

World leaders

Welcome to Hoist's list of the top 50 most important people working in the hoist industry. These people have shaped the course of the global business over their (sometimes long) careers, and hold the keys to its future. This list is the result of nominations from contacts and readers around the world, and in-house research. The winners are in alphabetical order.

DERRICK BAILES, chief executive, LEEA

Derrick Bailes' career in the industry began with a student apprenticeship with Herbert Morris Ltd. After graduating in mechanical production engineering in 1971, he spent the next few years in various roles at Morris. He joined the UK based Lifting Equipment Engineers Association (LEEA) in 1978.

Under his leadership, the LEEA has grown in influence, contributing to raising standards of safety and professionalism within the lifting industry. He has represented the membership on numerous standards and legislative bodies and is currently chairman of the CEN and ISO technical committees dealing with slings and lifting accessories. Over the past 25 years, the LEEA has published several benchmark publications, and developed widely recognised training courses and qualifications for testers and examiners of lifting equipment. It has recently opened a dedicated training centre, and its membership continues to grow - internationally as well as within the UK.



WALLY BLOUNT entertainment hoist division manager, Columbus McKinnon

Wally Blount has had a major impact on the field of entertainment hoists. He was instrumental in using a grass roots campaign to train riggers in the entertainment market on the features and benefits of the black, inverted CM Lodestar. He has also held numerous other positions with the corporation.



WERNER BUEHNE, founder, Abus

Werner Buehne set up Abus Kransysteme in 1963 and built it into one of the world's leading manufacturers of hoists and standard overhead cranes and hoists, producing approximately 6,000 cranes a year and 14,000 hoists. Buehne's success, based on a profound work ethic, effectively revolutionised the whole European market.

Now managed by 51-year-old Lothar Buehne, Abus continues to be a company that is distinctly shy of publicity or involvement in industry associations and activities. Although the Buehne family chooses to follow their own path, the route has certainly proved successful for the Gummersbach, Germany-based firm.

LIBERO DONATI

Libero Donati turned his family's business, Donati Sollevamenti, a small Italian electric chain hoist manufacturer, into a large international player through an advanced serial manufacturing process. He joined Donati in the 1960s, and led the company's expansion and development in the 1970s and 1980s, introducing jib cranes and wire rope hoist production.

The company was one of the first to push serialised manufacture of chain hoists, and kept overheads low by outsourcing sub-components. Donati also saw a limited future in the Italian domestic export and grew the amount of export to one-third total sales revenue. In 1992 Donati sold the business to Demag, and set up consultancy Phoenix Engineering for the hoist industry.

JAN BOETTCHER, managing director, Kuehnezug Foerdertechnik

In 2002 Jan Böttcher took over the reigns of the company from his father Manfred. It was more than 40 years since the 24-year old Manfred Boettcher bought the machine tool company Fritz Kuehne in August 1959. In 1960 he took on German distribution rights for Norwegian Munck cranes and soon the company was producing its own cranes, under the name Kuehnezug. Inspired by the car industry, it pioneered closed-construction gear boxes with Rollcompact drive with spring-operated DC disc brakes.



JUERGEN DLUGI, SWF Krantechnik managing director

SWF has seen its turnover rise from Euro 17m in 2003 to Euro 27.4m, a startling rise for a distribution company in a mature sector. SWF no longer produces its own hoists, instead putting its own branding on hoists and crane kits supplied by parent company KCI Konecranes. Leading the successful reinvention of the company is Jürgen Dlugi, who stepped up from sales and marketing director to managing director in 2004. "We deliberately reclaimed our core competence as a supplier for crane constructors," Dlugi has said. A feature of Dlugi's leadership is the enthusiasm and team spirit of his youthful team.

Dlugi himself gives the credit for the new energy within SWF to his young marketing and communications manager, David Rennert.



DR. JOACHIM BIEWALD

Electrical engineer Joachim Biewald was one of the guys who brought computers into hoists. Over his decade of experience at Demag Cranes and Components, first as head of product development, he promoted the use of microprocessors and electronics for manual and automated motion control. Biewald now heads up the effort to maintain the international electrical machine safety standard IEC 60204-32 when not working as head of the special cranes order processing department. In his spare time, Biewald also acts as head of European trade association FEM's electric overhead travelling cranes group.

