

Diamond Award is up for grabs

There is not long to wait before the top three winners of Diamond Award 2009 are announced in the world's gambling capital Las Vegas, USA. The competition for the best concrete cutting and drilling projects has already entered its final stage. With the 31 October deadline for entries moving rapidly into the past, the award committee is now busy with an arduous task of processing job stories filed by the contractors from all over the world. PDi's Andrei Bushmarin gives an overview of the 2009 Diamond Award 2009.

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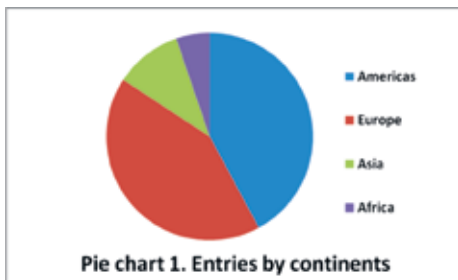
The contest attracted 19 entries from 18 companies, which are on the IACDS website. In the face of the global economic meltdown, when "how-we-can-tackle-the-crisis" has become the most engaging topic of our everyday conversations, it is a truly reassuring sight to see that the competition has not lost its appeal and contractors are still lined up for the trophy race. The Diamond Award 2009 incentive package includes airfare and accommodation for representatives of the companies that make the top three.

Fifth award run

"Diamond Award", which was conceived by Horst Wapler of the German "Fachverband Betonbohren und-Sägen" almost nine years back, now sees its fifth run. Before the IACDS took up the baton of organizing this professional contest in 2007, it was the German association that had regularly staged it. Its conditions have not changed much since the time the first awards were presented at BeBoSa 2000. The association's expert panel evaluates all entries by four basic criteria: planning and complexity, degree of difficulty, innovation and quality requirements using a 1 to 10 points system. To be eligible for a prize, an entry should score high in every category. Following an established tradition to confer the Diamond Award at the world's largest trade fairs like BeBoSa and Bauma, this time around the final showdown is scheduled to take place at the World of Concrete show in Las Vegas on 4 February, 2009.

Let's talk statistics

The main purpose of this report is to provide a statistical overview of Diamond Award 2009 as an event, which reflects the current state of development of the concrete cutting industry. Considering it in geographical terms, the Americas and Europe account for 16 entries, each mainland providing an equal number of 8 entries. Asia is represented by two Japanese companies, while Africa mustered one entry. Given that it is the first time an African contractor has participated in a competition dominated

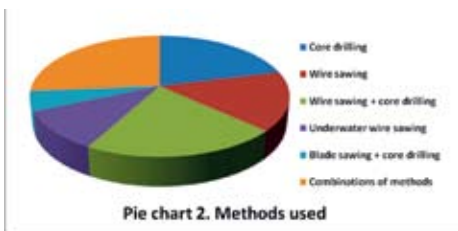


by European, American and Asian firms, the bold and long awaited initiative of the Egyptian company Market Leaders is highly laudable. Australia and New Zealand are conspicuously missing from the list of contenders. The zero turnout seems especially inexplicable consider the strength of their national association, with many resourceful and innovative contractors.

Country wise, the USA topped the list with 5 contributions, followed by the UK, which provided a grand total of 3 case studies. One entry came from Japan, Germany and Mexico, Austria, Canada, Italy, Russia and Egypt. Adra Tecnologia en Servicios from Mexico, was the only contestant to submit two projects for the award. It is another trophy hopeful, however, that we have to watch out for. The prize-winning Tondin S.R.L. from the Italian town of Gazzo has now bagged a handful of Diamond Awards. Tondin won the 2004 contest and took second prize in 2007. This year they came up with a complex project of consolidation of the foundation of Loggia Palace in Brescia, which entailed some innovative drilling. We will soon know if the Italians can continue their winning streak into the 2009 event.

As one can see from the entries, the contributions which involve an array of concrete cutting, drilling and crushing techniques, prevail over ones where just one method, largely core drilling, is described. Only four companies, - Taylor's Concrete Cutting Services from the US, OLVEK from Russia, and Italian Tondin from Italy and Seidl from Austria placed their bets on the exclusive coring projects. The combination of wire sawing and core drilling is seen as winning in more senses than one by four contenders. It is evident that many contractors tend to use wire sawing, as the most versatile and imaginative technique currently available, to tackle challenging concrete cutting projects. Flexibility of this method allows for a broad scope of applications. For instance, the contributions from Adra Tecnologia en Servicios and the USA's Minneapolis Concrete Sawing and Drilling detail underwater wire sawing operations, whereas German company Norbert Braun GmbH presented a case study, which dealt with remotely controlled wire sawing at a nuclear power plant.

Wire sawing may be complemented with other concrete removal methods or else can be used as a stand alone technique, which was exemplified in the UK's Drill Cut and Soft Cut entries. Two companies lodged contributions describing multi-technique projects. Bohrtechnik Westerswald from Germany completed a job on the foundation of a rolling mill to a 120 hour deadline using a range of



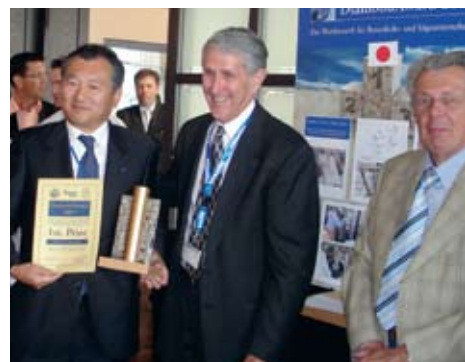
concrete sawing techniques, while the American Holes Incorporated employed nearly all known methods, except for wire sawing, to demolish a storage warehouse damaged by a tropical storm. Another distinct trait of the modern concrete cutting business is an increasing tendency to use robotic demolition machinery and concrete scanning technologies like GPR in addition to conventional techniques when handling complex jobs, which was illustrated by Alabama-based ABC, Robore Group from Great Britain and the Egyptian Market Leaders.

If we try to assess how big the field of application of concrete sawing techniques is, using Diamond Award contributions as a reference point, we notice that it is practically unlimited. Specifiers range from steel mills, hydro and nuclear power plants to bridge and marine contractors. Concrete sawing helps successfully solve eco-sensitive projects, which was again proven by a few contestants. Ancient monuments and beautiful palazzos get a new lease of life, buildings and facilities damaged by natural or man-made disasters get fully restored, not least thanks to concrete sawers and their cutting edge techniques. PDi wish all contestants good luck, and whoever wins, it will not be just the winners who will gain from their victory; it is the entire industry that benefits from networking for which such an excellent vehicle as "Diamond Award" was devised. The number of sponsors that have realized the positive business ramifications of supporting "Diamond Award" increases from competition to competition, and this is yet another sign of its worthiness and relevance.

All entries and the list of sponsors are accessible at www.iacds.org/diamondaward.



The winners of the Diamond Award 2007 (from the left): Xavier Angerer, Angerer GmbH from Garmisch-Partenkirchen, Germany, winner of the third prize; Norikazu Shibuya representing Komu Ltd from Hiroshima, Japan, winner of the first prize; Tiziano Tondin, Tondin S.R.L., from Gazzo, Italy, winner of the second prize.



From the left Norikazu Shibuya, Pat O'Brien, President of IACDS and Horst Wapler from the German Association who took the initiative to the Diamond Award.