

2007 Manufacturer's

Spotlight

Around the World With Laibe Corp.

There's a wise old adage that says, "If you dig deep enough, you'll reach China." In the case of Laibe Corp., the company has reached halfway around the world to Australia. Known as an industry leader for its innovative, state-of-the-art Versa-Drill brand drilling rigs, Laibe set out to design, engineer and build a versatile, large-diameter deep-hole water well drilling rig also capable of reaching shallow oil and gas reserves.

"Our goal was versatility," states Mark Laibe, chairman of Indianapolis-based Laibe Corp. "As the world continues to become smaller, and more of the world's far-reaching places are being found, a powerful, yet compact and lightweight rig is needed to get the job done." In fact, the new Versa-Drill V-2095EXP is just that. It weighs in at under 68,000 pounds, is very compact, has a low center of gravity at 12 feet, 9 inches, and yet is powerful with 95,000 pounds of top-head pullback.

One of the first V-2095EXPs has just been purchased by Bunbury Drilling Co. of Bunbury, Australia. Established in 1955, Bunbury Drilling is one of the largest and oldest drilling companies in Southwestern Australia. The "Aussies" have been around the world looking for the perfect drilling rig. They tried several manufacturers in the past, prior to placing their order and confidence in Laibe Corp. to build this new versatile and innovative rig.

"Once you develop a reputation for being the industry leader for innovative design and quality, it becomes expected of you," states Jim Hopkins, president and CEO of Laibe Corp. "Our people continue to strive to be the best, and it now runs well beyond our management and design team. I'll have members of our production team, at every level, consistently offer new and improved ways to build better products. It's become a company-wide focus to adhere to exacting quality standards while still delivering industry-leading innovation."

One aspect of the business that continues



New VersaDrill V-2095EXP for Bunbury Drilling Co., Australia.

to be in the forefront is service after the sale. With any complex piece of equipment, there's going to need to be a service component to support the product. To some, certainly the Laibe service team, it's the most important part of the process. Inevitably, rigs need parts and service at the most inconvenient times. "We feel it's important to not just sell the product, but also respond quickly to the service needs of our customers. As one of the only companies to stock a complete line of parts, this differentiates us and gives us an edge over our competitors," says Laibe.

Examples of innovation and attention to customer needs are numerous throughout Laibe Corp.'s history. The V-2095EXP is the latest example. In 2006 they introduced the Versa-Drill V-1040DP, which comes with deck-engine power, a feature some drillers prefer. And the newly upgraded Versa-Drill V-100NG is built on a Peterbilt chassis, another example of the company's focus on continuous improvement. "We look at every rig we build as an opportunity to make an advancement that our customers will appreciate," says Hopkins. "By continually improving our products, we feel that drillers who demand the best will include our rigs in their decision-making."

Laibe Corp. recently shipped a new Versa-Drill V-2000NG to the United States military for the humanitarian efforts of the Combined Joint Task Force - Horn of Africa in Camp Lemonier, Djibouti, Africa. It also shipped a new Versa-Drill V-1040DP to Hydro Construction and Engineering Co. Ltd. of Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.

"When I talk with customers, I want them to know that because we understand their business, we continue to seek ways to better serve them," adds Hopkins. Throughout more than 45 years in business, this focus on service – combined with an unwavering desire for improvement – has earned the respect and appreciation of well drillers throughout North America. It's becoming very apparent that Laibe's reputation for quality and innovation now is spreading around the world.