FABIO FIORINO, president, R&M Materials Handling

With his work experience of North, Central and South America, Fabio Fiorino has some of the broadest experience of the full extent of the Americas of anyone in the crane industry. As North America considers extending the Free Trade zone, Fiorino will remain at the forefront of the industry.

Born in Argentina, Fiorino's family moved to Montreal when he was nine. After obtaining an engineering degree at McGill, he worked in the atomic energy industry, went back to McGill for an MBA, and then moved to Burlington, Ontario, where he first joined Crane Pro Services in marketing.

Three years later, he was appointed to a project to analyse the Central and South American market for opportunities.

When that finished up, he moved to the USA, to become president of R&M Material Handling.

Since then, he has been made president of controls manufacturer Drivecon and development director of KCI's standard lifting equipment business.



JUHA ERIKKILA, managing director, Erikkila Nostotekniikka Oy



You might expect that the Finnish national committee of FEM (Fédération Européenne de la Manutention) would be chaired by a senior executive of Finland's very own global giant, KCI Konecranes. But no - that privilege belongs to Juha Erikkilä, who heads a small but innovative family business with just 18 employees in Finland and a further 24 in Estonia. The firm began as a trading company founded by his grandfather in 1912. It started to focus on importing lifting equipment in 1976 and soon began to produce its own light crane systems. Since that time the company has secured important patents for its ergonomic handling devices, including the Robsystem (1989) and the Ergolator (1995).



Erikkila said he came up with a recent safety improvement to his light crane system in a dream. "You cannot invent by inventing," he said. "You invent by experience."

LARS FREDRIKSSON



Lars Fredriksson has been described as "the most enthusiastic man in lifting". He has been with Gunnebo



for many years but his foremost claim to fame is inventing Gunnebo's GrabiQ system for crane rigging. Introduced in 2000, the GrabiQ system has the twin virtues of being simpler and safer than previous lifting tackle. A four-leg sling with a shortening function, which previously required up to 15 separate components, can be handled by GrabiQ with just three. "There are hundreds of clever inventors all over the world who have presented smart solutions for our industry," says Jan Sandberg, manager of Gunnebo Industrier in Gemla and project manager for GrabiQ. "But I reckon that Lars Fredriksson is in a class of his own when it comes to finding optimal solutions which are also commercially successful."

ACE GHANEMI, founder, Ace World Companies

Texan Ace Ghanemi founded one of the USA's largest independent hoist manufacturers.

Ace's specialty has become heavy-duty hoists and cranes. With the company's recent Terminator and Eliminator hoist ranges, the company has standardised production to lower costs for built-up hoists that would need to be custom-designed.

Ghanemi, a professional engineer, started work in 1975 at material handling manufacturer Bowlin Engineering Co. He gained experience in all of the company's different operations - first in manufacture as an engineer, then product design and customer service as product manager, and then quality control, management and purchasing as plant manager. The broad experience set him up well for managing his own firm, which he set up in 1987.



JOE GIBBS, sales & marketing manager, Acco Chain & Lifting

One of the highlights of Joe Gibbs' career came in the early 1990s, when he was still working under mentor Bob Reisinger. Gibbs would work with that professional engineer and long-standing member of US ASME B30 standards committee, now retired, for a total of 24 years. Together, they re-worked the old Work-Rated hoist line from the 1970s and finished with the Speedway line. Reisinger was responsible for the engineering, and Gibbs helped make sure the design fit the market needs. The project also spanned a transition in Gibbs's career into his current role, sales and marketing manager. "When I took over in 1996, the market was not great, but we have done well," he says, due to the Speedway wire rope hoist. Gibbs was president of the US Monorail Manufacturers' Association in 2004-5.



VICENTE GUERRA, managing director of Industrias Electromecanicas GH

There are not many crane company founders left. But Vicente Guerra, managing director of Spanish crane builder and hoist manufacturer GH, still works for the company he founded with three brothers in 1952. In the early years, motivated by a lack of cash, the company made anything that there was market demand for - washing machines, radios, agricultural machinery and forklifts, among others. "We could have tried planes, but we never did," he said recently. "If you have nothing, you have to think. If you have everything, you don't think," he said. That drive and intelligence has carried the company from selling to the Basque region to now an international business selling 2,000 cranes per year.



