



ACA taking lead on development of online CDP certification

Association tapping expertise of local tech company to overcome need for hands-on component in remote learning

By Ken Partridge

The challenge: delivering a technical certification program to a widespread and often remote workforce, which is often unable to travel to a centralized location for program delivery. This would seem to be a situation tailor-made for Internet delivery, yet the challenge remains unanswered.

The Canadian concrete industry has been seeking an online approach to delivery its Concrete Delivery Professional (CDP) certification for several years now.

Earlier attempts were made, but so far, the program still relies on gathering trainees in a specific location for day-long, in-person sessions.

The challenge is the need for hands-on skill acquisition. No one has been able to crack the code for how to accomplish that remotely.

That's why the Atlantic Concrete Association has approached Pixelyard in Bedford, Nova Scotia. The company specializes in developing custom instructional solutions and curriculum for trades and technical training organizations. Pixelyard's use of high-fidelity 3D models and simulations create 'vir-

tual' tools and equipment that overcome the need for trainees to physically manipulate actual tools, but still get the experience and repetition required to acquire the requisite skills.

"We've been doing this for quite some time," says Pixelyard's Peter Moak. "We're comfortable taking technical training and putting it online. We put lots of interactivity into it and bring the process alive. Taking a classroom course and converting it to online can be daunting for an association, but it's the kind of thing we've been working with such groups to accomplish for a long time."

This ACA initiative, which arose from the 2018 AGM and is paid for by the association, is expected to lead to other opportunities to expand the reach of the new online CDP training once it's up and running.

"The ACA board and education committee were looking for an efficient and cost-effective way for all members to access the CDP Certification," says Karla Brown of Casey Concrete, chair of ACA's education committee. "Providing this delivery will allow more of our drivers to get valuable professional training without having to miss time or travel to do so."



ACA and ACI collaborated to host their first Field Testing Certification and Workshop on April 19 and 20 in Moncton. Shown here, workshop instructor Bill Dooley (seated) watches as participant Mark Mumford of Quality Concrete in Kentville, N.S. puts what he learned to work.



Field Testing Certification and Workshop attracted a lot of participants. Thanks to Quality Concrete for hosting the event.



Atlantic Concrete Association
Association béton Atlantique

Publication Mail Agreement #40064799

Atlantic Concrete Association (ACA)
Association béton Atlantique (AbA)

Produced for ACA/AbA by Advocate Media Inc.

(Formerly Atlantic Provinces Ready Mixed Concrete Association)

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Making the case for concrete roadworks

By Kathy Johnson

The Atlantic Concrete Association (ACA) is hoping recent attention given to the success of some concrete roads that were completed in Nova Scotia a number of years ago will help support industry's case "that concrete is a great building material of choice and stands the test of time," says president Jamie Reid.

A test 11-kilometre stretch of concrete roadway on Highway 101 built 15 years ago is slated for its first repair work since construction, part of the provincial Department of Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal's five-year plan.

"It takes that long and longer to achieve a real-life expectancy," Reid says. "Those results are in now and look positive, showing concrete really is a long-term, cost-effective choice."

Besides tendering a call to conduct concrete repairs on the 101, the five-year plan also calls for repair work to a 4.7 km stretch of concrete highway near Oxford. Built in 1994, it has performed even better than the 101 stretch.

Marla MacInnis, spokesperson for the Nova Scotia Department of Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal (TIR), says the concrete section of High-

way 101 "has not performed as well as the section on Highway 104. Highway 101 has seen substantially more cracking after fewer years of service than Highway 104."

Never-the-less, "a life cycle cost analysis of concrete pavement over a 40-year period, with a four per cent discount rate applied, sees about 40 per cent maintenance cost savings when compared to flexible pavements over that period," MacInnis says. "Where concrete pavement has been used in Nova Scotia, there was a significant life cycle cost analysis premium placed on them in the tender to even the playing field with asphalt's lower construction costs."

