



THE NORTH AMERICAN CRANE INDUSTRY: LIFTING THROUGH CHANGE

The crane industry in North America has always been a barometer for the region's economic health. From infrastructure megaprojects to wind energy expansion and industrial growth, demand for lifting equipment mirrors broader shifts in construction, manufacturing and energy. Today, as we look ahead to 2026, the industry finds itself balancing strong opportunities with complex challenges.

MARKET DYNAMICS

The North American crane market is one of the most mature and diverse in the world, spanning everything from small carry deck cranes to some of the largest crawler cranes ever built. Demand continues to be fueled by:

- **Infrastructure spending:** U.S. federal investment through the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, along with Canada's national infrastructure plan, is driving unprecedented demand for heavy lifting across bridges, highways, ports, and airports.
- **Energy diversification:** The surge in renewable energy projects - particularly onshore and offshore wind - has created opportunities for large lattice boom crawlers, while oil & gas expansion still supports demand in traditional energy hubs like Texas, Alberta, and the Gulf Coast.
- **Urban development:** Tower crane fleets remain heavily concentrated in North America's fastest growing cities, with skylines in Toronto, Miami, Dallas, and Seattle showcasing the strength of both residential and mixed-use construction.
- **Rental dominance:** The rental model continues to outpace ownership, as contractors demand flexibility to scale fleets for projects while reducing capex risk. Rental houses are investing in newer fleets with advanced safety features, greener technology, and better telematics.

OEMs are responding by introducing hybrid and electric cranes, investing in automation, and building smarter maintenance systems. This positions North America not only as a high demand market but also as a test bed for the industry's next generation of technology.

WORKFORCE PRESSURES & TALENT DEVELOPMENT

Perhaps the single greatest challenge facing the crane industry is workforce availability. With a

significant percentage of operators, mechanics and supervisors nearing retirement, the talent gap is widening.

- **Training bottlenecks:** While union halls, trade schools and OEM led programs are training new operators, the pace isn't keeping up with demand. Certification pathways often require years of experience, slowing entry into the field.
- **Generational shift:** Younger workers are interested in technology driven roles. Positioning cranes as high tech, high skill careers with exposure to telematics, VR training simulators, and automated systems can help attract new talent.
- **Diversity & inclusion:** Companies are recognising the importance of broadening their recruitment base, actively encouraging women, veterans, and underrepresented groups to join the lifting profession.

Organisations across North America are investing in apprenticeships, mentorship programs, and cross-generational leadership development. The goal is to ensure knowledge transfer from seasoned operators while empowering the next generation to drive innovation.

WOMEN IN THE CRANE INDUSTRY: A GROWING FORCE

One of the most promising shifts in recent years has been the increasing number of women entering the crane and lifting sector. Traditionally male dominated, the industry is beginning to see a steady rise in female operators, riggers, engineers, project managers and executives.

- **Representation is growing:** From job sites to boardrooms, more women are taking on leadership roles and technical positions, with unions, OEMs and training centres reporting record participation.
- **Role models & visibility:** Industry events and media coverage are helping to highlight female



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professionals, inspiring the next generation to see cranes and construction as an inclusive career path.

- **Recruitment initiatives:** Many organisations are actively encouraging women to pursue crane operations through scholarships, mentorship programmes, and targeted outreach campaigns.
- **Impact on culture:** Diversity is reshaping workplace culture, fostering stronger collaboration, broader perspectives, and more inclusive safety and training practices.

"The crane cab isn't just for men anymore, women are proving every day that skill, precision and leadership know no gender."

While challenges remain, including breaking stereotypes and ensuring equal access to opportunities, the growth of women in the lifting industry represents a vital step forward in meeting workforce demands and building a more inclusive future.

SPOTLIGHT: WOMEN LIFTING THE INDUSTRY

As the number of women in the crane and lifting sector continues to grow, several professionals are making waves and inspiring the next generation:

- **Morgan Bosh** - Certified crane operator & Training advocate

Breaking barriers on major infrastructure projects, Morgan Bosh, previously an operator with Mammoet and currently a mobile crane instructor with NAIT, is one of a growing number of women earning operator certification and running complex lifts with precision and safety.



With a focus on mentoring, she has championed initiatives that bring more women into training programs, offering pathways to certification and long-term careers in lifting.

• **Kate Lampson** - Industry executive

As a senior leader at Lampson International, Kate Lampson has become one of the most recognisable voices in the global crane industry. With decades of experience in marketing, communications and corporate strategy, she is helping guide Lampson's legacy as an international leader in heavy lift and transport. Kate is not only championing innovation in crane design and fleet development but also advocating for a more inclusive and diverse workforce that reflects the industry's future. Through her leadership, she continues to build bridges between generations, ensuring that both tradition and progress remain at the core of the lifting profession.