JEAN-MAXIME GUHUR, managing director, Verlinde

Over his 15-year tenure, Guhur has developed the Vernouillet factory into one of the most important hoist manufacturing sites in Europe. Since 2001, Guhur has also been director of KCI Light Lifting Equipment (chain hoists).

In 1858, Léon Verlinde supplied the French navy with what he called a 'wormscrew hoist'; the factory began making electric hoists and winches in 1918. Its current output capacity is 40,000 electric chain hoists, 25,000 lever hoists and chain blocks and 3,000 electric wire rope hoists per year.



STIG GUSTAVSON, chairman, KCI Konecranes



In June 2005 Stig Gustavson turned 60 and retired from his position as president and CEO of KCI Konecranes and moved 'upstairs' to become chairman of the board. In the 11 years since leading the management buyout of Kone Corporation's crane interests, he has grown turnover fivefold to close to a billion euros and firmly established the company as a global powerhouse. This has been achieved by cost reduction through outsourcing and moving production to low cost countries (including China), targeting and encouraging the growth market of maintenance services - KCI now has a quarter of a million lifting units under service contracts worldwide - as well as through more than 40 acquisitions.



Gustavson is a recent past chairman of FEM and the Federation of Finnish Metal Engineering and Electronic Industries.

With a 3.1% stake, he also remains the largest individual shareholder in Konecranes.

Gustavson has made the 250m Finnish Marks (Euro 42m) that was invested in the buyout from former parent company Kone Oy look like a very good deal for the investors.

WALTER HEINRICH, crane technology inspector, Inspecta

Walter Heinrich is one of the few people who has contributed to the safety of industrial and construction cranes from every angle: as crane designer, standards developer and as safety inspector. His breadth of experience has given him an equally broad perspective on cranes and hoists.

Walter Heinrich started his 40-year long career as a special crane designer. He worked for more than 12 years at Sweden's Hvilans Mek Verkstad, today owned by KCI Konecranes. In about 1970 he began work on his life's work, crane inspection, for many years for the Det Norske Veritas organisation, and its new owner, the Finnish firm Inspecta.

He has worked on the CEN standard committee on slewing jib cranes, and has developed technical standards on building deck cranes for the Swedish Navy, and repairing high-tensile steels of mobile cranes. Heinrich has also served as chairman of the testing and certification trade body CEOC for three years.



TSUTOMU HASHIMOTO, R&D division general manager, Kito

Tsutomu Hashimoto, aged 58, has been general manager of Kito's development and technology division since 1991. He joined the company in 1986, and from 1990 to 1996 he made major contributions to launch the operations of Kito Inc. in the USA as general manager. Back in Japan, he served as manager of technical control, then general manager of quality assurance while playing a key role in international relations, particularly with Europe and the USA. Beyond Kito, he is a member of the Japan Society of Industrial Machinery Manufacturers, is secretary of the Japan National Committee for ISO/TC111, and also is deputy of Japanese Fibre Sling Manufacturers' Association.



DIETRICH HOFFMANN, founder, Hoffmann Foerdertechnik

In January 1948, at the young age of 21, Dietrich Hoffmann set up a company in central Germany producing agricultural machinery. By 1953 he had launched his first electric chain hoist.

Under the communist government of East Germany the company became the property of the state, but Hoffmann was one of the first businessmen to buy back his company from state after reunification with West Germany. Now aged 80, he remains an exceptionally gifted engineer, say colleagues and competitors alike.

These days the company is primarily represented by dynamic managing director Matthias Huehn, who has developed the Liftket brand of electric chain hoists into an increasingly global player within the industry.



LONGLIN HUANG, general manager, Jiangyin-Kito Crane Co

With its market of 100,000 hoists and 30,000 cranes, China is attractive for any crane vendor. But there are huge disparities between the high-volume, low-price domestic market and higher-priced international marketplace.



Spanning that divide is Longlin Huang. An employee of the Jiangyin Machinery Factory since 1979, he worked his way up to factory manager in 1988. In 1995, he helped set up a joint venture with Japanese manufacturer Kito that was an 80/20 split - mostly owned by Kito, but 20% by Huang and a few other top managers. As the Chinese economy continues to boom, this factory has become more and more important to the domestic market - it makes 20,000 Kaicheng-brand hoists a year. A month ago, Kito announced plans to increase its presence in Jiangyin and increase the volume and the quality of hoist production. Huang will become the company's top man in China.

