

CHALKING IT UP TO EXPERIENCE

Pace Cranes recently announced that experienced crane expert and industry personality, David 'Chalky' White has joined the National Sales team. Chalky will be working on the entire range of products represented by Pace Cranes including Maeda, Sennebogen, Almac Multi Loaders, Uplifter Glass Handling Equipment, Tracked Carriers and Valla pick and carry cranes.

CHALKY'S CAREER STARTED IN THE MID

80's when he joined Western Australian crane manufacturer Linmac.

"I started working with articulated pick and carry manufacturer Linmac in 1986. They were a crane manufacturer in WA designing and manufacturing tractor cranes.

"This was pre-Franca and I was with Linmac for quite a number of years. I had a bit of time in and out of the business, but effectively I was there until the '90s when I left to join Franca. I was with Franca for seven years and the business was Franca when I started and Terex Franca when I finished up there.

"Having just left Franca that final afternoon, I was driving home thinking to myself, what am I going to do now? My phone rings and it's Brendan James from James Equipment in Victoria. I knew Brendan had been negotiating with Tadano and he said, 'I've just had the best news I've had all day.' It was Valentines Day, and Brendan said, 'I'll pay you to take a break and start with me in April,' and he did," said Chalky.

Brendan had secured the Tadano distributorship and he and Chalky went about selling Tadano cranes.



Industry expert David "Chalky" White has joined the Pace Cranes National Sales Team.

"I think Tadano had sold two cranes maybe three cranes in the previous two years and I knew we could sell a lot more than that. We went on to sell 17 in the first year.

"Brendan and I worked together for a number of years until he sold the business to Boom Logistics. I stayed with them for another couple of years until Boom decided the Tadano distributor didn't suit their business model.

"Tadano decided to service the market directly and I put my hand up and said, 'If you're going to go on your own, I would like to be part of it and I registered the name Tadano Oceania,'" he said.

Tadano Oceania kicked off with Chalky.

"The difference was, we weren't just waiting for people to call us, we were actively selling. I was with Tadano Oceania up until six years ago when I went out on my own buying and selling cranes on consignment. I was working my way into semi-retirement with an aim to putting

my feet up and not doing much, or so I thought," said Chalky.

"Mid last year, I was over in New Zealand for the CANZ Conference and caught up with Anthony Heeks and Michael Cawston. I've known Paul Heeks and the family for a very long time, and I've always been a fan of Paul, he reminds me of my dad.

"Anthony asked what I was up to, and I told him I was doing my own thing, working two to three days a week. He said he wanted me at Pace Cranes and explained his plans for the business he was very convincing. I met with him back in Sydney and he said, 'Give me four days a week and do your own thing on the other days.' I thought, 'what have I got to lose? I agreed and we haven't looked back since,'" he said.

This is the first time Pace Cranes has had representation outside of the Sydney operation.

"Up until now, sales have always been out of their branch in Sydney with

Michael and Anthony managing sales and prior to this it was Paul. Michael is an amazing fellow. I didn't really know him, but the more you get to know him, the more you understand he's a smart guy.

"He does a lot more than just the sales. He's responsible for most of the purchasing and because of that, he doesn't get out of the office much other than when he's delivering a crane or when he gets a chance to see a few customers. This is the first time they've had a salesman out knocking on doors," said Chalky.

Chalky believes there is significant growth opportunities for the range of products represented by Pace Cranes.

"It will be interesting to see how it goes. In terms of sales, when people are ringing you for cranes, the strike rate is very high. But when you're knocking on doors, the success rate is not going to be quite as high. I'd like to think that every second or third door you knock on, there will be interest in a crane, but it doesn't always work that way.

"My territory is Australia and New Zealand. I won't really need to focus on Sydney, because Anthony, Michael and the team are there, and they know the Sydney market. To some extent it's the same with Melbourne, Michael gets down there a fair bit, so I'll concentrate on the other states and also New Zealand," said Chalky.

The next 12 months is shaping up to be a busy for Chalky and the Pace Cranes

team. There's likely to be plenty of travel and a new facility in Brisbane.

"I've been planning my schedule for the next 12 months and I've currently locked in 21, week-long trips. The majority of these will be in Queensland, Northern Territory, Western Australia, South Australia and New Zealand.

"Pace Cranes have been very clever in the way they've brought together the various brands and product lines in the business. When you look at the Maeda range, there are so many opportunities to talk about the track carrier ranges and glass handling equipment and when larger capacities are required, we can talk about the Sennebogen range," said Chalky.

Joining Pace Cranes isn't just about sales, says Chalky. There is also commitment to increasing service and support capabilities.

"We are currently looking at a facility in Brisbane which will help with the servicing and support for the planned increase in the population of product in Queensland. We are looking at a facility with service and workshop capabilities and a showroom where we can demonstrate product.

"There is a service guy in the Sydney team who has expressed interest in moving back to Queensland. Pace Cranes are good at keeping people and many of the staff have been there a long time. Even if they leave for a while, they tend to come back,"



The ML 3.0 FX is a powerful and versatile flatbed truck carrier with a load capacity of 3,000kg.



SENNEBOGEN's first battery-powered telescopic crawler crane, the new 50t capacity 653 E Electro Battery.

said Chalky.

Chalky has also been involved in projects for CICA and one of these involved him providing his crane expertise to the National Heavy Vehicle Regulator (NHVR) project around access for mobile cranes.

"My involvement in that project started in 2016, when the NHVR released a national notice for mobile cranes. At



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that stage it was for Frannas and truck cranes, that sort of smaller mobile crane.

"The NHVR were finding it hard to get traction with the road managers. For example, Queensland has numerous councils and very few had signed up to the notice. So, the Queensland CICA board decided they could afford a few dollars to see if they could put someone inside the NHVR to assist in getting a

better platform for the crane industry.

"It was Lorna Williams, Smiley's wife from Williams Crane Hire who suggested my name. Lorna knew I'd been involved with cranes on a national basis and understand the requirements all over Australia," said Chalky.

"We are about to move into a phase where I'll be spending a bit more time working on this project which Anthony is

quite okay about. It continues to put me in front of a lot of crane people. Although I like to think I'm reasonably well-known in the crane industry, this sort of project helps you stay in front of people and front of mind.

Anthony recently took over the Chair for CICA New South Wales, so Pace Cranes is very keen to align with the industry's leading body," he said. ●