

UNLOCKING TRENCHLESS KNOWLEDGE

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Asset owners and principal contractors can achieve better outcomes from projects by involving experienced and collaborative design and construct HDD providers, such as Maxibor, in the early planning and design stages of a project. Unlocking this knowledge early in the decision-making processes helps optimise outcomes for all stakeholders.

The value of the extensive horizontal directional drilling (HDD) design and construct experience Maxibor has gained across all infrastructure sectors – rail, road, water and sewer, power, gas, mining, renewables and telecommunications – cannot be underestimated.

The company has established a comprehensive network of supply chain, professional and community connections, which increases the potential to add value beyond the technical and practical delivery of a specific project or program of works.

Through building up respectful relationships with various stakeholders in the infrastructure industry, Maxibor is well placed to understand and respond to their needs. This collaborative approach creates the right environment for the transfer of knowledge, enabling all stakeholders to be better informed, producing better economic and social outcomes.

As an industry, trenchless technology still has a lot of educating to do to overcome the limited understanding of its benefits and past, and even current, prejudices. The industry also needs to do more to promote opportunities it can provide to achieve better outcomes.

Getting the message to the right level and having a value-add message package are essential prerequisites to the education process. Increasingly, Maxibor is finding that it is being provided the opportunity to share its extensive knowledge at a strategic and operational level with asset owner and principal contractor decision makers.

In this context, trenchless knowledge transfer at a strategic level is seen as crucial. It is key to helping executive level decision makers better understand how effective integration of trenchless solutions into the asset build and management process can deliver extra value to their organisation.

Well informed asset owner executives and asset and procurement managers will be much better positioned to make better strategic and specific work decisions around aspects such as design, cost, time, asset management, procurement, environment, community and culture.

As an example, a major government asset owner, through working in a collaborative way with Maxibor over time, now has a much better understanding of the benefits of trenchless solutions in the management of their multibillion-dollar assets. This knowledge allows them to make more informed decisions particularly at a design, asset management, procurement and environmental level.

The asset owners that take the time to listen and appreciate the value of the knowledge transfer around trenchless solutions will bear significant long-term benefits for their stakeholders.

Most principal contractors have outsourced their trenchless services. This has led to a decline of trenchless knowledge within the businesses and often results in less than optimal bids and designs from a trenchless solution perspective.

Inadequate communication of the trenchless solution is not conducive to increasing the pool of available trenchless works to the industry – if the principal contractor's bid solution fails with the asset owner, then the trenchless provider loses the opportunity to provide the work as well.

Again, it is a matter of the principal contractors better connecting into the knowledge of the experienced design and construct providers, like Maxibor. Their bids and conversations with asset owners will be much more informed and the likelihood of use of a trenchless solution will be significantly increased.

Several major principal contractors are now appreciating the benefits of connecting into Maxibor's technical and broader networks to assist with their bidding processes and connections into asset owners. Respect and relationships built with the benefit of knowledge are earning responses in the form of winning bids for principal contractors and Maxibor. It is also increasing the level of trenchless understanding at all levels within the principal contractors and asset owners, and creating additional work opportunities for the trenchless industry as a whole.

There is benefit for trenchless providers in better connecting across the supply chain and professional network supporting the trenchless industry.

Maxibor has developed strong relationships with engineering services providers, plant and equipment suppliers, key materials suppliers and broader services providers including finance, insurances, asset management advisory, legal, governance and in-field technology.

With these connections comes knowledge, which can be all part of what is provided back to principal contractors and asset owners as part of the total value add package.

At a social level, Maxibor has part of its objectives to help Indigenous businesses and organisations better participate in the civil construction sector. Significant knowledge is being gained from listening to these First Australians and their values are reflected in how Maxibor conducts its business.

In addition, Maxibor is proactively involving Indigenous businesses and people in the company's business model through knowledge transfer and the opportunity to participate in projects. As a business, Maxibor has also become more aware of the environmental and cultural impacts on projects.

The knowledge gained from Indigenous people is all part of the knowledge transfer to asset owners and principal contractors. Some great outcomes can be achieved through training and wider opportunity for these businesses and people to participate in projects and programs of work.

Maxibor recently worked closely with a small Victorian Indigenous drainage contractor, Native Earthworks, to facilitate the company's entry into the West Gate Tunnel Project. The two organisations are working together with a view to Native Earthworks obtaining work with other principal contractors managing other major projects in the state.

Smaller trenchless providers may struggle to participate at the broader and more strategic level that main players have been able to achieve; however, Maxibor takes the view that if the standard of the trenchless technology sector can be strengthened then it is for the benefit of all participants. After all, we win together, not in isolation.

In particular, smaller, like-minded HDD providers are more than welcome to have a

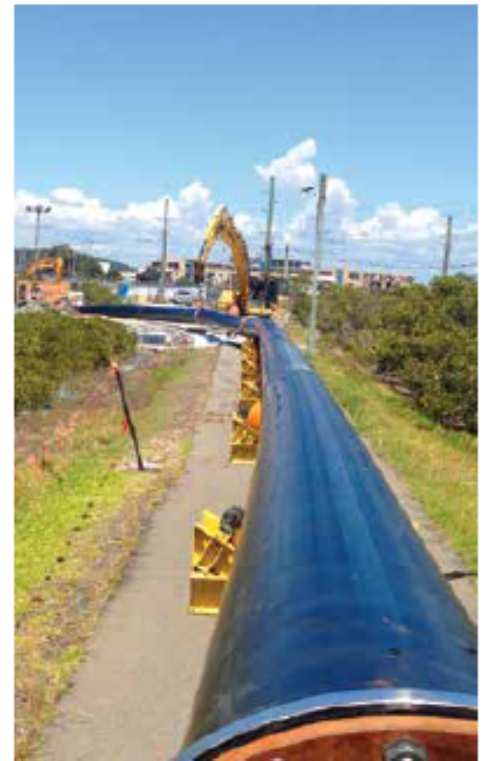
conversation with Maxibor on how better outcomes can be achieved for themselves and the industry.

Using 'commercial concerns' as a reason not to build professional relationships between trenchless providers is, in effect, holding the whole industry back. The immense knowledge within the sector needs to be shared much better.

Attendance at No-Dig Down Under every two years is highly recommended, but trenchless technology participants need to become much more professionally involved if the industry is to realise its full potential.

The trenchless providers that share knowledge across the industry and wider supply chain will be better positioned to achieve sustainable profitability and build the value of the business asset for shareholders.

Working together to unlock the knowledge in the trenchless technology industry is the best way to optimise outcomes for all stakeholders. **T**



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