KIMMO HYTÖNEN, founder, Innocrane

Kimmo Hytönen established Innocrane in 1992, fresh out of university, where he had undertaken scientific research into the dynamic control of mechanical systems and obtained various patents for algorithms that proved key to reducing and preventing load sway. Over the next 10 years Innocrane sold more than 500 licenses for its ICRAS a control system, which prevents load sway by optimising acceleration and deceleration. In 2002, KCI Konecranes bought a license to use the ICRAS algorithm in its own anti-sway systems - a significant vote of confidence for the Innocrane product - and paving the way for it to become a standard product on all industrial cranes. In the same year Street Crane also came on board with the technology and became exclusive UK supplier of the ICRAS system.



MIKE JAMES, vice president, distribution, Morris Material Handling Inc

Over his 37 years at Morris, Michael James has worked on the most important issues of the industrial crane industry. Early on, he specialised in electronics engineering, earning a degree in 1975 - six years after he started work at Morris. He was instrumental in the development of the P&H Smartorque variable frequency drive crane controls, and holds two patents. But his roles were not only technical. In the 1990s, he went back to business school to receive certificates from Duke University. He established the Phoenix division, a remanufacturing operation, and numerous sales and marketing programs. He also started a distribution and service business.



HARALD JOOS



Although a relative newcomer to the crane industry (he signed up in December 2003) Harald Joos is still in the driver's seat as the CEO of Demag Cranes and Components.

Already in his tenure he has made major structural changes to the company. "My role is to be the change manager, and the manager who leads the company in a new direction has to bring trust and confidence in the total organisation," he told Hoist in 2004. Then, he said that the company needed to extend into the entry-level segment from its dominance in the high end, and to cut costs.

Things seem to be going his way. In the current positive crane environment, the company's performance has improved - its 2004/2005 financial year results - Euro 660m sales - were up 6% compared with the previous year, with 300 fewer employees.

Now that majority share owners US venture capital firm Kohlberg Kravis Roberts is likely to launch the company on the stock market, Joos becomes all the more important to the company's success as the Demag figurehead.



HERB LADDS

Ladds was instrumental in the worldwide growth of the Columbus McKinnon Corp. He led the charge to grow through acquisitions, including the major purchases of Lift-Tech and Coffing Hoists. He also added numerous complementary products to the offering during his term, including manipulators, forged hooks and shackles, and numerous below-the-hook lifting devices.

He served as president of CM from 1982 until 1998, as CEO from 1986 to 1998, and served as chairman of the board of directors from 1998 until August 2005. He currently serves on three corporate committees.



JEFFREY KAHN, president, Whiting



In 1983 a management group purchased Whiting Corporation from its former parent. As the financial guy in the group, Jeffrey Kahn, who had come out to Whiting two and a half years earlier, structured the buyout, developed a business model to pitch to the bankers, arranged the financing terms and negotiated the sale.

After good results were achieved by Whiting for the remainder of the 1980s, the early 90s were difficult for heavy industry. In 1994, Kahn assumed Whiting's presidency, succeeding retiring Raymond Gibson. The organization was quickly restructured to meet the company's new customer-focused mission statement.

In 2000 the company moved from Harvey, Illinois, where it had been for 107 years, to a state-of-the-art manufacturing facility site sixteen miles away in Monee, Illinois. Prior to the move, Kahn brought in outside expertise to train Whiting personnel in lean manufacturing. He realized that replacing an aging facility was just a small part of the answer, and that many processes also needed to be changed to assure future success.

Kahn's vision has transformed an old-line crane company and set the standard for US special crane manufacturing.



HEINZ-HELMUT KEMPKES, owner, Kuli Hebezeuge

Heinz-Helmut Kempkes not only leads the European hoisting industry, but participates in it as well. The mechanical engineer currently serves in the top posts of the two biggest European trade associations for materials handling. He is president of the FEM - Fédération Européenne de la Manutention -



and the chairman of the German materials handling and logistics technology association (VDMA). He is also a first vice president of the German standards organisation (DIN). Furthermore, Kempkes is a board member of the German factory crane service organisation, the Gütegemeinschaft Kranservice (GKS).



