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# Towering Above the Concrete Jungle

Family-owned Superior Crane navigates challenges of working in New York City.



By Karen M. Scally

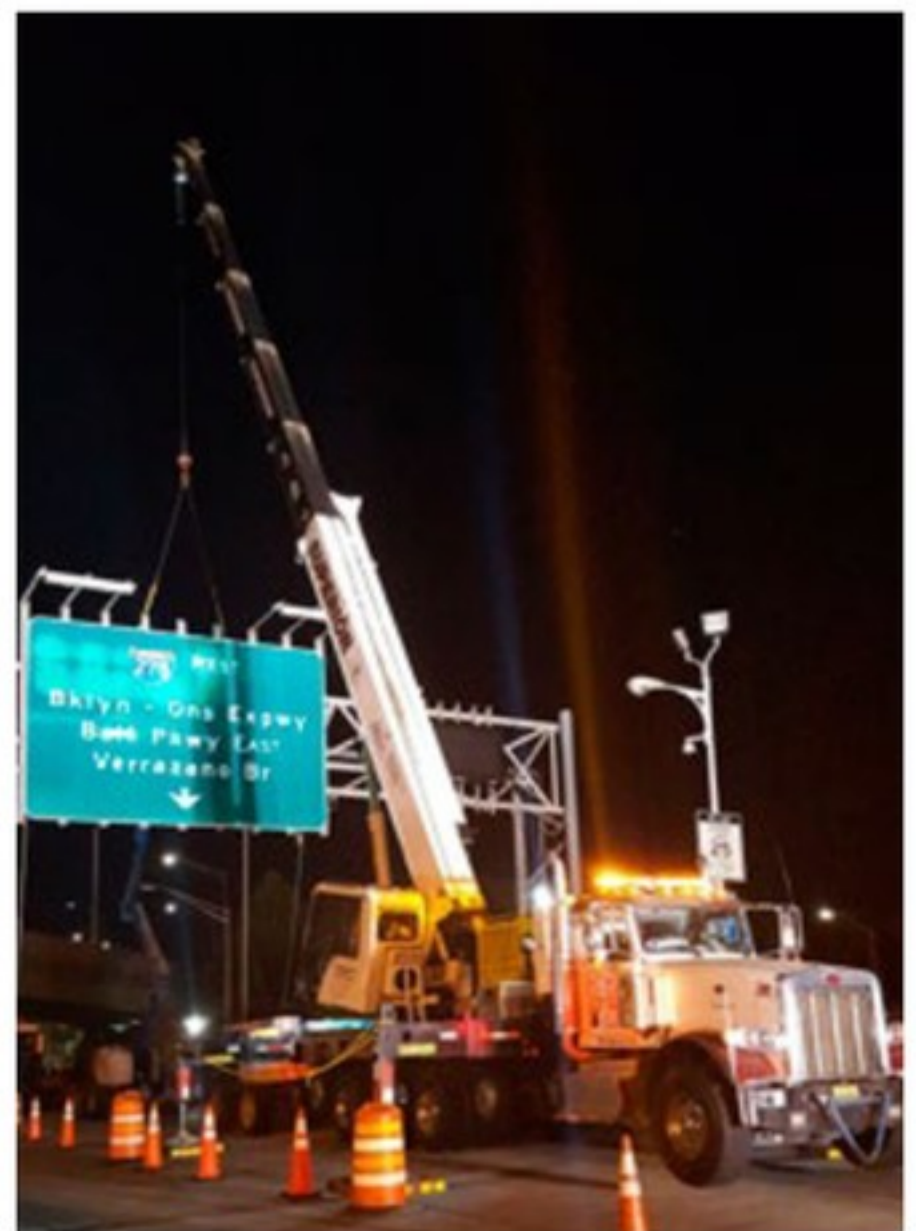
**W**hen Dave and Brian Marcason of Superior Crane head out for a job, chances are, it's already more challenging than most in North America.

Why?

