

## Staff Spotlight: John Overhill Regional Manager - Southern



John joined Synergy in April 2017 and comes with a wealth of experience in the machine control industry. Born in Tokoroa, John has spent his entire working life in the earth moving and construction industry. Previous to working at Synergy Positioning Systems, John spent sixteen years working in machine control and is proud to have seen the technology develop from its infancy to the advanced technology we see today. When he's not managing the Southern region for Synergy, John enjoys hitting the local tracks on his mountain bike.

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with confidence, knowing your equipment meets set requirements.

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## Synergy extends comprehensive reach

**Servicing the civil construction and geospatial industries for over 20 years, Synergy Positioning Systems has extended its back-up offering to clients even further in recent times, with dedicated support for its many clients in every corner of the country.**

Upon its formation in the late 1990s, Synergy Positioning Systems was established upon a solid base of experience in both civil construction and geospatial surveying.

In the intervening two decades, Synergy has become synonymous with a variety of world-leading technologies from systems manufacturers including Topcon among others. Advancing the collective abilities and project results of the New Zealand civil construction industry by offering an ever-expanding range of cutting-edge hardware and software solutions has remained key for the company.

In the past 12 months, Synergy has pushed ahead again, expanding its efforts in terms of service support for an increasing number of clients in every corner of the country, and beyond.

Louie Schutte, General Manager – Sales and Marketing, says that Synergy Positioning Systems has bolstered its support focus with the development of a robust national service team.

“We now have support and service locations in Auckland, Wellington and Christchurch, with trained technicians providing technical back-up for our many clients on a regional basis,” he says.

“With construction activity at a peak throughout the country, we recognise that we need to have trained service technicians able to cover a lot of ground in a hurry if needed. We also know that support and servicing is vital for so many of our clients, as tough working environments and weather conditions add uncertainty to project timelines. Our team needs to work in with our clients’ availability.

“We’ve established ourselves as a proven consultancy in terms of our ability to recommend the right tools for projects of all scales. But with new technology, such as machine control systems or back-end project management software, developing so rapidly

in terms of what it can achieve for construction firms, it has become ever-more important to offer our customers the ability to make the most of the capabilities of these systems.”

Louie says a big effort has also been made in recent years to ensure Synergy Positioning Systems’ technical support staff have been fully trained to a factory level.

As well as installing control boxes in cabs and ensuring machine control systems are calibrated to suit the environment and machine they are fitted to, Synergy’s team can also provide knowledgeable advice on utilising advanced project management software, such as the job-site monitoring and planning system, Sitelink3D.

“Adopting these sorts of technology suites – whether through investing in them or renting them on a fixed-term basis – is a big step-change for companies. So, we have to be able to provide all the answers when they are needed. For a company to get the most out of a comprehensive system such as Sitelink3D, for example, the education process is ongoing. This is where we can help,” he says.

Equally crucial to Synergy’s client support performance is the Kiwi company’s direct line to the global development teams from the brands it represents in our part of the world.

“As an established distributor, we have a fantastic relationship with Topcon in America, for example,” continues Louie.

“We’ve been able to maintain a solid connection with companies such as Topcon, and we really see the benefits of this relationship in terms of their ability to support us, which allows us to deliver solutions that fit our clients’ needs.

“Over time we’ve been able to relay back to the likes of Topcon a pretty comprehensive picture of the challenges associated with civil construction

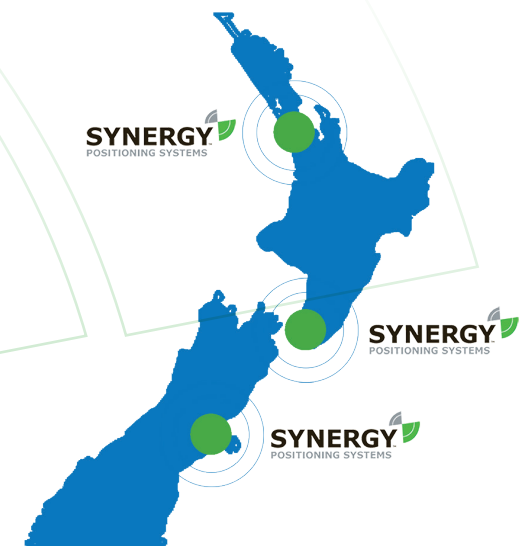
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or geospatial surveying in our country. As a result, they know as much as we do which products will work for New Zealand’s contracting and surveying industries, so there is knowledge going both ways there; that’s a pretty powerful position to be in as a distributor.”