CHAI CHON KIM, managing director, MPH Cranes (Far East)

Although one of Asia's biggest crane businessmen is now working for Morris (P&H), he has spent 20 years working at the forefront of KCI Konecranes in Asia.

In fact, after getting an engineering degree in Canada, Chai Chon Kim started his career in the crane industry working for MHE Demag in Singapore. He switched to Konecranes after three years, and soon was running the business, at the time the company's primary outpost in Asia.

Then, after moving continents to spend four years working in Australia, he moved to China in 1999, where as managing director of KCI Konecranes (Shanghai) he helped start up the company's new Shanghai manufacturing facility until 2002.



YOSHIO KITO, president, Kito Corporation

Kito of Japan produces 30,000 electric chain hoists a year and 150,000 manual and lever hoists, generating \$220m in sales last year, aided by strongly performing subsidiaries in North America and China.

Until 2003, Kito was a publicly listed company with 25% of the shares held by the Kito family. Now it is a subsidiary of US venture capital group Carlyle, but there will be no culture gap between the American owners and the American-educated president of the company.

Yoshio Kito, grandson of the founder, took over from his uncle Shinjiro as president on 1 January 2006. At the same time, Shinjiro Kito moved up to chairman, a position previously held by Yoshio's father Ryoichiro Kito.

Yoshio Kito joined the company in 1988 after graduating from the University of Utah, Salt Lake City in the USA and training in accountancy in the States. He has degrees in both engineering and business.

ARI KIVINIITTY, chief technology officer, KCI Konecranes

Ari Kiviniitty joined Konecranes in 1983 and in recent years has been R&D manager, run the hoist factory, and vice president of the Standard Lifting Equipment division.

He was promoted to chief technology officer last year. Kiviniitty headed up the project team that developed the CXT hoist platform that is sold direct and through subsidiary companies. He is also chairman of Technology Industries of Finland Working Group for Materials Handling and Hoisting Equipment and head of the FEM's factory crane statistics unit.



STEVE KLOSTERMEYER, Sales and marketing director, Stanley Cobotics

The company Cobotics, derived from the words 'collaborative robotics', was established in 1997 by Edward Colgate and Michael Peshkin, two professors from Northwestern University in Illinois, USA. They had developed the technology for a servo-powered intelligent assist device during research funded by Ford and General Motors.

Steve Klostermeyer was charged with marketing and promoting the product at the outset of its product life cycle, a task he has undertaken with energy and enthusiasm. Cobotics describes itself as "the global market leader in the large fast-growing market for IADs". Although this remains a small market, the potential is huge, given that intelligent assist devices present a more flexible option than full automation with robots, and a more productive option than conventional mechanical handling. This potential was recognised by Stanley Assembly Technologies, which acquired Cobotics in 2003. On takeover, Cobotics president and CEO Paul Decker left the company, but Klostermeyer stayed on board and retains a central role in the promotion of this innovative technology, not just for Stanley but for the industry as a whole.

JIM NELSON, crane project manager, PaR Nuclear

Jim Nelson started his career in 1974 with Ederer and is now the crane project manager for PaR Nuclear, an associate company of Ederer Cranes in Seattle, USA. Jim began in engineering, and soon advanced to cost estimating, sales engineering and sales management.

His extensive experience in all phases of crane design, layout, estimating and technical sales of custom engineered cranes and other heavy equipment have been instrumental in crane development at Ederer and for PaR Nuclear. Nelson is recognised as an industry expert in design and application of single-failure-proof hoists and cranes for use in nuclear power plants and other critical lift installations. He also sits on several national committees for establishing crane specifications in the US crane industry. He has chaired positions at the Crane Manufacturers' Association of America, American Society of Mechanical Engineers, and Committee on Cranes for Nuclear Facilities.

**WILFRIED NEUHAUS-GALLADE, managing director, JD Neuhaus**

When Wilfried Neuhaus-Gallade took over as managing director of JD Neuhaus in 1986, he became the seventh generation of his family to head the company founded in 1745 as a smithy by Johann Diederich Neuhaus. In 1952, J. Diederich Neuhaus substituted an air motor for the traditional chain blocks. By 1986, the company needed restructuring and a new direction. Coal mining was the core market for JDN air hoists for many years, but with the decline of that industry the company needed to find new markets in offshore, shipbuilding and general industrial applications. Neuhaus-Gallade set up a worldwide sales network and founded subsidiaries in the USA, France, England and Singapore, and pushed exports to above 70% of the company's turnover. He is also a board member of the VDMA and the vice-president of the Chinese Industry and Trade Association.

