

# CONVERSATION

## Rob Lee

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projects throughout the United States and have expanded into Canada and Puerto Rico. We are headquartered in West Fargo, North Dakota, with an office in Alexander, North Dakota. We also have a maintenance facility in West Fargo. Our employee count varies with project load from 600 to over 1,000.

### How does Wanzek best serve the wind energy industry, and what are the various construction services it offers?

We have established a strong portfolio of successful wind projects, with over 6500 MW of wind generation capacity installed for some of the leading companies in the wind industry. We also offer wind O&M services specializing in large-scale corrective work; civil and SWPP maintenance; and substation and collection system inspection and repair. We continue to invest in our fleet, which has earned us recognition on American Crane & Transport magazine's list of Largest Crane Owning Companies.

### What are some important aspects with completing a wind project?

Wind projects are very hands-on. A consistent level of attention, coordination, and communication is required to successfully complete a project. Our teams work closely with owners

to develop detailed budgets and construction schedules, address a myriad of challenges, and complete civil and electrical design. On a typical project, during construction, the project manager meets with the owner or owner representative multiple times a day by phone and on-site weekly. Everyone on the team, from the owner to the superintendents to our field force, stay informed regarding project status, any challenges that have been presented, and the chosen method for handling them.

### What are some of the challenges associated with the construction of a wind farm?

Two of the big challenges are geographical spread and inclement weather. Wind farms are generally constructed over hundreds of square miles. Many of the areas that have the expanse of land needed for a wind farm also have months of inclement weather that make construction a challenge.

### What role does communication play in overcoming those challenges?

Communication is critical to keeping a project on track. As part of a larger efficiency initiative, Wanzek is focusing on mobile solutions in the field. We actively implement the use of job-site mobile devices including

### Tell us about the company and how it became involved in the wind industry.

Wanzek was founded in 1971 on heavy/civil and concrete projects. We are now going on our 45th year and are a subsidiary of MasTec, Inc. — a leading specialty contractor. We offer construction services for the power, renewable energy, oil and gas, heavy/civil, and industrial agriculture industries as well as specialty services including wind O&M, crane services, oil field services, and construction consulting services. We entered the wind industry in the 2000s and quickly began providing services to some of the biggest names in the industry. Our growth has been due largely to repeat clients, and we are proud to have retained many of our first clients while continuing to form new relationships. We have successfully completed

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smartphones and site kiosks and have introduced tablets. Use of these devices drives efficiencies through on-site, real-time data-capturing that facilitates better information processing and decision-making. Technology is a communication tool that allows us to integrate our teams, evaluate our processes, and develop effective solutions for successful project completion.

### **What sets Wanzek apart from other companies like it in the industry?**

Wanzek's growth has been in direct response to client needs. Our success in wind construction has led to an expansion into wind O&M services. We offer lean and continuous improvement facilitation at the onset of a project as well as consultation with a master black belt facilitator to assist early in a project to ensure lean and efficient processes.

### **What can our readers expect to see from Wanzek in the future?**

Wanzek's client-focused approach will continue to drive our growth. We always focus on safety and quality as well as invest in employee training and our wholly owned fleet of state-of-the-art specialty construction equipment. In the future, we will push innovation and technology. By capturing pertinent information on mobile devices, in the field, on a daily basis and integrating that information with our back-end systems, we are able to provide our field and corporate management teams with real-time information, adding value to the life cycle of our projects. We are also working toward a more proactive approach to information gathering by generating reports and dashboards that are predictive, not just reactive. ↵

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