The father-and-son-team, along with their crews, do much of their work in New York City. Though it's been dubbed the "Greatest City in the World," it is also one of the most difficult to navigate and succeed in for a company like theirs because it is an intensely regulated municipality, in addition to its dense environment and high traffic.

◀ The dual-rated Altec AC40-152S is specifically certified to work in New York City.

Due to the high traffic of the city, Superior Crane will often work at night with street closures.♥



“It’s 10 times more headaches than working anywhere else,” says Brian Marcason, vice president of Superior Crane.

His dad agrees.

“New York City is one of the strictest places in the United States, probably the world,” says Dave Marcason, president of the company. “The laws are very, very strict to prevent accidents.”

But the Marcasons have carved out a New York niche for their Norwood, N.J.-based company, combining their decades of experience along with the right equipment to maneuver through the challenges to perform quality work.

“We have been in business for about 20 years,” Dave Marcason says. “Myself, I’ve been doing this about 50 years, so I’m well-seasoned in the business.”

For Brian Marcason, it’s basically what he grew up doing.

“I’ve been around with my father

since I was 10 years old,” he says.

Brian Marcason says that if you want to work in New York City, you have to know the rules—and they are extensive.

First, the company has to be licensed to do work in New York City, a process that may take up to two years, Dave Marcason says. The process involves taking a course and written and operational tests, and their license must be renewed every five years, he says. Then, they will also have to take refresher courses during that time to stay up-to-date on the ever-changing regulations, he says. Once they have their license, they have to secure permits for all their work, which includes HVAC, machinery moving with rigging, structural, plant, and more.

In addition to obtaining permits, the properly trained and certified crews must be hired to do the job, which could include a master rigger, certified flaggers, and a pedestrian manager when necessary, he says.

“Everyone has to have cards so there’s no questions,” Dave Marcason says. “They’re not just regular people off the street; they’re trained.”

If they are working over or near a subway, Brian Marcason says that adds another layer of complexity. They need engineered drawings and additional insurance, often just to cover a one-night job.

And the permits are narrowly defined and time-limited, he says.

“If you’ve got a job say at 34th Street in the city,” he says. “You could tell them when you want to do it, but DOT is going to tell you when you are going to do it.”

Brian Marcason says due to the highly trafficked areas, both by pedestrians and vehicles, their work will often be at night with street closures, and the city may give them from a one- to a five-day window to complete their work.

“If you lose it, then you’ve got to do everything all over again,” he says.

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They also have to factor in a considerable amount of lead time for their jobs.

“If we’re closing the street, it takes almost two weeks,” Dave Marcason says. “We have to post professional signs on the roads a week ahead of time stating that your street will be closed for a certain amount of time.”

Then they also have to worry about people removing their “no parking” signs and subsequently having to get the cars out of the way before they can start. Once the street is closed and they are ready to work, they need a certified flagger on one end and a pedestrian manager to watch that no one walks under the load, Dave Marcason says.

If they don’t follow the rules and regulations, the penalties can be steep.

“There’s 10 more things you’ve got to be on top of, you know, because if you get a ticket ... it’s very expensive,” Brian Marcason says. “Plus, you don’t want the bad publicity.”

Fines can be as much as \$30,000 to \$40,000, they say.

“They make it painful so everybody does it right,” Brian Marcason says.

### Finding the Right Equipment

Superior Crane has eight machines in their fleet, ranging from 5 tons to 120 tons, to handle their work in New York City, New York state, and New Jersey.

