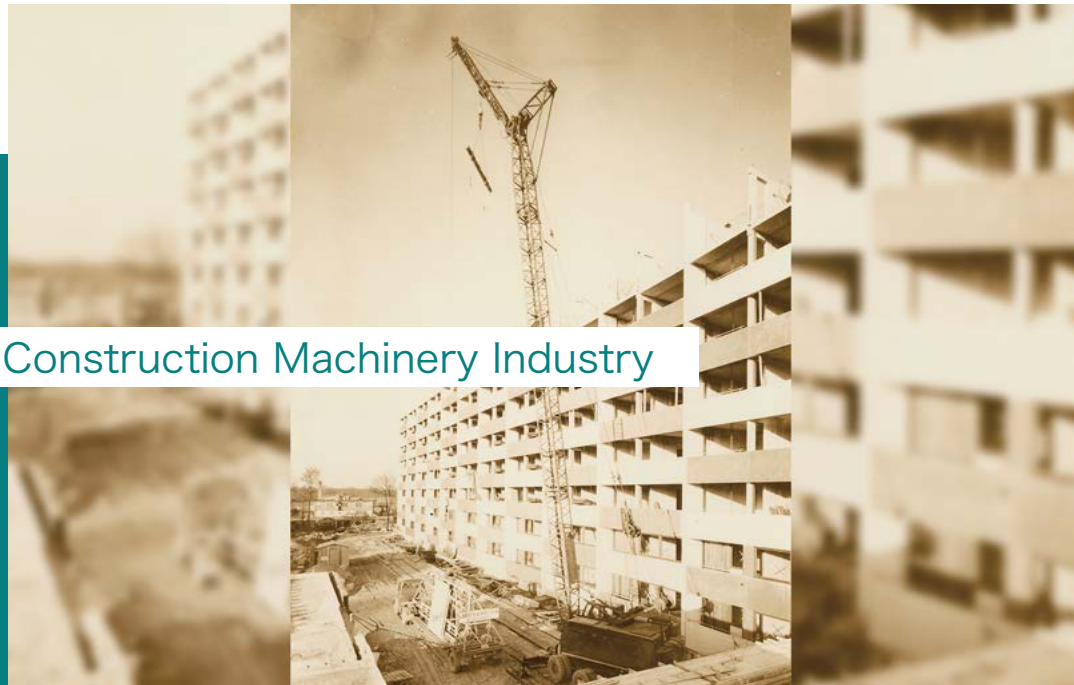


1940-1960s

A Challenger in the Construction Machinery Industry

Mobile Crane

KM200 Type Mobile Crane in a residential construction site



Japan does not have a long history of construction machinery, and much of it was developed after World War II. Kubota, who had led in many fields, also entered the industry in 1953, renaming the company name Kubota Tekko Co., Ltd. This was a declaration of Kubota's commitment to supporting Japan's infrastructure development.

Increased Momentum for Domestic Production of Construction Machinery. Industrial Infrastructure Develops at an Accelerated Pace

Since 1950, as Japan made progress in postwar reconstruction, the development of the electric power system was in full swing. As the construction of large-scale electricity-generating dams took place throughout Japan, large construction machines imported from Europe and the US were employed in major construction sites, creating increased momentum for domestic machinery production. Moreover, in addition to developing electric power sources, massive other projects to build the industrial infrastructure rose, one after another—building highways and transportation/communication networks, reinforcing port facilities, and constructing petrochemical complexes. In 1953, Kubota established Kubota Construction Machinery Co., Ltd. and started designing and selling products, focusing on power shovels. Utilizing the technology and experience building mining winches, it entered the construction machinery industry.



Non-hydraulic Excavator KB60 loading at a construction site



The KM40 Type Mobile Crane tested at the Mukogawa machinery plant

The Leading Actor of Construction Sites is the Mobile Crane. Kubota, an Industry Rookie, Tops the Domestic Market Share

Mobile cranes, having no restriction to its move above ground, became the mainstream equipment for movement of materials in major urban construction sites, and its sales rose exponentially. In 1956, Kubota developed the 4 ton Mobile Crane KM40 for port use. It built the Mukogawa machinery plant as a mass production facility and gained a foothold in the market. The following year, with a subsidy from the Department of Transportation, it developed the KM80 Type Mobile Crane, an 8-ton mobile crane, before any other company. In time, Kubota developed a series of mobile cranes and gained the top share in the domestic mobile crane market. In addition, we began producing attachments, entering the field of public works.

