



## Booming business

Now consisting of three generations of engineering, **Dan Watkins** isn't slowing down his family's tradition. In fact, with the help of parts suppliers like **BPW Transpec**, his agricultural machinery business, **Calibre Spraying**, is going from strength to strength.

The art of invention is in Dan Watkins' bloodline. It started with his grandfather, a mechanical fitter, who was the general manager of the Swan Brush Factory in Fremantle and invented a lot of the machinery they used there. "What he was doing then is very similar to what I do now," Dan says. "The difference is it's 2023, so instead of working with pneumatic machines using air, today we use a lot of electronics and technology. My family line has always been


around inventing and innovating products and making the world a better place in our own little way." A boilermaker by trade, Dan says that industry is where he cut his teeth and developed a passion for designing and manufacturing. Five years ago, he decided to start a repair service business for farmers and through that, quickly moved into building trailer products. And his sights were set on something big – becoming an Australian leader in manufacturing

broadacre boom sprayers. Joining forces with Scott Morrell, a broad acre spraying contractor, they formed Calibre Spraying to design and manufacture a serviceable and efficient towed boomspray. That's when his relationship with BPW Transpec began. BPW Transpec has been providing parts and equipment – including axles and suspension systems – to the transport, mining and agricultural industries for more than 65 years. A reliable suspension

system was fundamental in creating the boom sprayer Dan was after. "Boom sprayers would be some of the hardest going gear in the world to be honest. They are dealing with some pretty rugged conditions," he says – adding that at the top of the scale a boom sprayer can carry 10,000 litres of liquid chemicals, consist of 48 metres of boom and travel 25 kilometres per hour. BPW Transpec supplies Calibre Spraying its heavy duty off-road airbag suspension systems, wide track braked and unbraked axles and hydraulic and pneumatic braking systems. "Their products are quite phenomenal," Dan says. "When people see the BPW branding on the hub, they know its quality and as a designer, the less you have to worry about, the better, which is the case with their products." Calibre Spraying's newest offering is its

**Fast fact**  
Herbicides have been used to control weeds in Australia since the late nineteenth century when common salt and kerosene were used to control certain weedy plants. The boom sprayer was developed in the 1880s in France. In Australia the first boom sprayer units were adopted in the early 1900s and were horse-drawn

Generation 10 Series Trailed Boomspray which provides high-capacity water rates, ground-following structured booms, simple operation, and smart plumbing as well as the latest in technology in spraying. Dan says it's technology that has taken his product to the next level, for example using sensors that detect green plants on brown soil, enabling precision spraying which can potentially save farmers 90 per cent in chemical costs. "There's so much technology pushing the industry forward and we're really at the forefront of all that," he says. "It's about

harnessing great concepts and ideas and putting them into a product that makes farming a lot more effective, profitable and environmentally friendly." With his business continuing to grow, Dan says the secret to his success comes down to having a good team around him. "It's a lot like coaching. Every financial year it's just about coaching our team through to the to the premiership, so to speak," he says, adding that working with good companies such as BPW, provides the final piece to the puzzle. "BPW is a major factor in helping all these smart people work together to build a great product that gets to farms and really innovates the industry for farmers." 

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