

Keson Case Study: Cavers Look to Keson Long Tapes for Rugged Reliability



CUSTOMER PROFILE

Based in Sewanee, TN, the Sewanee Mountain Grotto is an organization with more than 50 volunteers dedicated to exploring, surveying and conserving 14,000+ caves and watersheds throughout TN, AL and GA (TAG region).

www.caves.org/grotto/sewaneemountaingrotto

BUSINESS SITUATION

North American caves provide shelter and home to thousands of creatures, in addition to pure, scenic beauty as daily tourist attractions. But cave visitors do not always clean up.

Known as cavers, the volunteers of Sewanee Mountain Grotto help keep caves clean while also enjoying the opportunity to explore and survey caves in the TAG region. This work, which contributes to conservation and scientific study of cave environments, involves hours of careful measuring in conditions that are often challenging to the cavers and their equipment.

The equipment these cavers use must be rugged and able to stand up to extreme weather conditions, from regular submersion in water to extreme cold, abuse and the occasional drop of up to several hundred feet.

The cave surveys conducted must be accurate, because they are submitted to all surveying groups in the state as well as to the National Speleological Society (NSS) www.caves.org.

SOLUTION

The Sewanee Mountain Grotto was first organized in the 1960s and has been using Keson fiberglass tapes as part of its standard surveyor's toolkit ever since.

"We usually send in a team of three-to-four people on a surveying project, and we always carry a Keson 100-ft fiberglass tape, a compass and a chronometer with us," said Jason Hardy, president, Sewanee Mountain Grotto.

"We like the 100-ft line the best, but we've used the 200 and 300-ft lines before on larger free falls," said Hardy. "When we draw the cave, these fiberglass tape lines hold up better than other tapes we've used. They are rugged!"

"Some guys like carrying the laser distance meters, but they still carry a Keson tape," Hardy continued. "The laser distance meters are fine, but they run on batteries, they can't be used under water, and they don't like to be dropped. We put the tapes through a lot of work; they are submerged in water, sometimes pushed through 3-inch crawl spaces, and yet they are accurate and easy to read in dark caves."



BENEFITS

- Rugged equipment proven to take a beating in harsh conditions
- Easy to read tapes, even in the dark
- Molded handle is easy to grasp, even with wet hands
- Crank handle is reinforced with metal to provide years of reliable use
- Double-throat roller guides prevent tape twisting
- Shovel handle is ideal for rapid reeling