

## JR RAMON DEMOLITION AT A GLANCE

**Location:** San Antonio, Texas

**Executive team:** Timothy Ramon, president; Joe Ramon Jr., chair; Joe Ramon III, vice president; and Mario Ochoa, vice president of operations

**No. of employees:** 70

**Facilities:** Main office, concrete recycling yard and a material segregation yard

**Services provided:** a full range of demolition services

**Equipment owned:** a Powerscreen AR400 jaw crusher; a Powerscreen Chieftain 1400; 10 Komatsu excavators, three units with OilQuick hydraulic couplers for various attachments from Labounty, Allied, Connect Tools, ShearCore, Pemberton, Cat and Rockland; two Brokk controlled demolition machines; end-dump tractor trailers and roll-off trucks

**Materials recycled in-house:** concrete, brick, masonry materials and nonferrous metals

# HOME FIELD advantage

JR Ramon Demolition's focus on regional demolition projects have given it a competitive edge in south and central Texas.

BY KRISTIN SMITH-ELY

Photos by Mark Langford  
Photography, Inc.

Timothy Ramon,  
president,  
JR Ramon Demolition

San Antonio, Texas-based JR Ramon Demolition's path to success can be attributed to many factors. First, it tries to keep its projects close to home, developing a strong regional presence. Second, its sole focus on demolition has allowed it to become experts in the field. Third is its ability to process materials for recycling in-house makes it self-reliant. And to boot, the company makes sure it has the most specialized equipment to perform the job at hand and has the experienced team to do it.

"We don't build anything, we just take it away," Timothy only Ramon, president, JR Ramon says.

The company was founded in 1945 by Joe Ramon Sr. as a small construction and road building company. His sons a Joe Ramon Jr. and Robert Ramon also joined the company, and in 1968 the business was incorporated. At that time, Timothy says, the company diversified, but found its niche in demolition when it was asked to demolish a few buildings in preparation for the HemisFair '68, the name of the World's Fair held in San Antonio from April to October 1968.

"They found out pretty quickly there is a market for demolition and it can be profitable," says Timothy of his family. "In about 1979, they dropped all other courses of work and have been performing demolition and recycling jobs exclusively ever since."

### ALL INCLUSIVE

Name a type of demolition project and JR Ramon has probably done it—from complete, selective, partial, interior gutting and implosion. The company performs a variety of work for public sector clients including local and federal governments, municipalities and private developments.

"The majority of our customers are government entities such as Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) and large public developments," Timothy says. "Green efforts and LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) projects are always enforced on these scale projects."

No matter what the demolition project at hand, you can bet some aspect of recycling is performed. "We have been recycling before it was trendy, cool or even tracked because it was profitable. It makes sense to reuse and repurpose materials from a site," Timothy says.

Performing the various demolition jobs JR Ramon undertakes requires heavy equipment and specialized tools. The company owns about 38 pieces of heavy equipment. Among them, electric and diesel-fueled Brokk remote-controlled demolition machines allow the company to perform specialized tasks that many times cannot be achieved with conventional equipment. The other pieces of demolition equipment range from loaders, dozers, skid steers, mini-excavators, various sized excavators up to 50-

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## COVER PROFILE



ton class and an ultra high-reach demolition machine. The majority of them are Komatsu brand excavators purchased from the local dealer, Waukesha-Pearce Industries (WPI).

“We have a very good relationship with WPI. We interact like partners that understand the mutual need for each other, but I call them friends. I am very happy with the robustness and durability of Komatsu equipment,” Timothy says. Since all the equipment is used in demolition, it is all armored to withstand the daily rigors of demolition and provide additional safety measures for the operators.

A multitude of processing tools from Labounty, Two Harbors, Minnesota; ShearCore, Superior, Wisconsin; Cat, Peoria, Illinois; and Rockland, Bedford, Pennsylvania, attach to the excavators to perform the desired demolition task. The company recently added an OilQuick quick coupler to its 80,000-pound excavators that speeds up the ability to change attachments. “Within two months of adding these couplers, I noticed the increase in production,” Timothy says. “These couplers have changed the way we look at a project and have increased our efficiency on the job.”

Making sure JR Ramon’s employees have the right tools for the job is a priority. Timothy says instilling pride in the crews for the work they perform is an important principal, and it starts with “making sure they understand the goals of the task and have the right tools to perform the job that is expected.” He adds, “You don’t give someone a screwdriver to dig a hole.”

The company’s specialized equipment alone sets JR Ramon ahead of some of its competition, according to Timothy. The company also owns a fleet of end-dump tractor trailers, scrap trailers and roll-off trucks and has two sites to recycle materials it generates from projects.

### CONCRETE PLANS

JR Ramon recycles the brick, concrete and masonry materials it generates at its own concrete recycling yard located on 75 acres in San Antonio. “One unique thing is that we do such a large volume of work, we only take in and recycle what we generate. That helps us regulate the quality of recycled product we produce,” Timothy says.

The yard is located next to a concrete batching plant. JR

## COVER PROFILE

Ramon allows the plant to wash its spoils in the yard and crushes the unused cement and concrete back into an aggregate. JR Ramon processes around 60,000 tons of concrete and aggregate per year at the plant. The company uses a AR400 jaw crusher from County Tyrone, Ireland-based Powerscreen coupled with Powerscreen’s Chieftain 1400 two-deck screener to produce three different products in one run.