Today, Synergy Positioning Systems offers an end-to-end service for its many clients, with the ability to provide the latest technology through its solid connections with some of the construction industry’s most powerful and widely-recognised brands.

Similarly, the company’s ability to provide rapid technical support and service back-up for a wide variety of customers from one end of New Zealand to the other, reaffirms its reputation as a tried and tested partner for entities of all sizes within the multifaceted New Zealand civil construction and surveying industries.

“We offer the New Zealand civil construction industry the best products available,” concludes Louie. “So, it’s logical that we need to back these products up with the best support service offering as well.”



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## Topcon delivers end-to-end coverage for Parallax Consultants



**With a wide variety of projects on the go at any one time, and a small staff required at multiple points on the map on a 24/7 basis, Parallax Consultants saw the benefits Topcon spatial measurement hardware and software would bring them.**

Warkworth-based surveying and planning consultancy, Parallax Consultants, have been a Synergy Positioning Systems customer since 2008. The company's range of disciplines is as wide as the territory its team members cover.

Field work in the Auckland, Kaipara and Rodney districts see Parallax's staff operating in a variety of environments, completing land transfer, topographical, set-out and as-built surveys for a wide range of clients including commercial developers and private land-owners, along with local councils, Land Information New Zealand and NZTA.

A consistently busy portfolio of project work led company director Brendon Smith to consider purchasing a GNSS system back in 2008.

"We had used a variety of GPS brands in the past and the Topcon gear just seemed to be the most intuitive to use," says Brendon.

"Eventually we decided to invest in our own equipment and I don't think there was ever any question we'd go with any other brand.

"We saw Topcon as a real innovator in this space. Through Synergy Positioning, they were

one of the first easily-accessible brands we encountered that could offer truly wireless equipment in the field, that didn't require cabling or backpacks.

"And things have developed at pace from the initial RTK / Static GPS options, through to the use of Skynet and Magnet Enterprise. The ease with which we can turn around accurate data for our clients is really impressive, and we're bringing a high level of technological ability to every job we do, regardless of the scale, which is a nice point-of-difference we can offer as a company."

Brendon says that, more than having the right tools for the job in the field, Topcon's suite of data management software also ensures an end-to-end solution is readily available for organisations such as his.

"More than offering data capture in the field, Topcon now offers MAGNET Office software too, which helps us manage the way we record, store and distribute data. So, we now have Topcon MAGNET Field for all our surveying requirements, and Topcon MAGNET Office covering the production side of things.

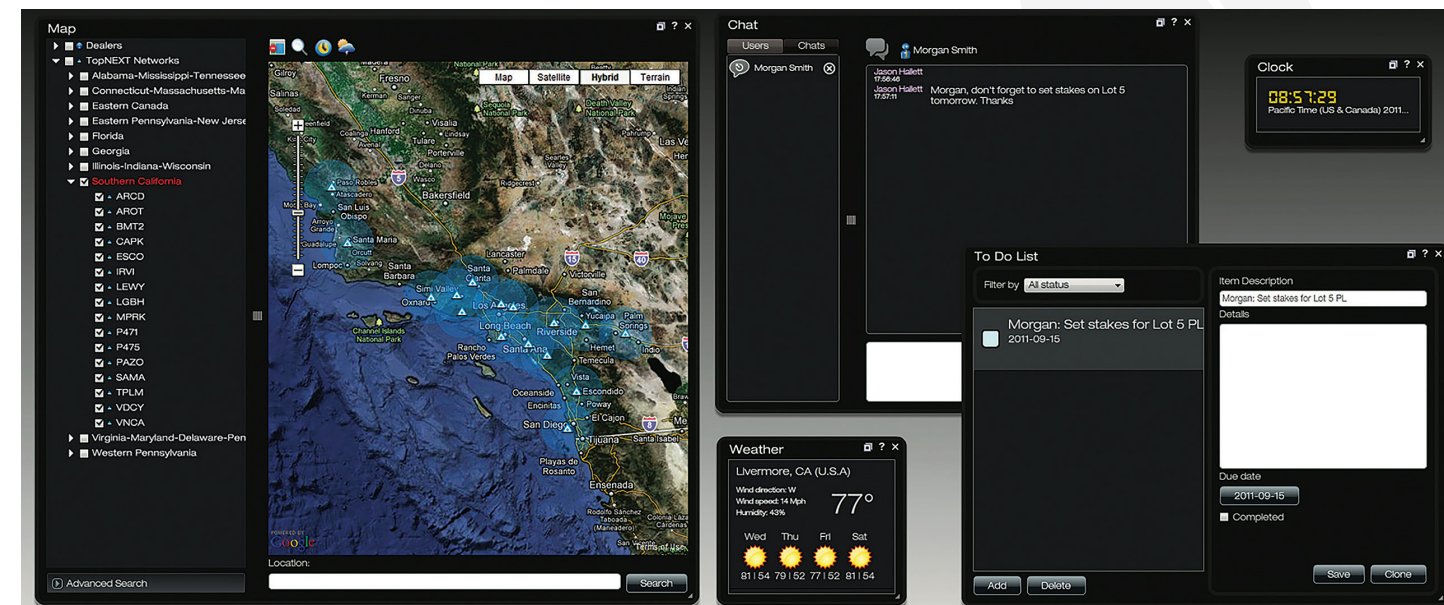
"The fundamentals of surveying haven't changed as such, but the way in which we are able to collect, reduce and deliver data certainly has. We have tools which allow us to see everything faster, and allow us to relay information to stakeholders in a more efficient and reliable way."