Next Story

1960-1970s

The Arrival of the “Building a New Japan” Boom

The “Building a New Japan” boom, which occurred amidst rapid economic growth, prompted many construction projects around the country. The demand for construction machinery also grew substantially, and intense competition between machinery manufacturers rose. Furthermore, construction machinery further evolved with the introduction of hydraulic technology.

Scroll to See Next Story



1960-1970s

The Progress in Hydraulic Technology Bringing Dynamic Progress to Construction Machinery

Hydraulic Shovel

The hydraulic Kubota Excavator Atlas handling earthwork



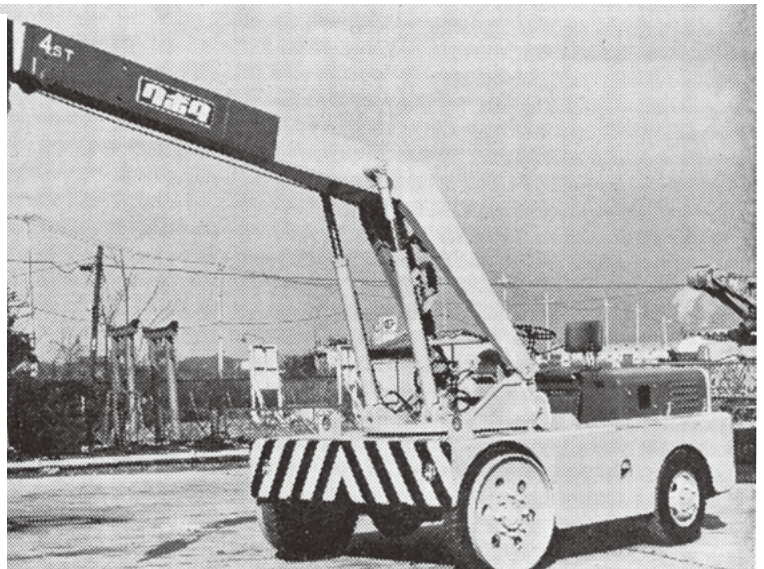
As rapid growth led way to an economic boom in late 1960s, the construction machinery industry achieved dynamic development. Behind this was the progress made in hydraulic technology, which was introduced from Europe around 1960. The hydraulic system was compact and light with excellent maneuverability. It was widely used for large equipment, greatly enhancing their quality standards.

With Advancements in Hydraulic Technology, Competition Intensifies Among Major Competitors. Kubota Also Releases its First Hydraulic Shovel, Atlas

One of the greatest factors for the development of the construction machinery industry since 1965, amid the economic boom, was the advancement in hydraulic technology introduced from Europe around 1960. Although compact and lightweight, the hydraulic system demonstrated great power and was widely used for such equipment as power shovels and truck cranes, enhancing the performance and quality of heavy equipment. Ceasing this opportunity, Kubota signed a partnership agreement with Weyhausen company in West Germany in 1966 and resolved to develop Kubota's first hydraulic shovel, Atlas, as a flagship model.

The "Building a New Japan" Boom—The Demand for Hydraulic Shovel Rises and Competition in the Industry Intensifies

The following year in 1967, we started manufacturing Atlas shovels at the Hirakata machinery plant. In the hydraulic shovel market, in which Mitsubishi Heavy Industries and Hitachi first dominated, Kubota and Sumitomo Heavy Industries entered, escalating the competition. In 1972, amid the "Building a New Japan" boom, the demand for hydraulic shovels greatly increased. Although Kubota entered the market later, hydraulic mobile crane KMH-305 for construction works was able to acquire a stable number of orders and fared well in the market. Kubota exported mechanical mobile cranes to the Soviet Union and China in large quantities between 1970 and 1971; however, this did not turn around its overall business performance.



