

The Payoff

Owner/operator Bill Miller credits quality Cat® equipment and high technology for his company's recent growth

In the past six years, Bill Miller has seen his business grow by leaps and bounds. Not only has the workload grown, but the jobs have become significantly larger. The growth has allowed him to bring sons Jason and Nathan into what is now called Miller and Miller Custom Services.

Booming business has allowed him also to expand his quality Caterpillar® fleet of equipment. "If you pull up to a job with another brand of equipment, people just regard your business differently," says Miller. "People see our Cat equipment at work and stop by to watch. We get a lot of work through word of mouth. But now we're seeing a lot of repeat business, as well."

Doubling Productivity

Crucial to Miller and Miller's growth is the investment they have made in onboard stakeless grading systems — including GPS+™ and Millimeter GPS™ grade control systems — high technology that, he says, can double daily production. They install the systems on every machine with a blade, the Cat D5G XL and D7 XR Track-Type Tractors and the 140H Motor Grader.

The company also uses Hyper+ rover units for setting site coordinates and spatial parameters. The information is integrated into the onboard grade control systems, which automatically set the blade to the cut or fill depth for the correct grade. As the machines move across the site, the grade control systems automatically move the blades to the appropriate angle, tilt and cutting depths.

"Not only does this technology increase our daily productivity, but it eliminates the need for surveyors. When other contractors



Using GPS+™ and Millimeter GPS™ stakeless grade control systems, Bill Miller says his crew's productivity has doubled. They can bring the initial cut to within final grade tolerances on the first pass.

out there are waiting for surveyors to show up, we're making final grade. When we make the initial cut, we are working within the final grade tolerances. There's no going back. It makes us faster, more accurate and, ultimately, less expensive."

Their grading projects today are typically over 10,000 to 500,000 square foot areas to be paved, and much of their work involves projects covering 20 or more acres. A recent major project has been the 58-acre site of the Overcoming Faith Christian Center in Arlington, a two-phase project they have completed to final grade for general contractor, Starling Richardson Construction Inc. Working in the dusty red

clay of Texas on 23 acres of phase one, they brought the entire parking lot into final grade in a matter of days.

"With our technology, we can do at least 200,000 square feet in a day and get it to 0.25-of-an-inch grade — first time," says Miller. They make the initial cut using GPS+™ or Millimeter GPS™ to get it to grade, and use the laser grade control system to perfect the finish grade pads.

Hearing of Miller and Miller's work at the Christian Center, military officials came to inspect Miller's crew in action. So impressed were they that Miller and Miller was awarded the contract for a 175,000-square-foot parking lot at a naval air station in nearby Grand Prairie. "People stop by our sites all the time to check out our work," Miller says. "Part of it is the technology and a big part of it is the sight of our Cat yellow fleet. Word of mouth is our best advertising."

Keeping Quality Crews

Working in normally dusty conditions, Miller and Miller's five-man crew (in addition to the three Millers) enjoys the comfort of enclosed, air-conditioned cabs on each machine. "A good operator can make your operation good money, and good operators don't like an open-air operator's station," explains Miller. "It costs a lot less to invest in a fully-enclosed ventilated cab, than to lose good operators."

And, the crews appreciate the precision operation that the machines provide. Having consistent familiarity with such features as hydraulic joystick controls when jumping from one Cat

