

# Company digs deep to thrive on innovation

**TONY RAGGATT**

PROVIDING a better quality product has opened lucrative exports to Africa and South America as well as providing a bedrock of work for Bohle manufacturer Townsville Engineering Industries.

The company has been highlighted by Australian Industry Group as one of Queensland's manufacturing successes amid the gloom of massive job losses in the sector nationally.

The company's general manager Richard Parker said yesterday that the exports came about mostly by an Australian milling technician working in Africa wanting to install one of their steel trommels in a mill at a gold mine in Tanzania.

That and one of Townsville Engineering Industries' managers declaring after some trepidation: "Let's give it a go."

"It was pretty much a case of an inquiry coming through a fax machine from halfway across the world to a small engineering company in Townsville," Mr Parker said.

That was several years ago and now the company has provided scores of trommels, large steel rotating screens used in mills, to mines in Tanzania, Zambia, Egypt, Peru and Papua New Guinea

as well as in Australia. Mr Parker said most of the trommels used in mining were screens made of poly material which were a risk of vibrating and falling out, resulting in a large cost in labour and time to replace.

The poly screens were also replaced more often.

The advantage of mills working more effectively was important considering grinding processes usually consumed more than 50 per cent of the energy at a mine and processing site.

"We offer a better solution and a more cost-effective solution," Mr Parker said.

Townsville Engineering Industries provides services in engineering, fabrication, and construction but the manufacture of trommels gives the company an edge.

"They have become quite important for us," Mr Parker said.

"It gives us a base workload when times are tough."

Mr Parker said the company's business owners invested in equipment and research and development, and looked to innovate and adapt technology.

Australian Industry Group Queensland director Jemina Dunn said it was the companies doing these types of things that were doing well.



**BIG SUCCESS:** Facilitator of NQ Enterprise Connect Ross Contarino, general manager of Townsville Engineering Industries Richard Parker and state director of Queensland Australian Industry Group Jemina Dunn with one of the groundbreaking trommels.

Picture: WESLEY MONTS