While it's been shown that concrete pavement can offer a decreased cost and longer lifecycle, one of the "sticking points" to more concrete highway construction in Atlantic Canada "is the equipment to place the concrete is not owned by any company in Atlantic Canada so it's the 'chicken and egg' story," Reid says. "The multi-million-dollar investment into the equipment will need a guarantee of sorts by the province that contracts will be awarded for concrete construction before the investment by Ready Mix producers and contractors will be realized. If that guarantee can happen, then the investment will be

made for highway construction."

Another sticking point is traffic volume. "Concrete pavement becomes competitive with asphalt and more cost effective in areas with high traffic volumes and heavy trucks stopping and turning," MacInnis says. "Therefore, concrete is not as competitive in jurisdictions such as the Maritimes."

Reid says in the short term, "I believe government at the municipal and provincial levels should take notice of the concrete highways results and should be looking into more concrete roundabouts, high traffic intersections, parking facilities, and bus stop locations made of concrete. Concrete highways must be looked at as an investment into the future to achieve lower operating costs over its life span. Though concrete quite often has a higher initial cost, when you look at the products' life cycle, the total cost of ownership

is typically less for concrete than other building materials. As our tagline says, 'Build for Life!'"

To draw more attention to the use of concrete, Reid says the association participated in a Concrete Lobby Days in Ottawa in 2017. The major goal was to educate key federal government decision makers and influencers on the advantages of using concrete in many different construction projects.

Nova Scotia's TIR does have plans to use concrete pavement in at least one other project this year and will also be allowing concrete bids on upcoming 100-series twinning construction.

"Concrete pavement will be used for the Kelly Lake Scale approach and exit ramps this year," MacInnis says, "and a life cycle cost analysis will also likely be performed to allow for concrete bids on our upcoming 100-series twinning work."



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Steve Peters takes a class through the Concrete Basic Principles and Practices course in Halifax March 20 and 21. The practical part of the course was hosted by Quality Concrete.



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Legalization of cannabis will bring insurance issues for industry

By Andy Walker

When the sale of cannabis becomes legal in Canada later this year, Steven Bates is convinced it will present challenges for companies in the concrete industry.

"It's something companies should have on their radar now," says Bates, vice president of Stanhope Simpson Insurance in Halifax and a commercial insurance broker.

The law will see cannabis move from the category of an illegal drug to a con-

trolled substance, like alcohol. Bates says the onus will be on companies to put policies and procedures in place aimed at ensuring employee use of marijuana is on their own time and won't impact their performance on the job.

"The industry needs clarity from government on the regulation," says Kevin Nickerson of Quality Concrete in Dartmouth. "At this point the construction sector doesn't have any clear direction."

Bates says he would like to see the insurance industry be proactive on the issue and develop some guidelines for clients. While it would be impossible to plan for every eventuality, he says such

guidelines could alert clients to areas they should be concerned about.

Company guidelines should be like those surrounding alcohol. The issue isn't quite as simple as making sure workers don't come to work high or use marijuana on the work site. There could also be issues surrounding the use of cannabis the night before and whether that can impact their ability to do the job the next morning.

Bates says companies must have clear policies even when something is legal or controlled.

"It's like texting and driving. Everybody knows you shouldn't do it, but there should still be clear policies and procedures in place," Bates says.

There are still several unknown factors regarding the law, the least of which is the exact implementation date. It was slated to be July 1 when the government's decision to proceed with legalization was announced. However, the measure has been held up in the Senate and it could be late summer or early fall before it's in force. Little is also known about what resources might be available to employers

to deal with any potential issues.

Bates suggests companies begin developing policies with the view "there will always be those who push the limits" and suggests managers and site supervisors be aware and on the lookout for potential problems.

"At the end of the day, it's the company's reputation that is on the line," Bates says.

It will take some time for all the implications surrounding legalization to be worked out for employers, including those in the concrete industry. There could well be some issues that will eventually be worked out by the courts, a process that often takes months or years.

Even now, when only medical marijuana is legal, there are issues for employers regarding privacy and health and wellness if an employee is using marijuana for medical reasons, but the employer deems it as impacting job performance.

"While there will definitely be some growing pains to be worked out, employers must be proactive and begin to plan now," Bates says.