**DR. BERND NEUPERT, consultant**

As head of Demag's crane components technical department for 14 years, Neupert has had a hand in generations of Demag lifting equipment. He helped develop a generic wheel block travel drive system, a rope hoist, series designs of rope and chain hoists, mechanical gears and controls. (Early in his career, he designed standard cranes for Cologne-based industrial equipment firm Pohligh Heckel Bleichert).

No surprise then that he holds several patents. He also holds standards. He collaborated with Top 50 member Ilkka Riikonen on another standard, EN 13135-2, 'Non-electrical Equipment of Cranes'. But his experience, and his influence, extends beyond cranes. Since 1997 he has been the convener of the CEN group for power driven hoists and winches, which has developed two major new international standards (EN 14492-1) on winches and hoists, likely to be issued in 2006. Although he left Demag in 2004, he continues to lead this standards group.

**STEVE KOSIR**

Canadian-born professional engineer Steve Kosir has been working for KCI Konecranes since 1987, most as president of Konecranes Americas based in Houston, Texas.

Kosir has recently been leading the Canadian Standards Association (CSA) working group revising the B167-96 Canadian crane standards. The CSA standard had been previously based on US-based standards, but the group has made a big decision to break with the US standards and adopt international ISO 4301 standards.

MICHAEL PARNELL, President, Industrial Training International

Trainer, expert witness, inspector, consultant - if it relates to rigging, Mike Parnell has done it.

In 1986, Parnell moved to Industrial Training International, where he organises training for rigging jobs, and operating construction cranes and overhead cranes. He is a main voting member of the American Association of Mechanical Engineers, and members of the ASME B30.9 standards subcommittees for slings and rigging hardware. His training programs have earned him a reputation as a guru of lifting practices.

**HARRY OLLILA, Chief executive, KCI Konecranes north-east Asia**

When 56 year old Harry Ollila moved from Finland to China last September, it was to take on one of the biggest jobs in the industry - chief executive of Konecranes North East Asia, including responsibility for Konecranes' factory in Shanghai.

Ollila joined Konecranes in 1991 and by 2002, when he was already regional executive in charge of Europe, he was promoted to the additional role of head of group development, responsible for business development, human resources development, group IT and R&D.

Such is the global spread of the company, numerous Konecranes senior managers could have made it on to this list, including Arto Juosila, group vice president, administration and business development, and Ollila's predecessor as the Konecranes man in Shanghai.

The selection of Ollila reflects the growing importance of China, both as a market and as a manufacturing centre for lifting equipment.



DR. THOMAS PEUKERT, managing director, production

Over the past four years, R. Stahl Foerdertechnik's managing director Thomas Peukert restructured the production and reoriented the marketing of the company's hoist and crane manufacturing plants in Kuenzelsau and Ettlingen, Germany. As the market has improved slightly, the reorganised company was proven to be a bargain for its new owners KCI Konecranes.

Peukert, a doctor of engineering, was previously managing director of elevator manufacturer Thyssen Aufzuege. As managing director for production and technology at Stahl CraneSystems, he leads the development of a growing and dynamic brand under the Konecranes umbrella.

**DAVID REH**
GORBEL
 A CLASS ABOVE

David Reh founded Gorbel as a jib-crane manufacturing company in 1977. Since then, he has transformed the company into a one-stop shop for workstation lifting equipment. The company has diversified into enclosed-track bridge cranes. It then moved into the lifting machine itself, developing and manufacturing a range of computer-controlled hoists (G-Force), later integrated into jib cranes (Easy Arm).



Workstation cranes have helped save the backs of hundreds of labourers who had been used to manually lifting equipment on workbenches, or into a sub-assembly. And their manufacturers, working with safety researchers, have extended cranes into smaller and smaller applications.

This year, Reh has been elected to the board of governors of the US Material Handling Industry trade association.

ANDREW PIMBLETT, managing director, Street

The UK's largest producer of factory cranes, Street ships about 1,400 wire rope and chain hoists per year. Thanks to extensive promotional efforts under Pimblett's leadership, Street sales topped \$20m last year. Pimblett's successful expansion strategy has been based on traditional distribution methods and supplying crane kits and components to strategic partners overseas.