Brendon says that having Synergy Positioning Systems as a technology distributor has also been crucial to the company's experience using Topcon technology over the years.

"This is pretty rugged hardware, but damage occurs; with general wear and tear from rain, dust and mud along with being pushed through vegetation, through to accidents from being dropped and knocked over from time to time, problems and breaks do happen, so it's good to know we have effective and educated hardware and software back-up through Synergy.

"They've been representing Topcon through continual generational change and evolution for years now, so they really know the products they represent. They have a great knowledge bank, but they also have a direct line to the factory, so that's good for our peace-of-mind as a company which has made a big investment in this technology," he says.

More information on Topcon's range of specialised 3D machine control systems can be found at [www.synergypositioning.co.nz/products/machine-control](http://www.synergypositioning.co.nz/products/machine-control)



## Topcon machine control provides the eyes underwater



**Not even specialised underwater construction work is too difficult for Topcon machine control technology. Just ask Sean Kelly from multi-disciplined marine construction firm, Pacific 7.**

For Sean Kelly, managing director at Bay of Plenty-headquartered contracting and engineering firm, Pacific 7, the flexibility and robustness of Topcon machine control equipment is crucial.

With a reputation for tackling a diverse array of difficult contract work in the marine and civil construction sectors, Pacific 7 offers a multi-disciplinary approach to a variety of projects, both above and below water.

In high demand in the region for its marina, boat ramp and water channel build expertise, Pacific 7 utilises Topcon machine control technology on its barge-mounted Cat 320D long-reach excavator, in order to ensure faster and more accurate preliminary sub-surface construction work.

The excavator works off a 14.5-metre-long sectional barge, which can be deconstructed for road transportation to inland areas; Pacific

7 has been engaged in projects in riverways and lakes, as well as on the coast, meaning their excavator – and the machine control technology – needs to be able to work in a variety of marine environments.

"We're now at the stage where there's an expectation from our clients that we'll have some form of machine control for marine work," says Sean.

"We've been dredging off the barge since 2005, so I like to think we know our stuff in those working conditions. But the adoption of machine control about six months ago has certainly given more assuredness to these sort of projects."

While Pacific 7's marine work is of a very specialised nature, Sean says it is bread-and-butter work for him and his team of 12. Topcon's system gives his excavator operator eyes

underwater, offering accurate bucket placement in real-time, allowing for sub-surface materials to be moved and shaped more quickly.

"It works quite well for us, because we have the sensors fixed to the excavator's boom all the time, but – because marina construction and dredging work comes and goes – we just hire the Controlbox and GPS box when it's needed. It's more cost-effective for us to work this way."

Sean says he opted for Topcon as a technology provider simply because he could see it was an increasingly popular brand within the wider civil construction industry. He also says he has been impressed with the level of experience on offer through local Topcon distributor, Synergy Positioning Systems.

"The Synergy guys have been great. They were very helpful with all the set-up we needed to get done, and have been good with ongoing support too. They have a lot of experience with the technology, so I think if we ever came across an issue while using it, they'd be able to sort it out for us pretty quickly."

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