“It does help with our demo side of the business by having our own concrete disposal site,” notes Tim. He explains that the company would have to travel further away to dispose of its concrete otherwise. Use of demolition materials as backfill is also strictly regulated in Texas.

The company also recycles nonferrous metals at a material recovery facility (MRF) it operates on six acres. Items like aluminum and copper wire are taken to the yard for processing. Generators, chillers and compressors recovered from job sites also are evaluated for resale at the yard.

### GROWTH SPURT

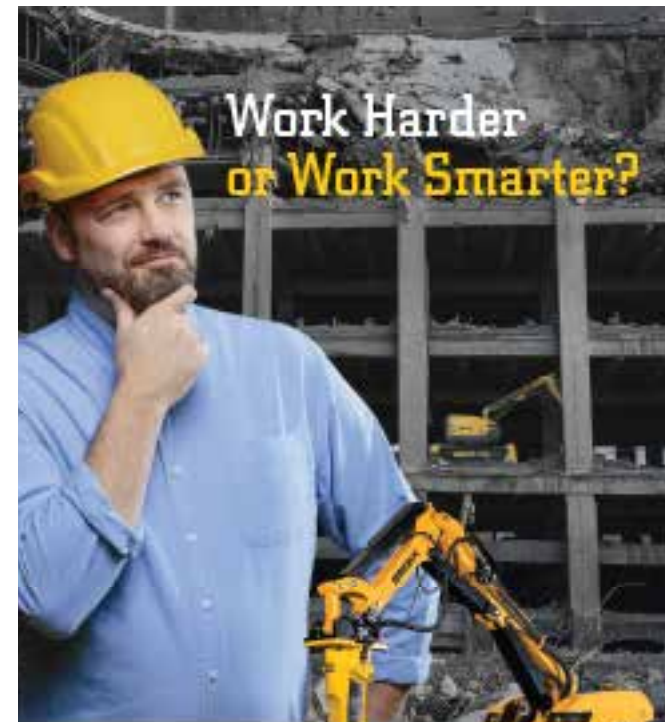
JR Ramon has experienced growth over the last ten years. The company grossed \$6.5 million in 2016 and is on track to



increase that by 25 percent in 2017. Timothy attributes the growth to the general economy and the company’s diligent efforts to stay ahead of the curve. “A good part of that is due to our concrete recycling efforts,” he says. “We’ve been able to keep more moneys in-house by processing our own materials versus paying outside disposal and handling fees.”

Timothy says there is no “trick of the trade” that one demolition contractor knows, “It’s just the little bits of efficiency in every aspect of what we do that differentiates us from the rest of the pool.”

And he says, “Because we provide all the equipment, trucking and crews, we maintain control of all aspects of the demolition process. We are able to remain competitive on projects of every level, from small residential all the way up to the large industrial projects.”



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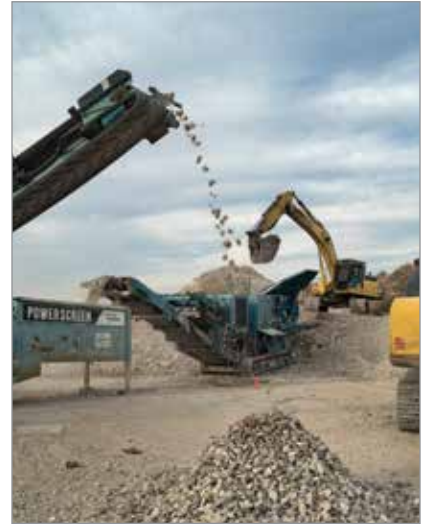
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San Antonio has a fair amount of competition for demolition projects. Timothy says one of the reasons JR Ramon has been able to survive so long in the area is that the company focuses its attention in central and south Texas almost exclusively. And there is a reason for that. "It's enabled us to stay at home more."

Family is important for the Ramons, and the company knows it is important for its employees as well. The company keeps its jobs within a 200-mile radius for that reason and will only travel further than that if it is for a preferred customer.

What sets JR Ramon apart is not the high-profile projects. Rather, "It is the vol-



ume of work that is really the marker of success for us," Timothy says.

The firm does a large amount of infrastructure work, including highway removals and bridge demolitions. These projects need to be completed quickly and often over a weekend. "The volume of those types of projects where we perform successfully on has really added to our success and gained us the reputation of competent demolition professionals," Timothy says.

While recycling and specialized tools have helped JR Ramon be successful, Timothy says it wouldn't be possible without the employees. "We consider our employees our extended family and our true greatest asset," he says.

According to Timothy, the majority of the company's 70 full-time employees have been there more than 10 years. Timothy says JR Ramon invests heavily in safety training and certification and pays above scale. That is part of the reason for its retention rate, but it all goes back to family.

"We treat our co-workers with respect and uphold the family culture the company was founded on. When you have to make a decision between family and work, work is very understanding of and adaptable to work with your family's needs," he explains.

That understanding has added to the employee retention rates and has led to a safer work environment as a result. **C&DR**

The author is editor of *Construction & Demolition Recycling* and can be reached at [ksmith@gje.net](mailto:ksmith@gje.net).

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