Now 52, Pimblett joined Street as a 15 year old apprentice and worked his way up, becoming sales director at 27 and managing director ten years later.

**MIKE REUPERT**, head of ISO and quality assurance programmes, Morris Material Handling Inc

Chief engineer of Morris Material Handling for 15 years (1987-2003), Mike Reupert has particularly influenced the development of special cranes in the USA over his 37 years of experience at the company.

He has worked as a design engineer, product engineer and project engineer, and has designed charging cranes, gantry cranes, stacker cranes, log-handling and container handling portal cranes, reactor room and fuel handling powerhouse cranes, refuse and coke handling bucket cranes, and many industrial cranes.

He has served as the chairman of the P&H patent committee and product safety committee.

But he has also influenced the industry. During his time as a member of the ASME structural subcommittee, he wrote design code for cranes in nuclear facilities.

ILKKA RIIKONEN, Senior Chief Engineer, KCI Konecranes

Ilkka Riikonen has worked in engineering, research and development for Konecranes for 30 years. He has also contributed vast amounts of time and energy to the development of European and international standards. He was chairman of the ISO technical committee for bridge and gantry cranes -TC96/SC9 - from 1983 to 2003.

Riikonen was also president of the European Material Handling Federation (FEM) heavy lifting equipment section in from 1994 to 1996 and is currently convener of the European Committee for Standardisation committee CEN TC 147 Work Group 4 'Cranes: Safety: Bridge and Gantry Cranes.' In 2004 the ISO awarded him its Certificate of Appreciation in recognition of his contributions to the profession. The award prompted his colleague Harry Ollila to respond: "Ilkka Riikonen can be considered an international master in structural crane analysis whose work has been widely recognised and has significantly increased the harmonisation of standards in the crane industry."

JACK STINNETT, president, Morris Material Handling

A year after Jack Stinnett joined Morris Material Handling in 1999, it filed for Chapter 11 bankruptcy protection. The company survived, and so did Stinnett, a veteran industrial executive with a decade of work at component manufacturer TRW. It was testament to his leadership that the company kept going, and remained independent of some of its bigger competitors, in the consolidations that engulfed the industry at the time. Stinnett, a professional engineer, graduated from the US Naval Academy and served five years as an officer in the Navy.

NEIL SKOGLAND, crane segment manager, Ederer

Neil Skogland joined Ederer in 1979 as a part-time engineer while attending the University of Washington's Mechanical Engineering Co-Op program. During his college days, Skogland would also on occasion be called to work the nightshift at the Seattle shipyard docks as a "fill-in" longshoreman. In 1998 he reached the top of Ederer and became its president. In 2003 Ederer was acquired by PaR Systems, Inc. He is also executive delegate to CMAA and a member of the Association of Retractable Roof Operations Worldwide.

Over the years, Neil has gained an industry reputation as an expert in the application of custom cranes and heavy material handling equipment and automation, working for such customers as the US military, NASA and Boeing. In addition to his management duties, Neil continues to take on design and estimating for a range of special projects at Ederer ranging from the control system for a retractable roof of a baseball stadium to the 375 US ton bridge crane that is used to mate the space shuttle to the external fuel tank for launch.



TIMOTHY TEVENS, president and CEO of Columbus McKinnon

Yale, Abell Howe, Budgit, Chester Hoist, Coffing, Shaw-Box, Gaffey and LodeRail are all leading brands in the industry, and they are all part of \$500m-turnover Columbus McKinnon Corporation. At the head of this group is Tim Tevens.

Having started his career in management consultancy with Ernst & Young LLP, Tevens joined CM in 1991 as vice president for information services to introduce new IT systems for the company. He became chief operating officer in 1996, in charge of all day-to-day worldwide operations of CM's manufacturing facilities and distribution network. He was also directly responsible for planning and implementing the numerous acquisitions that were made, including Yale. In 1998, still aged just 41, he succeeded Herb Ladds as president and CEO. With the downturn in the market and acquisitions to integrate, Tevens has faced many difficult decisions. Through it all, he has kept CM as an industry leader that is respected worldwide. Tevens is also president of the USA's Industrial Supply Association.