Halifax was the scene for the ACA Concrete Pump Operators Safety Workshop on March 24, during the same time another course, on CDP certification, was underway in Moncton.

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Scenes from Atlantic Concrete Association



Kevin Nickerson and Steve Peters share a laugh during the 2018 AGM.



Enjoying dinner at the ACA AGM are, from left, Donna Kline, Pam Woodman, Tanya Moore, Darren Cross, Bryant Deveaux, Julie Marston, Sarah Stephens, Steve Peters, Scott Flemming, and David Kline.



Who says AGMs aren't romantic? Mexico's Playa del Carmen seems the perfect background for Francis Forlini and Julie Richard.



The 2018 ACA Executive includes Scott Flemming, Past President; Jamie Reid, President; Pam Woodman, Executive Director; Kevin Nickerson, Vice President; and Steve Peters, Treasurer.



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Association's 2018 Annual General Meeting



The Atlantic Concrete Association recently held its annual general meeting in Mexico, Feb. 25 to March 4 at Playa del Carmen. Members paid their own way to the event and report the week-long event was highly productive, resulting in several initiatives that will come together later this year and into 2019.

"The 2018 offshore AGM presented a great opportunity for our producer and supplier members to discuss the industry's successes and challenges, while also allowing time for networking," says ACA President Jamie Reid. "Holding meetings in a different country presents a unique set of challenges for our staff. I would like to thank our Executive Director, Pam Woodman, for all of her hard work in ensuring we had all of the pieces in place to allow for an effective and productive week of meetings."

Reid says, "In order for any AGM to be a success it takes a commitment from our members. With an offshore AGM there are additional time and financial commitments for all attendees. Through registration fees, the attendees bare all of the costs of the AGM's events, such as executive director travel, meeting space fees, and other AGM requirements. I would like thank all of the AGM's attendees for making our 2018 offshore AGM a huge success."

Dave Kline, Darren Cross, Alex Kennedy, and Paul Gallagher during a 2018 AGM session.



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Ready Mix Briefs

• Upcoming Events

Aug. 17 to 19: 2018 Summer Family Fun Board Meeting, Rodd Brundenell River Resort, P.E.I.

Sept. 13: 2018 Annual Golf Tournament, Royal Oaks Golf Course, Moncton, N.B.

Feb. 21 to 23: 2019 ConAtlantic, Halifax Delta, Halifax, N.S.

• Lisa Brinson joined the staff of ACA at the start of 2018. She comes to us from a long career in administration and both mortgage and retail finance. She also had her own organizational ser-

vices company for three years. She comes from an industry where client care is king and is perpetually thrilled to hear from the membership. She greets every question, query, or quandary with a can-do attitude and positive energy. She and Pam work well together and are quickly becoming a 'dynamic duo' who play on each other's strengths and creativity. Such a positive working relationship in the office has already lent itself to offering creative new approaches to educational efforts and membership benefits. In her spare time, she is a devoted mother and wife. She has two teenage daughters, a husband, and a small, domestic 'zoo' that keep her on her toes. Her passions include music in all forms, writing for several online publications, constant home renovation, cooking, and making endless 'to do' lists for the simple joy

of crossing items off. Please join us in welcoming Lisa to the Association.

• **Birth Announcement:** Congratulations to Travis Richard (Shaw Resources) and Tara Sobey on the birth of their daughter, Halle Quinn Richard, born May 22, weighing 6 lbs 15 oz., and 19.5 inches long.

• Feedback from past attendees of **ConAtlantic** have led to a revitalization of the event. The 2019 version will see the Atlantic Concrete Association and the American Concrete Institute work together to deliver new topics, new speakers, and a greater emphasis on professional development. Long known for presenting highly technical sessions not for the faint of heart, the 2019 agenda calls for more accessible subjects presented in more attendee-friendly formats. High profile speakers

are being sought, and the event will include social events that allow attendees more direct, one-on-one access to the presenters for even greater learning opportunities.