Hydraulic mobile crane KMH-305 for construction works at a subway construction site



An equipment assembly line in the Hirakata machinery plant after moving the manufacturing hub in 1973

Reestablishing the Construction Machinery Business by Focusing on “Compactness.” Reforming Our Manufacturing Hub and Distribution System

Although the industry thrived with the “Building a New Japan” boom, Kubota, who entered the market later, faced an uphill battle. In 1973, in order to rebuild its business, it implemented a policy focusing on “compactness.” At the time, small-scale construction projects increased with urbanization. As there were limits to doing construction work, such as digging and loading, by manpower alone, the sales of walk behind dozers increased. In the same year, we renewed our organization, manufacturing hub, and distribution system and established a “continuous flow manufacturing according to its demand” system. In 1974, we developed the mini excavator KH1 with 360 degree turning structure, which became the base for Kubota’s mini excavators. As an equipment suited for small-scale urban construction work, this shovel became a popular product.

Next Story

1970-1980s

Overcoming the Oil Crisis

With the first oil crisis in 1973, the economy experienced a sharp downturn, and the demand for large-scale construction machinery also showed a sudden drop. At the same time, strict regulations were put in place to control noise and vibration at construction sites, starting a transition to equipment appropriate for a new era that departed from the conventional thinking that prioritized efficiency.

Scroll to See Next Story



1970-1980s

From Large to Small—Creating the Foundation for Today's Kubota Construction Machinery

KH Series

The mini excavator KH1 with 360 degree turning structure, which later became the base for Kubota Mini Excavator



Upon the first oil crisis, Kubota committed itself to structural improvements, such as strengthening its business performance, reforming its organizational structure, and pursuing energy and resource efficiency. Based on the principle of "a company established on solid grounds of technology," we promoted advanced and basic research, emphasized innovation, and built the foundation for today's research and development stance.

Drop in Demand Due to Oil Crisis. Developing Small Construction Machinery as the Third Pillar

Due to the oil crisis in autumn of 1973, the demand for machinery suddenly decreased. As it reviewed the manufacturing system and marketability of large construction machinery, Kubota decided to terminate the production of Kubota Excavator "Atlas" as it concluded its collaboration with Weyhausen company in 1976. It also decided to end its production of mobile cranes for port use and truck cranes, taking measures to care for existing clients and business partners. At the time, the target of construction projects shifted to improving living environments, and small-scale urban construction works increased, resulting in the growing sales of Kubota's mini excavators. Thus, Kubota determined to develop small construction machinery as the third pillar of its business, along with agricultural machinery and iron pipes.

With a New Business Structure and Specialized Factory, the Mini Excavator Makes Its Way Through the Market and Construction Sites

In 1979, a new Construction Machinery Business Division opened, integrating technology, sales, and production. In the same year, we built a factory dedicated to small construction machinery inside the Hirakata machinery plant with robotic welding and a crawler shoe processing line and implemented a manufacturing system that made possible small lot production. With a multiplied output of 750 machineries per month, the factory produced mini excavator series products such as KH5H and KH90, supporting urban construction works, which focused on improving living environments, and small-scale construction projects issued by municipal governments. Kubota, which was in the small construction machinery market from the start, exerted a strong presence with its competitiveness.



Mini Excavator KH5H being transferred to an electric cable installation site by a helicopter



Mini excavator KH90 at a narrow construction site near Osaka Stadium

Developing Machinery Designed for a 20th Century Urban Environment—Pleasant to People and the City, Pursuing Simplicity in Operation

In 1979, the world faced a second oil crisis. As material resources grew scarce and their price rose, the government called on its people to conserve energy and resources. Kubota promoted changes in its products, market, and awareness among employees. Construction workers and clients started to consider environmentally conscious solutions and machinery with small radius turns. In 1980, in order to respond to such demands, Kubota expanded its mini excavator lineup. It released the Mini excavator KH007 with a compact body, providing high performance in tight construction sites, and KX012/KX014, which enabled operation in the inner city or during the night with an ultra noise reduction system.

Next Story

1990-

Rising Consideration for the Global Environment and Evolving Construction Machinery

As we entered the 1990s, the serious impact on the natural environment caused by industries became apparent and recognized as a global issue that needed to be immediately addressed. Strict legal restrictions, such as emissions regulation, spread to the construction machinery industry, and construction machinery changed according to the time.