HAL VANDIVER, vice president - business development, MHIA

Over the past decade, Hal has been key in the US trade association the MHIA as managing director of the Crane Manufacturers Association of America (CMAA), Hoist Manufacturers Institute (HMI) and Monorail Manufacturers Association (MMA). Over this period the groups have faced some of the most challenging times in their long existence – particularly globalization, consolidation and severe business cycles.

Under Hal's stewardship all three groups have transformed themselves from largely tactical organisations producing technical content with a national focus to more balanced organisations with more strategic objectives and international work programmes. Building and maintaining an industry consensus in such transformation is a complicated and fragile process and requires special leadership.



CHARLES TOTTEN, sales representative

Charles Totten came to work at Morris one month after the International Steel Group completed its purchase of Bethlehem's assets, in June 2003. He spent 37 years managing cranes at Bethlehem Steel's Burns Harbour, Indiana plant. By the time he left, he was superintendent of the site's 750-person centralised maintenance department. He has also shared his experiences as a crane user with the Association of Iron and Steel Technology. He has served as the chairman of the AIST's subcommittee number 6, electric overhead travelling cranes, and has also chaired the cranes operating committee of the AIST. Totten is currently serving on the AIST's board of directors.



ULRICH VORPAHL, Detroit CEO

Berlin-born Ulrich Vorpahl has led the traditional US hoist manufacturing market since he acquired Detroit Hoist in 1991. With their mechanical load brake and low-maintenance design, Detroit hoists take a different tack than the lighter European-style hoists that have become popular over the past decade in the USA. But this traditional firm is in fact led by a Berliner. Vorpahl was born and raised in Berlin, and worked in Africa for Demag and then acquired an SWF distributorship. In 1978 he left and emigrated to Canada, and acquired Detroit Hoist & Crane in 1991, where he remains president and CEO.

KLAUS VETTER, managing director, Vetter

Vetter Foerdertechnik is the archetypal German Mittelstand - long established, relatively small, family-owned industrial enterprise. Vetter was founded as a smithy for the mining industry in 1869 but by the early 1960s mining was in decline. Young managing director Klaus Vetter, who took over in 1962, decided to restructure the company and build column- and wall-mounted slewing jib cranes as well as forks for lift trucks.

Forty-four years later Klaus Vetter is still managing director and has grown the company to an annual turnover of more than Euro 30m and a world leader in jib cranes, producing more than 3,000 slewing cranes a year.

One of Klaus Vetter's greatest contributions to the industry in Germany, however, was the establishment of the Guetegemeinschaft Kranservice (GKS), a trade association for crane service companies that has set standards to which member companies commit themselves. In this way Vetter has helped raise standards and drive out rogue elements from crane servicing.



DR. GERHARD WAGNER, rector of Ruhr University, Bochum

Dr Wagner has spanned the divide between academia and industry. After finishing his doctorate in mechanical engineering, he was head of crane engineering at Donges Stahlbau, then section chief and procurement officer for Mannesmann Demag and then, from 1987 to 1989, worked as managing director of MAN GHH Krantechnik in Heilbronn. He took up the chair for Machine Elements and Mechanical Conveying and Handling at Ruhr University in 1989 and became dean of the faculty in 1993. He was appointed rector of the university in December 2002. He is convener of CEN TC 147 working group WG2 Design - general. He is also a long-serving member of the Academic Association of Machine Elements and Construction Theory (WGMK) since 1990.



WOLFGANG WEGENER, MD, Yale

The managing director of Yale Industrial Products first started the job 20 years ago. Wegener has set up a network of distribution companies in Europe and Africa, and manufacturing operations in the UK and China. He is currently head of Yale operations in Europe, Africa and Asia. Over his career, he has broadened the range of product, broadened the manufacturing base and broadened the reach of the company.

NEAL WILSON, president of Texas-based Proserv-Anchor

Wilson is head of the largest independent crane builder in the US, in the largest hoist market in the US – Texas. His biggest local competitor, like so many crane builders around the world, is Konecranes Americas. Forty-seven year-old Wilson worked for all of the local competition, Kranko, then Landel. He rose in the company to the post of vice president, sales, when it was taken over by KCI Konecranes in 1987. He left to start up on his own a year later. "I'm not a person that likes to work for huge companies," Wilson told Hoist in 2004. "In my early career I worked at Brown & Root [the construction and engineering contractor] for a year, and I was just a number. I didn't want to be a number again."