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Screen Specialist Shares Risks And Gains

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Suppliers to the mines need to break the traditional way of doing business - selling plant and equipment and then moving on

to the next sale. This is according to Joest Kwatani, a Level 3 Broad-Based Black Economic Empowerment manufacturer of screens for the African mining industry.

Kim Schoepflin, managing director of Joest Kwatani, says the company has established open and transparent communication channels with the mines, sharing best practices in screening and how to feed optimal tonnages of ore at the lowest cost with its customers. An example of this is Joest Kwatani's contractual risk or gain sharing business relationship with mines. "Instead of merely supplying a screen to a mine at a fixed price, this model sees Joest Kwatani share in the gains mines enjoy from efficient screening solutions," she says.

According to Schoepflin, this model incentivises vendors and mines to make better decisions concerning the project.

“At this point in time, I’m not convinced that suppliers are being adequately incentivised to deliver optimal solutions for projects. However, this type of contractual arrangement aligns the interests of both mine and supplier. This formula of sharing tonnage and risk positions Joest Kwatani as a provider of value rather than a purveyor of products and services,” she says.

Joest Kwatani is able to offer such a service because it has an intimate understanding of its customers’ businesses and operational challenges, and, as Schoepflin points out, without this knowledge “there is simply no basis for gain sharing”. A milestone for the company, in terms of these agreements, is its 11 year contract with a Limpopo-based miner to replace, refurbish, service and maintain 96 coal screening machines at the largest coal processing complex in the world.

Due to the dearth in skills on mines, Joest Kwatani is also entering into customised service level agreements.

“Sub-standard maintenance is being undertaken on plants. At times, it is reactive, as opposed to being proactive, leading to further costs to the mines. Screening machines are such important elements in the process that regimented maintenance programmes are critical to ensuring ongoing efficient operation and improved yield,” says Schoepflin.

A structured service programme allows mines to select a package that matches their existing needs and resources of the plant. This offering has been well received by mines, and Joest Kwatani has fixed-year, multi-service level agreement in place with coal, diamond, iron ore and manganese plant operators.

Joest Kwatani has adapted to a rapidly changing industry where the vendor takes the lead in driving efficiencies in the market it serves. ■■