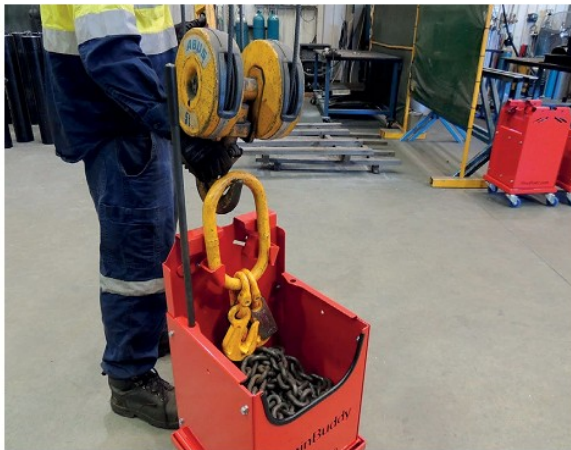


FACE TIME **STEVE ANDERSON**

# Entrepreneurial spirit

**Steve Anderson** one of the founders of The Rigging Shed is entering into another entrepreneurial venture, SlingRakz Systems – he talks to Maria Hadlow about why he is still excited by the lifting industry.



**W**hen Steve Anderson reflects on his working life he says, “SlingRakz is just my third place of employment – they have all been fabulous places to work – great groups of people with energy and harmony – working with people who have same goals makes it easy.”

SlingRakz Systems is Steve’s most recent venture – he and three colleagues are developing and manufacturing a range of racking and handling equipment, which is designed to rationalise and ease the storage and management of lifting equipment. Prior to this endeavour, Steve and his business partner Steve Flint founded and built the Rigging Shed business.

Steve’s first job in the lifting industry was with Sling-Rig a company with an outstanding reputation for quality and service. It was bought by Bullivants in 2004.

“I joined Sling-Rig from school at 17,” says Steve. It was only supposed to be a one year traineeship but I ended up staying there for 12 years progressing through the business into senior management – it was a great place to work.”

## Take control of the stores

SlingRakz Systems’ range of storage and handling solutions for lifting and rigging products are being developed in response to a changing working environment.

Anyone who has worked for just a few years in the lifting industry will have encountered the Aladdin’s cave of storage areas where products have been more dumped than stored, confusing and obscuring the equipment. Not only is it inadvisable to house, what are essentially pieces of safety equipment in this way, it makes them difficult to lift and handle and hard to assess their condition.

Health and safety regulations make it inadvisable to manually haul and drag heavy chains, slings and equipment about the workshop. A changing demographic in the workplace may require that equipment is easier to handle by different people of different ages and sexes. In addition, efficient equipment management and testing

protocols are important for traceability and safety.

SlingRakz’s range of professionally designed racking, storage and safe handling products can: minimise manual handling; minimise physical lifting; allow for easier, more orderly storage and reduce manpower requirements.

SlingRakz is a relatively new business, but the team of four driving the business have some 70 years of combined experience with the design, supply and servicing of lifting, rigging and materials handling products. The product range currently consists of storage racking and chain handling solutions but new products are being developed all the time.

Steve Anderson, one of the directors of SlingRakz says, “Our aim is to develop products that will make lifting equipment easier to handle.

“Some equipment is too heavy to lift according to health and safety regulations and the workforce is