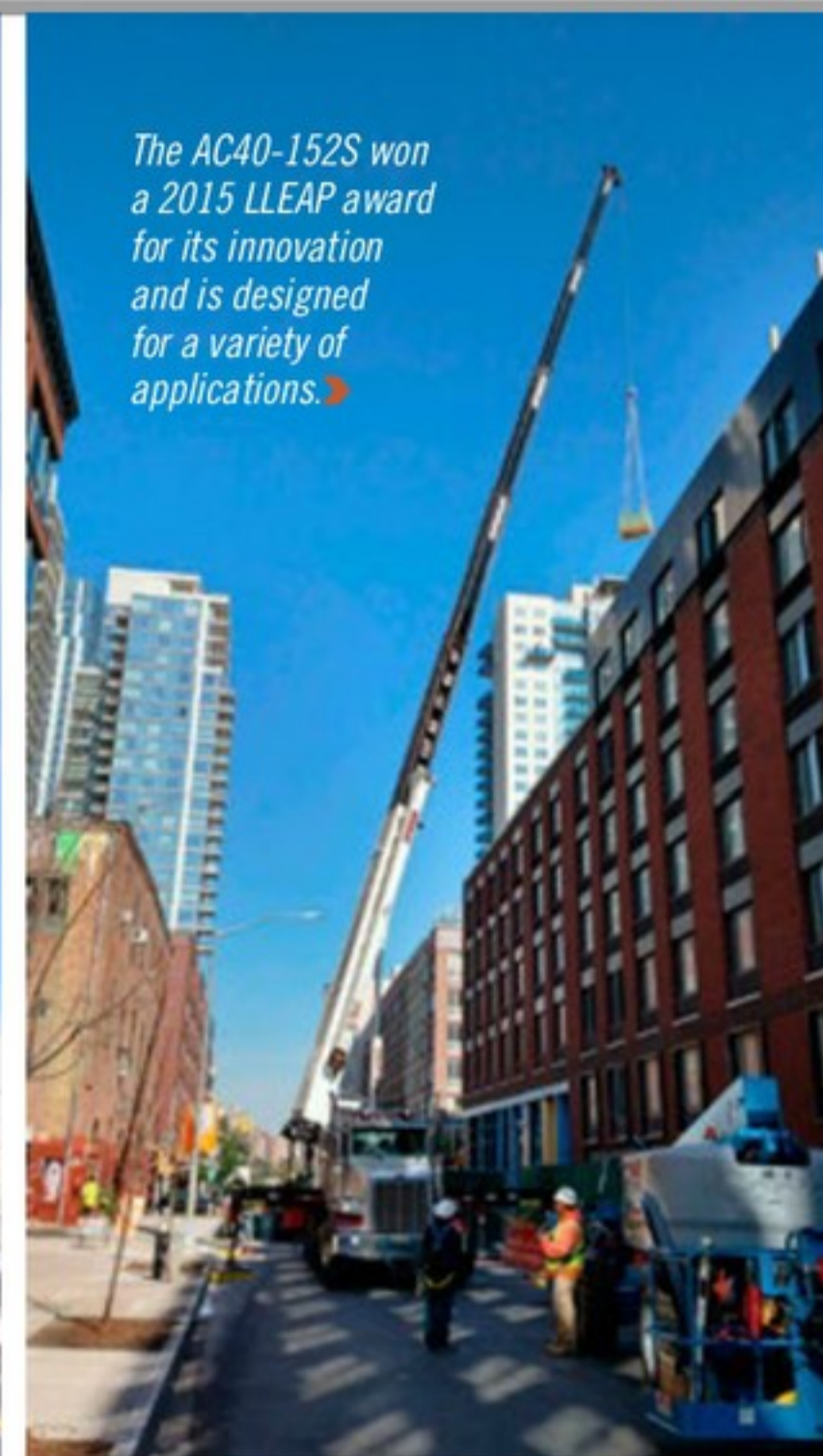
Their models include four Altecs, including a 26-ton Altec AC26-103B with a 103-ft. boom from 2004; two AC38-127SHL 38-ton units with a 127-ft. main boom and a 55-ft. telescopic jib from 2007; and a 40-ton, 152-ft. AC40-152S. They also have a 5-ton UNIC UR-V504 with a 74-ft. boom; a 38-ton Manitex with a 124-ft. boom; and two Terex models, a T550 50-ton with a 110-ft. main boom, and a AC 100-4L 120-ton with a 195-ft. main boom.

Dave Marcason says they do a lot of work with the AC40-152S in New York City because of its reach. In addition to its 152 feet of reach on the main boom, it also has a two-section jib.

