

# Growth from collaborations

Kevin Reimer, sales and operations manager at Canada-based Sonic Drill Corporation, talks about variety and working from Europe

## Q Can you explain your latest sonic equipment?

The SDC-375 is the company's latest product to be launched and, unlike other smaller and less powerful rigs, the SDC-375 comes with numerous features (including a rod-handling option) and the ability to core and drill to 300ft and beyond – far deeper than the standard 150ft for comparable-sized models. It is a full-capacity sonic rig in a mini size and, because it is built in the UK, it cuts out the ocean trip for European customers.

In the past few years, Sonic Drill Corporation (SDC) has seen a lot of innovation in rod-handling systems and more compact, economical drill models. The future may also bring more options for the shallower driller – projects that are 200ft or less.

The company also believes a greater variety of sonic drill heads will become available, not only for vertical drilling applications, but horizontal as well. Currently, SDC has three vertical sizes available and two horizontal sizes, which is more than most.

The new SDC-375 is the result of a February 2013 partnership between SDC and Dando Drilling International in the UK.

This is Dando's first step into the sonic-drilling market. In addition to sharing technology, Sonic Drill Corporation will also be Dando's agent for North America. Although the technology and design comes from SDC, Dando is building the sonic rig model.

This collaboration allows SDC to reduce the price of the rig, provide shorter lead times and provide support for the European market from the UK.

Over the years, SDC has been very successful in placing rigs in Europe but the company can now offer a rig and tooling directly from Europe.

## Q Who are your customers?

SDC deals with the full spectrum of purchasers – from the small family-run businesses to the large mining corporation – which is why it has an extensive product line to meet all those different needs. SDC has touched down on every continent.

The company has seen a lot of interest from new purchasers that want to explore the technology for the first time as well as repeat buyers. SDC receives numerous questions on the speed of the drill, how many feet it can do in a day, as well as the daily cost of running the rig.

## Q What are the main trends at the moment?

Everyone is looking for the best price and the fastest delivery. Custom-builds are also more common and, because SDC is a medium-sized manufacturer it is flexible enough to make changes on the fly while the rig is being built, if the customer needs it. Recently, customer requests have driven new modifications or product offerings such as safety cages, hands-free rod handling and a high-speed diamond-drill coring head.

Since the 2008 economic crisis, SDC has found that it is more difficult for customers to secure financing. There is also constant pressure to reduce costs, so manufacturers have to be vigilant and innovative in providing economical drilling solutions for the customer.

## Q What are your expectations for business during 2013?

SDC is seeing signs of improvement. The first quarter was somewhat slow, although enquires remained strong – just not purchases. However, now SDC is selling

into Russia, New Zealand, the eastern seaboard of the US, Australia and is close to sealing a deal in Europe. These are not new markets for SDC.

The customer is always looking for something that is in stock. They ask: "What is in the yard?" Unfortunately, carrying inventory is a huge investment and, quite frankly, if SDC had a sonic rig sitting in the yard it would be sold instantly. Because SDC is medium-sized it does not carry inventory, but it is always looking for ways to speed up production times. ▼



Kevin Reimer

## People and places

In July 2012, SDC signed a collaboration and licensing deal with Sysbohr, based in Fulda, Germany, to produce SDC tooling for customers in Europe. This agreement means that same-day or next-day delivery on tooling is possible as long as it is in stock. There is also no need to ship overseas from Canada. SDC is also the new official distributor in Canada and the US for Sysbohr.

At the beginning of 2013, SDC was contracted by Drilltechniques, a Comacchio dealer based in Queensland, Australia, to convert a Comacchio MC900P into a sonic drill. Working closely with Drilltechniques and Comacchio engineering, the MC900P was fitted with a full-capacity Sonicator 50K drill head, high-speed coring head, slide-carriage assembly and upgraded hydraulic controls. The rig was first used at the end of February at a project in Christchurch, New Zealand.



The SDC-375

For more information: [www.sonic-drill.com](http://www.sonic-drill.com)

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