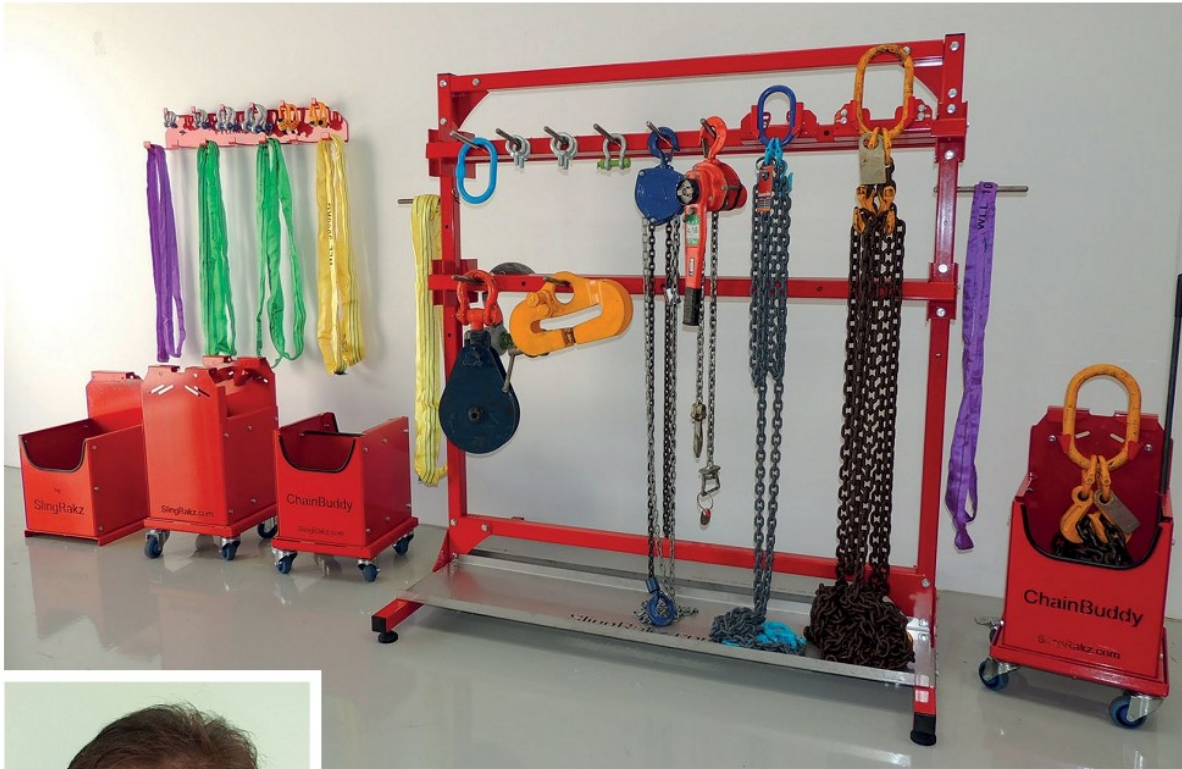
changing. It is no longer solely comprised of 45 year old men with broad shoulders,” says Steve.

“I first noticed that there was a growing number of women working in the mining and oil and gas industries and also in stores – but there are also older and younger people to take into account too.”

The products are being manufactured in Western Australia. SlingRakz has Partnered with The Global Lifting Group of Companies in Australia and is currently in discussions with companies in Singapore, Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines and Europe to become distribution partners.

As well as the standard products SlingRakz custom builds to clients’ requirements. Customers can provide a rigging equipment list with an idea of what wall and floor space they have to work with and SlingRakz can offer a custom designed and built racking, storage and handling solution.





**“I like to think a little differently – not outside the box: I think in a whole different box.”**

This first job has set the tone for the inclusive way that Steve likes to work. “It is important to respect the people you work with and help them to be the best they can. You need humility to create a team,” he says. “It’s not about the individual it’s about the team.”

Many people might have been satisfied with a successful career in a well respected company, but Steve had a desire to prove himself. “I had a great job at Sling-Rig with good job security, but I had ideas that I wanted to explore outside that business.”

“I like to think a little differently – not outside the box, I think in a whole different box,” he says. “I needed the freedom to pursue ideas and business partners who understood the need to build, create and explore.” Steve has found those business partners in the guise of Steve Flint, Matt Worth and Ryan Rule.

“The Rigging Shed was a good idea combined with great business partners,” says Steve. “The right mix and the right people and we had known each other a long time.”

The Rigging Shed began in 2001 with just the two Steves and one mobile testing truck on the road loaded with parts. The business now

employs 70 people, has four sites and 11 mobile test beds.

“The Rigging Shed is now a mobile testing, product supply, service and manufacturing company for lifting systems. It is number one for service in Western Australia,” says Steve.

“We grew with the mining and the oil and gas boom,” he explains. We recruited lots of good people with a good work ethic and have a stable workforce, some of the staff have been there 15 years and quite a few for more than 10 years.

“I am super proud of all the people there and what the company has achieved. The staff is an important reason the business is doing so well.

“Leaders should do anything to support staff and customers - when you build the right culture everything flows. We worked hard but we played hard too – it’s about building relationships.”

After 18 years Steve’s personal circumstances meant he chose to emigrate to Singapore.

“The Rigging Shed had been my baby,” he says, “but it was time to give the next generation of management their opportunity. It was not an easy decision to let go of the day-to-day involvement, but once I got my head around it, new ideas started to flow.”

Starting SlingRakz Systems has some commonality with The Rigging Shed, primarily business partners who Steve has known for between 15-25 years.

Steve finds it hard to decide what he enjoys most about beginning the entrepreneurial process again.

“It’s exciting to focus on a new business, new products and to develop and create something new, but I really enjoy the marketing, developing a partner network and talking to end users and suppliers too,” he says.

“I think what I like most is creating a win-win for everyone. good products, good working environment, good partner network, happy customers and good service.” ●