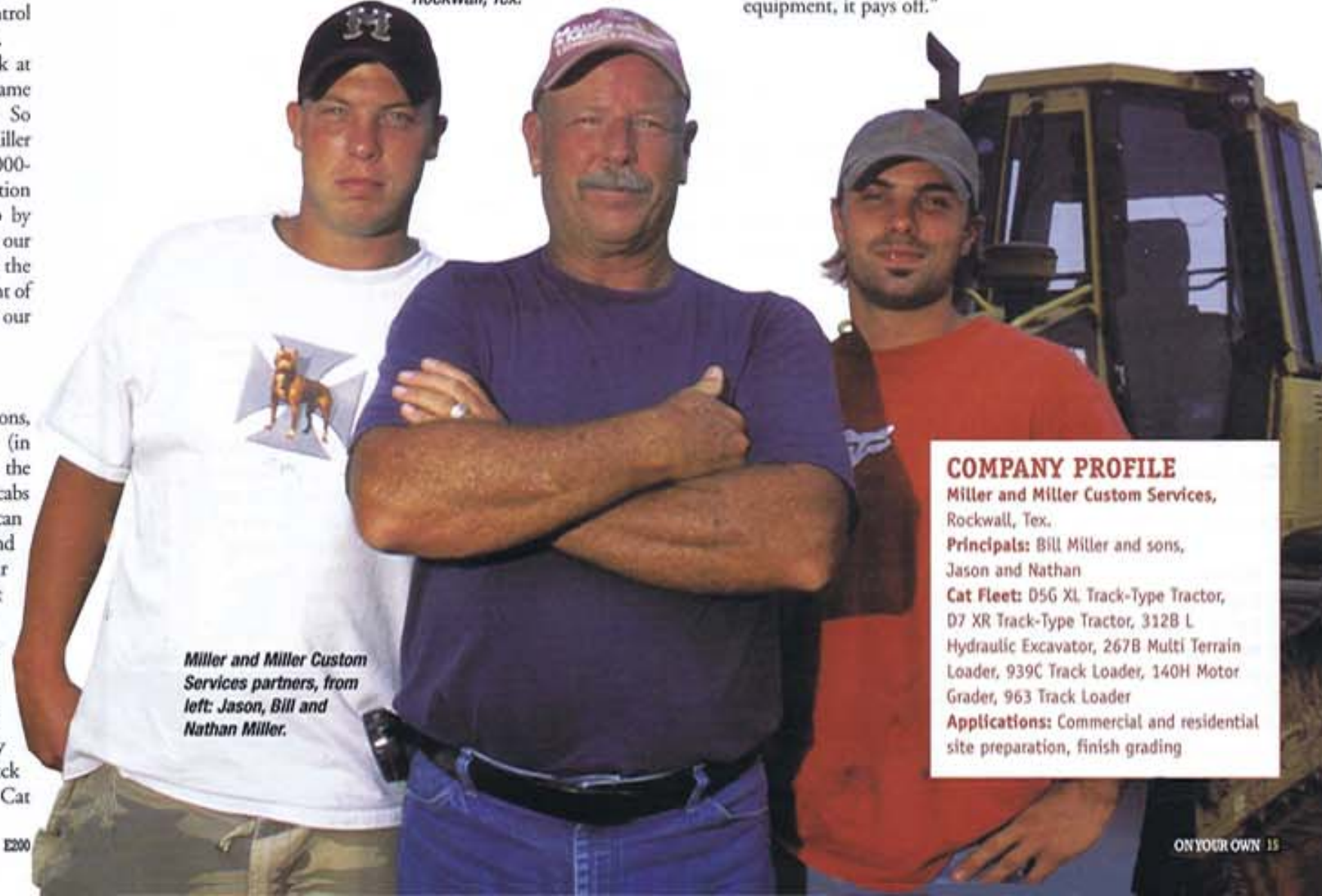
machine to the next is an enormous help. "It was the joystick controls that sold us on the equipment early on," recall Miller. "They're not only easier to use, but they're more accurate."

Cat Dealer Dedication

Another big selling point was — and is — the commitment and dedication they receive from their Cat dealer, HOLT CAT. "It means an awful lot when the folks at HOLT return our calls," says Miller.

"Caterpillar® is better equipment, and the resale value of Cat will always hold up better than other brands. When you invest in technology and quality equipment, it pays off."

— Bill Miller,
Miller and Miller Custom Services,
Rockwall, Tex.



Miller and Miller Custom Services partners, from left: Jason, Bill and Nathan Miller.

"I can't say that about all the other machinery dealers out there. HOLT has bent over backwards to help us.

"HOLT understands that I don't have 50 pieces of equipment to fall back on. I'm a small owner/operator. They've bumped us up on the list ahead of larger operators, just because they understand we can't stand down time with one of our machines. They just do a superior job in service and support."

Miller and Miller also relies on HOLT Field Service Technicians for routine preventive maintenance work, which includes S•O•S™ Fluids Analysis testing at every 250-hour interval. With S•O•S sampling, HOLT technicians can analyze all hydraulic and engine fluids for indications of any system-wide problems.

"We don't want our operators to be mechanics. We want them moving dirt. If I wanted to be a mechanic, I wouldn't be running this business — I'd get a job at HOLT!"

In the final analysis, says Miller, "Caterpillar is better equipment, and the resale value of Cat will always hold up better than other brands. When you invest in technology and quality equipment, it pays off."

COMPANY PROFILE

Miller and Miller Custom Services,
Rockwall, Tex.

Principals: Bill Miller and sons,
Jason and Nathan

Cat Fleet: D5G XL Track-Type Tractor,
D7 XR Track-Type Tractor, 312B L
Hydraulic Excavator, 267B Multi Terrain
Loader, 939C Track Loader, 140H Motor
Grader, 963 Track Loader

Applications: Commercial and residential
site preparation, finish grading



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Every Job is Local
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To the Rescue
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FIELD REPORT

North Dakota Couple Grows
Their Business
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HOLT



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