Kate Lampson

• **Jennifer Gable** - Business owner & Workforce advocate

As the owner of JK Crane, Jennifer Gable has built her reputation as both a successful entrepreneur and a passionate advocate for people in the lifting industry. Beyond leading her company's operations, she has become a champion for mental health awareness and workforce development, two of the most pressing issues facing cranes and construction today. Jennifer is an advocate for breaking the stigma around mental health, pushing for programs that support operators and crews in high-pressure environments. At the same time, she is driving initiatives to recruit, train and retain the next generation of crane professionals, ensuring that the industry continues to thrive. Her leadership blends business acumen with compassion, proving that strong companies are built by taking care of their people.



Jennifer Gable

"Representation matters. When women see themselves in the cab, in the office, and in leadership, the industry becomes stronger for everyone."

MENTAL HEALTH & INDUSTRY WELLBEING

A critical but often overlooked issue in the crane and construction industry is mental health. Long hours, high-pressure job sites, and the physical risks of heavy lifting create stress that can take a toll on operators and crews.

- **Awareness is growing:** More companies are beginning to normalise conversations around mental health, providing access to counselling, wellness programs, and peer support initiatives.
- **Reducing stigma:** Industry leaders are speaking openly about the need to support mental health just as much as physical safety, ensuring that asking for help is seen as strength, not weakness.
- **Safety connection:** Studies show that fatigue,



stress, and burnout directly impact jobsite safety. Supporting mental health is not only a duty of care but also a measurable way to reduce accidents and improve productivity.

"Supporting mental health is just as vital as maintaining equipment, both keep the jobsite safe and productive."

SAFETY & REGULATION

Safety has long been the defining characteristic of North America's crane culture. Regulatory oversight remains rigorous:

- OSHA in the United States sets strict standards for crane operation, inspection, and operator certification. These rules continue to evolve, particularly around new technologies such as self-erecting tower cranes and autonomous systems.
- Provincial regulations in Canada similarly enforce rigorous safety checks, with additional emphasis on cold weather operations, lifting near utilities, and urban density challenges.
- Certification pathways such as NCCCO (U.S.) and Red Seal (Canada) remain gold standards, but companies are also embracing supplementary training to ensure operators are comfortable with advanced telematics, remote controls, and automated assist features.

A growing emphasis is being placed on proactive safety systems:

- Realtime load monitoring
- Collision avoidance sensors
- Remote diagnostics
- Fleet wide data integration for compliance audits

By embedding safety into every stage - training, planning, and operation - the North American industry is setting benchmarks that influence crane operations worldwide.

INNOVATION ON THE RISE

Innovation is not just a buzzword it's rapidly reshaping the North American lifting industry.

- **Electrification & Hybrid cranes:** OEMs are introducing electric Rough Terrain cranes and hybrid All Terrains, responding to stricter emissions regulations and customer demand for greener fleets.
- **Digital transformation:** Advanced telematics now track utilisation, fuel efficiency and predictive maintenance. Rental companies are leveraging this data to reduce downtime and increase ROI.
- **Autonomous & semi-autonomous systems:**



While still in early adoption, self-levelling outriggers, automated boom positioning, and remote controlled crawler cranes are making jobs safer and more precise.

- **3D Lift Planning:** BIM (Building Information Modeling) integration and virtual simulation tools allow contractors to map complex lifts digitally before ever stepping on site, reducing risk and boosting efficiency.
- **Marketplace Evolution:** Digital platforms are modernising how cranes and lifting equipment are bought, sold and rented, offering global reach and transparency to what was once a highly localised business.

"Innovation is the bridge between generations helping attract new talent while driving measurable gains in safety and efficiency."

GLOBAL CONNECTIONS

While the North American crane sector remains strong domestically, its reach is global. Many U.S. and Canadian companies are supplying cranes, parts and expertise abroad, particularly into South America and Africa. This outward growth highlights the region's role not only as a consumer of lifting technology but also as an exporter of experience and innovation.

LOOKING AHEAD

The North American crane industry stands at a crossroads. With \$billions in infrastructure projects, growing interest in renewable energy, and rapid technological advancements, the potential for growth is undeniable. Yet the success of this momentum hinges on the industry's ability to attract and retain talent, support workforce wellbeing, embrace innovation, and maintain the highest safety standards.

At its core, the North American crane industry has always been about resilience lifting heavy loads, building stronger communities, and adapting to every new challenge. That spirit will define its future. ■

Quick Facts: North American crane market

- **Top Demand Segments:** Infrastructure, wind energy, urban development
- **Dominant Business Model:** Rentals account for around 70 percent of market activity
- **Hotspots:** Texas, Gulf Coast, Toronto, Miami, Dallas, Seattle
- **Emerging Trends:** Electrification, telematics, digital marketplaces

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XG1823ERT



Lift capacity: 700kg
Max. working height: 18.1m
Battery: 48V/480Ah
Flooded lead acid



XG0807ACW



Lift capacity: 230kg
Max. working height: 7.8m
Battery: 24V/200Ah
Maintenance-free lead acid/
25.76V/150Ah Lithium battery



XGA12ACK



Lift capacity: 230 kg
Max. working height: 11.56m
Max. working range: 6.87m
Battery: 48V/400Ah



XG1412AC



Lift capacity: 320kg
Max. working height: 13.8/9m
Battery: 24V/200Ah
Maintenance-free lead acid/
25.76V/202Ah Lithium battery