“We’re able to do a lot of work with that crane without bringing a monster crane in to set stuff up on



◀ Superior Crane does a lot of work in New York City with their Altec AC40-152S because of its 152-ft. reach. It also has a two-section jib.



The AC40-152S won a 2015 LLEAP award for its innovation and is designed for a variety of applications. ▶

Superior Crane, based in Norwood, N.J., is a family-owned and operated business, led by Dave Marcason, 74, president, and his son Brian Marcason, 43, vice president. Brian Marcason’s nephew, Connor Swanson, 23, also works for the company. Brian Marcason’s 4-year-old son Matthew is already getting exposure to the business. ▶



top of roofs,” he says.

Launched in December 2014, the AC40-152S was the first dual-rated unit in its class, says Dan Brock, market manager with Altec.

“Dual-rated means that based on configuration, the unit can be configured as an aerial or with the appropriate set-up, a crane for handling loads at height,” Brock says.

Brock says the machine, which won a 2015 LLEAP award for its innovation, is designed for a variety of applications, including de-energized transmission, cell towers, and general construction.

“Generally anything that requires high boom angles and a lot of hook height,” Brock says, adding that with its 152-ft. main boom and 83 degrees of boom angle, it easily reaches the tops of buildings.

When the unit is reconfigured as an aerial with a two-man platform, Brock says it has a capacity of 1,200

lbs. on the main boom or on the 49-ft. telescopic jib. The jib can be coupled with a 6-ft. composite reach extension to give the operator 222 ft. of powered working height. It also includes an intuitive Load Moment and Area Protection (LMAP) system with a fully featured Load Moment Indicator (LMI).

“With the radio that features a full-color display, which mirrors the information from our LMAP display, operators are afforded the ability to monitor all important unit data via the remote,” he says.

As a crane and operated from the unit controls, it features its patented dual-entry 20-degree tilt cab, where the operator can safely access the unit’s deck regardless of the rotational position, Brock says.

And perhaps most essentially for the Marcasons’ work, the dual-rated unit is specifically New York City certified.

“All the cranes have to be certified to work in New York [City],” says Dave Marcason. “You just cannot bring any crane into New York.”

### Service When it Counts

With the tight windows that they have to complete their work within the permitted time, Brian Marcason says it's important to have a unit like the AC40-152S that's going to set up quickly and be reliable. And if there's an issue, it can be promptly serviced.

This winter, he says he had an issue with the cold weather and one of the sensors when he went to do a job in the Bronx. He says the job was completely set up with six flaggers and the street divided, when he got in the machine and realized the sensor wasn't working.

“I sat in the truck, and I saw that light not working, and you know my heart was beating because you got all these people there,” Brian Marcason says. “I had 15 guys and the clock was

ticking, because I still had to do the job and be off the street.”

He says he got an Altec representative on the phone and in 10 minutes, the machine was working.

That service also extends to the way Altec has worked with Superior Crane on the customization on the unit, he says. Due to the city's specifications, an anemometer was added, and it was built on six axles. Superior Crane's AC40-152S also features powder coat painting, important for the area's winters, and a camera on the winch that is integrated into the LMI.

Brian Marcason says when he went to get his unit from the factory, he was impressed with the care they put into the machine.

“When I picked that crane up, I felt the pride from those guys at the factory,” he says. “The one salesman said everybody knew where this was going, and everybody knew this is one of the first models in the city, and they made sure everything was right on it.

They put a lot of extra time into it.”

That ownership and personal touch is important to him as someone who is part of a generational business. In fact, he says when he posted an image of his AC40-152S to Facebook, an Altec employee commented, “I welded that boom.”

“I saw that, and I was like, you know, that's a good feeling,” Brian Marcason says.

With working in such a challenging environment, he says it helps to be joined by people he loves—his family, including his father and nephew—and by truly enjoying what he does.

“You got to love it or you're not going to be good at it,” he says.

And when you pour that passion into the jobs to perform quality work, it pays off.

