

Wasa AG, 64293 Darmstadt, Germany

Phoenix Concrete Products in Dubai has been relying on solid plastic boards from the same supplier for 23 years

Phoenix Concrete Products, a concrete product manufacturer based in Dubai, outputs 150,000 concrete blocks each day on a production and office area totalling 50,000 m². To achieve this, three systems are employed with a total of 9,000 production boards. Since 1994, only Wasa Uniplast and Wasa Uniplast Ultra solid plastic boards made in Germany have been utilised.

Phoenix Concrete Products, with its headquarters in Dubai's Al Quoz Industrial Zone, is one of a total 32 concrete block production facilities in this Arab Emirate. From this location, Phoenix Concrete Products supplies its customers in Dubai and all other Emirates to the north. Up until recently, concrete blocks were also supplied to Qatar using the company's own trailers. Phoenix Concrete Products possesses 36 such vehicles, all of which are equipped with station-

ary mounted overhead cranes so that they can be loaded and unloaded independently.

The company's 63 year old managing director, Nadim Hobeika, was born in Lebanon and has already been domiciled in Dubai for 40 years. Before beginning his activities at his current employer, Hobeika was engaged as plant manager at Consent, a firm locat-



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Production is carried out on three Vibroblock machines, one of which the Hobeika brothers had redesigned and modified to suit Phoenix's special needs and requirements



Only Wasa Uniplast and Wasa Uniplast Ultra solid plastic boards are utilised

ed in the vicinity. It was here that he came to know Wasa Uniplast solid plastic boards from the German manufacturer, Wasa, which were also a success in production at Consent. Nadim Hobeika now heads Phoenix Concrete Products and its 175 employees together with his brother Nabil Hobeika, who, as production manager, is responsible for its smooth running and the consistent, uniform quality of its block products. The production lines run seven days a week 24 hours a day. A total of 19 forklifts are in operation day and night bringing finished blocks from the production halls to the yard or straight onto the trailers. Gone are the days when Dubai suffered the worst crisis in its history, even if the prices and numbers of blocks sold in the boom times can no longer be attained. In the times of booming economy, Phoenix Concrete Products employed a workforce of 215 persons.

“But there is no reason to complain at the moment,” says Nadim Hobeika. The company is more than satisfied with the sales figures. According to his own admission, the company has been market leader in the areas of lightweight, hollow and solid blocks. These are produced on three Vibroblock machines, one of which the



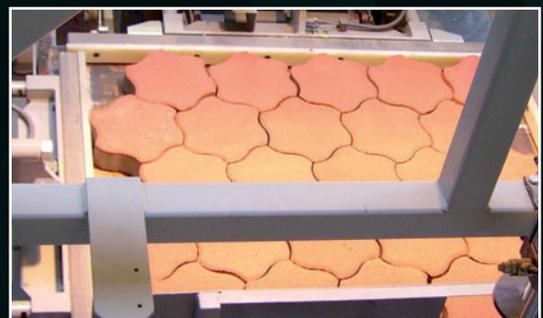
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PERFORMANCE MEETS PERFECTION



The total capacity of the curing chambers, which function with intrinsic heat, is 9,000 rack places

Hobeika brothers had redesigned and modified to suit Phoenix's special needs and requirements. The business with their well-known sandwich structure blocks, furnished with polystyrene for insulation, is operating very successfully.

Phoenix Concrete Products was also issued a so-called "Conformity Certificate" some time ago. It now allows the company to certify its own products in its in-house laboratory. Before this authorisation was granted, it was only possible to do so via the relevant administration in Dubai. Together with an ISO 9001 certification, this makes Phoenix Concrete Products ideally prepared for the future.

The total capacity of the curing chambers, which function with intrinsic heat, is 9,000 rack places. These are all fitted out with Wasa

Uniplast or Wasa Uniplast Ultra boards without exception. Up to the present time, Hobeika has never for one moment been sorry he purchased solid plastic boards, of which the Wasa Uniplast Ultra type is reinforced with fibre glass. Questioned about the advantages of these boards, his answer is this: "For us there are particularly three aspects that spoke – and still speak – in favour of solid plastic boards: in the first place they are half the weight of steel, which means that solid plastic boards can be handled much more easily, secondly the boards' long service life, and last but not least lower wear on the machines and our stock of moulds." One further benefit that Phoenix Concrete Products much appreciates is that solid plastic boards can never have problems with corrosion.

So it is hardly surprising that Phoenix Concrete Products has just lately again decided on purchasing such production boards from Wasa: 4,160 Wasa Uniplast Ultra with the dimensions 1,400 x 900 x 55 mm will be commissioned for operations in February 2017. These will replace a corresponding part of the board stock that is being exchanged after more than 15 years of service life.

Yet, it does not mean that the old plastic boards have to be disposed of. "A fully-fledged market for used plastic boards has developed," says Matthias Bechtold, chairman of the board at Wasa AG in Darmstadt, Germany. "Particularly on the African continent, there is great demand for good but inexpensive boards. They want to move away from wooden boards to boards that are better technically. In this case, our used plastic boards offer the perfect solution. They are cheap to purchase but still provide optimum production characteristics because the plastic has not changed throughout their entire previous service life."

"This is also the reason why new and old solid plastic boards can be mixed without problem in production facilities. This could come about, for example, when a factory does not start off at full capacity due to cost factors after commissioning. Production boards with varying lengths of service life can still be utilised together in production without generating different block qualities because the



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Testing laboratory at Phoenix Concrete Products



Nadim Hobeika

transfer of vibration remains unchanged for solid plastic boards during their entire working life. With wooden and composite wood/plastic boards, which Wasa also carries in its range, this is not the case," explains Matthias Bechtold.

The latter have been ruled out by Hobeika. He swears by boards made from fibre glass/plastic. "Phoenix Concrete Products supplies one of the best block qualities on the market not least because of the outstanding compaction with solid plastic boards. Why should we start thinking about changing the board type?"

FURTHER INFORMATION



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