Scroll to See Next Story



1990-

To Asia, to Europe. Kubota's Construction Machinery Striding Around the Globe

KINGLEV Series, KX080, CTL, SSL

Kubota's mini excavator at a renovation site in Shanghai, China



Since 2003, having withstood the period of instability following the bubble economy, the entire company focused on strengthening the business foundation for public sector contract works and promoting a global growth strategy. The establishment of overseas manufacturing and distribution centers, as well as product development for local consumers became our foothold for seizing the European and Asian markets, which generated sales for Kubota overseas.

Quiet and Clean Products, Thinking of People and the Environment First. Gathering Support In Japan and Abroad Despite "Economic Winter Time"

In the dawn of the 21st century, as expectations rose for future development, the bubble economy collapsed in 1991. Along with the sudden rise of yen, the Japanese economy falls into a slump. Although construction and public works orders from the government continued to come in, the demand for new construction works in the private sector diminished with uncertainty over the future. It was necessary for Kubota to manufacture on a more limited scale, responding to various needs with low cost, while reducing its environmental impact. Kubota simultaneously developed multiple models, releasing the KINGLEV Mini Excavator Series in 1999, which cleared emissions regulations enforced by Japan's Ministry of Construction, America's Environmental Protection Agency, and the European Union. It had a strong showing in both domestic and overseas markets.



Mini excavator RX-303, which excels in emission reduction and quiet operation



The 8 ton excavator KX080-3 with all the benefits of the mini excavator

Introducing Our Flagship Backhoe to the Thriving European Construction Machinery Market, Expanding Our Business Domain

Since establishing Kubota Baumaschinen GmbH, Kubota has stimulated the European market by introducing durable, clean, and energy-efficient products with high performance. At the time, the sales of 6-8 ton equipment, which was smaller than a 10-ton hydraulic shovel and larger than a 6-ton mini excavator, drastically grew. Therefore, Kubota developed the 8 ton excavator KX080-3 for overseas sales, which became its top-of-the-line model, featuring the benefits of the mini backhoe. With a stable body structure that demonstrated excellent performance in tight spaces as well as design that secured operator's safety and assured ease of maintenance, the KX080-3 gained good reputation and expanded Kubota's business domain.

Expanding Our Business Domain to Non-Excavating Equipment—A Highly Acclaimed New Product Responding to the Needs of Hauling, Loading, and Land Preparation in North America

Upon the 40th anniversary of the release of the Mini Excavator in 2013, the total number of production reached 400,000. The company achieved a high status in Europe, Asia, and North America, as its products and services took into consideration local needs from the planning process. Notably, the Compact Track Loader (CTL) was decisive, responding to the needs of hauling, loading, and land-leveling in North America. In addition, it released the Skid Steer Loader (SSL) in 2015, which can also be used in farm fields. It was a contribution made possible by Kubota, which manufactures both agricultural and construction machinery.



The non-excavating Compact Track Loader for hauling, loading, and land preparation



The TOUGH Series with downsized turbo engines, excelling in both fuel efficiency and power

With the Hope of Realizing a Cleaner Environment. The Future of Construction Machinery, Led by a Global Leader

Since Kubota became the world's first engine manufacturer to receive approval for meeting emission standards in 1993, the company has honed its emission reduction technology and applied it to the development of new models. It released the ZEPH Series with new-generation emission controlled engines in 2007, and the TOUGH Mini Excavator Series with downsizing turbo engines in 2009. Pursuing both clean emissions and powerful excavating performance to the maximum, they became models for the future development of construction machinery around the world. In order to keep on contributing to environmental preservation strictly required on a global scale, Kubota will continue its challenge.



Future

A Product that Delivers Optimal Value Depending on
the Region in Use—This is Kubota's Construction
Machinery

Not only does Kubota aim to improve the quality of construction machinery, but also develops equipment that fully meets the needs of actual construction sites in various regions. Till now and into the future, we have and will stand by those working onsite and think from the user's perspective. By doing so, we will develop products in which people around the world can acknowledge Kubota as "Kubota—a company which builds towns and nations."