“It's a lot of work,” Brian Marcason says, of operating in New York City. “If you know how to do the work legally, you stay busy.” **LA**

## HARRISON HYDRAULIC GENERATORS

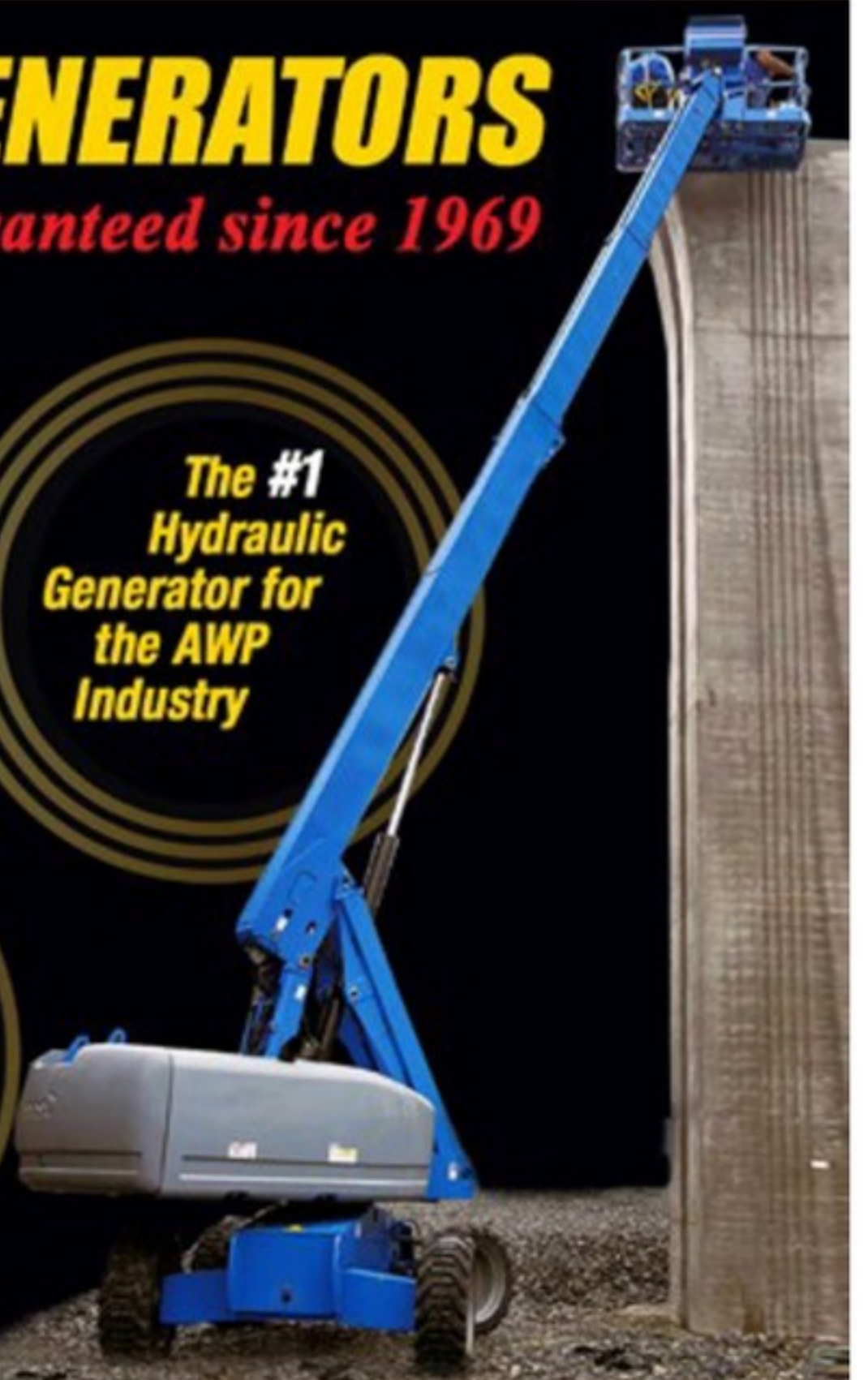
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