less, resulting in reduced material costs, hauling costs and overall project costs.

"Recycling concrete offers far superior compaction and constructability, and offers a way to reduce landfill waste streams," he said. "Using concrete can also help facilitate the process of obtaining LEED® Green Building Certification. Our recycled concrete and asphalt are sold daily to both general contractors and residential consumers looking for economical savings while still maintaining required structural durability in base materials."



FINDING A TRUSTED SUPPLIER

While there was already a crusher on site from the previous owner, Bowden was concerned the equipment wouldn't meet his needs and decided to start from scratch. During his first year of business, he diligently visited manufacturers and other producers across the country, seeking quality equipment that could handle the rigorous demands of recycling concrete and provide high production, as well as a trustworthy local dealer who could support the business with parts and service.

Ready to get his feet wet with equipment that served his needs but not quite ready to splurge on the full line of equipment he really wanted, Bowden purchased a used KPI-JCI and Astec Mobile Screens FT4250 impactor plant from Goodfellow Corporation in Lindon, Utah. It only took a few years after that for ConRock Recycling to grow to the point where a larger, expanded system was necessary.

"With ConRock Recycling, we faced a number of challenges – mostly trying to get material sized properly," said Sy Harrison, sales manager for Goodfellow Corporation. "We sat down with him, helped him design a plant, and came up with a plan that could help him get rid of his existing equipment."

Bowden ultimately purchased a KPI-JCI and Astec Mobile Screens CS3055 jaw crusher with a vibrating feeder, SS4250 impactor, and two 13-30100 stackers and one 11-3060 stacker.

THE BUSINESS OF RECYCLING

The process of recycling aggregate begins with sorting out large pieces of steel as soon as the demolition material is dumped at ConRock Recycling's site. From there, a loader loads it into the primary jaw plant, where a cross belt magnet pulls out rebar before the material is sent through the impactor. Once through the impactor, stackers sort the sized material into three products – 1", 1 ½" and road base.

"What we're trying to accomplish by placing a jaw crusher in front of an impactor is liberate the rebar





so it does not get into the impactor,” said Ron Griess, product manager for KPI-JCI and Astec Mobile Screens. “By having a magnet with a cross-belt conveyor, we’re able to get that metal out. When you get into recycling concrete, you don’t always know what’s in there. You want to have the ability to have every tool at your disposal.”

The scrap metal then gets sold, giving Bowden three means of income – charging contractors a tippage fee for dumping material, selling back the processed crushed concrete, and selling scrap metal from the material. This not only adds to ConRock Recycling’s bottom line, but it fits in with the philosophy of the industry – using everything you can to avoid putting excess waste in landfills.

“This landfill has been here for more than 30 years, and Ryan’s actually coming in, cleaning it up, making it back into a reusable property, and getting rid of this material that has been stockpiled for years,” Griess said. “It helps the environment and it helps businesses who need quality material for construction.”

Bowden’s new system of equipment has increased production threefold, up to 1,500 tons per day. The larger jaw crusher reduces prep work for his crew, as well as increases production. Additional stackers help reduce moving costs and eliminate the expense associated with diesel equipment.

“Before, we only had one stacker, and it took a little bit to realize how much it cost you every time you move something with diesel equipment,” Bowden said. “When we got away from the diesel engines, it saved us a lot with downtime from service. In this dusty environment, using diesel equipment just wasn’t right for us.”

A SUCCESSFUL PARTNERSHIP

For Bowden, partnering with a reliable manufacturer and dealer that cared about making his business a success as much as he did was a critical step in making ConRock Recycling a success.

“Overall, I like everything I’ve seen with KPI-JCI and Astec Mobile Screens equipment,” Bowden said. “I like the idea that it’s built in America. I like the idea that

they are semi-local to me, being only a few states away. I feel like if I need something that Goodfellow doesn't have, I could send a guy to the factory to pick it up. Downtime is everything for us. We can't be down a day. So far, I haven't had any problems with Goodfellow or KPI-JCI and Astec Mobile Screens. It's all been a good experience."

Harrison said Bowden's success stems from his determination to do things the right way, from the very beginning.

"Recycling concrete isn't an easy job, but Ryan's been able to take the bull by the horns, learn it in the last few years, and really knows a lot about the industry now," Harrison said. "From a guy who knew nothing about it, he's really come a long way and knows what he wants and what works and what doesn't work."

Looking ahead, Bowden expects continued growth in the recycle market and his company.

"We came into the business at the bottom," Bowden said. "When I bought it, it was probably as bad as it's going to get. We've done a lot of things to get the bottom line down to where it needed to be to run efficiently. We're looking forward to growth in 2014 and beyond."