• According to the **Portland Cement Association**, the rigidity of concrete pavement can enhance the fuel efficiency of vehicles that travel on roads when compared to other pavements. If concrete pavements were used by the U.S. road system, the PCA predicts fuel consumption would decrease by an estimated three per cent nationwide, equating to a reduction in fuel consumption of 273 million barrels of crude oil a year, and a corresponding reduction decrease of greenhouse gas emissions by 51.2 million short tons. These results appeared in a 2017 PCA flyer on the concrete industry in Maryland.

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Treatment plant helps Pictou improve water

By Steve Goodwin

PICTOU – Construction of Pictou's new water treatment facility is progressing well, and part of the success has stemmed from the project's concrete supplier.

Casey Concrete fulfilled the project's needs from its Trenton location, although the long-standing company has 11 locations throughout Atlantic Canada.

"The job went very well," says Dave Lemmon, the batch plant operator at the

company's Trenton site. The project itself came along quickly. They used a variety of strengths (of concrete) throughout the project."

In his latest update on the project, project manager Kyle Slaunwhite says the plant continues to progress on time and on budget. He has been overseeing the project, which is expected to be complete and online by Sept. 1.

Most recently, the concrete floors were poured, and interior walls are going up. The building's area is nearly 3,200 square feet.

Slaunwhite says construction of Pictou's new water treatment facility has fuelled his passion for the work he does for the town.

He went back to school to get an MBA and from that achieved a project management professional designation. He says he appreciates the colleagues he works with for the town.

"I realized that is where my passion lies," he says. "We have a great team, so that makes it that much more enjoyable."

The project costs \$5 million and includes pressure zones to produce good water pressure throughout the town's higher and lower elevations. Two-thirds of the cost was from federal and provincial sources and the town has financed the rest.



Pictou's new water treatment facility is currently under construction, but expected to be finished by Sept. 1.

Goodwin photo

The end goal of building the new treatment plant off Wellington Street is to achieve better quality water. The plant isn't far from the series of 13 wells located on the edge of town off Division Road.

Nine wells are operating now to meet the town's current needs, Slaunwhite says. About half of the town's water comes from two of the largest volume wells.

"We're keeping the others off-line until the treatment plant is operating," Slaunwhite says.

Pictou's residents have endured occasional off-colour water for years, but the new plant's more sophisticated filter system is designed to solve the problem. Slaunwhite does caution that the impact will not be obvious right away.

"Water discolouration will not be immediately fixed as the distribution will still have sediment. We'll be doing extensive flushing to remove it as efficiently as possible."

Continued on page 8



The exterior of Pictou's new water treatment plant is mostly complete while work continues inside.

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Dr. Soley Einarsdottir is a Materials Consultant and a recent addition to the Geotechnical group in our Dartmouth, NS office. Soley has expertise on Alkali-Silica Reaction in concrete, and testing concrete & materials for mix designs and durability. Drop by our Dartmouth office, or contact her at soley.einarsdottir@stantec.com —she'd love to hear from you!





The new water treatment facility will include pressure zones to produce good water pressure throughout the town's higher and lower elevations.

Continued from page 7

What will improve water quality is the two series of four tanks containing sand and special chemicals. Their principal purpose is to remove the iron that causes the water's reddish-brown colour, and manganese that causes the darker colour.

"The current system is over-worked," Slaunwhite says. "Everything will be more efficient, and the water will have a much better quality leaving the plant."

The treatment may also mean

less chlorine is required to make the water safe to drink. Slaunwhite says better treated water will represent one reason for people to choose to live in Pictou, whose population has dropped to less than 3,200 people in recent years.

"We're going to have a state-of-the-art plant that can treat water for years to come, and if Pictou doubles in population we'll be ready for that. We don't want people to have any reason not to come to Pictou."

Besides water quality, water pressure and water supply have

been emphasized. A water tower was installed to better meet those two goals.

"The water tower holds a lot of water, 800,000 gallons if filled to the top," Slaunwhite says. "With the water treatment plant, it will be filled all the time."

The two pressure zones that are part of the project are being located near the Pictou Fire Department and at the corner of High and Wellington Streets. Slaunwhite says the pressure zones will increase pressure in areas with lower than preferred water pressure.



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