

WOOD WORKS

A PUBLICATION FOR AND ABOUT C.N. WOOD CO., INC. CUSTOMERS • 2005 No. 4

Featured in this issue:

ATS EQUIPMENT, INC.

Putting the customer first
means growth for this
Boston-based rental company

See article inside...



John Connolly,
President

KOMATSU

A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT



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Dear Equipment User:

As 2005 begins to draw to a close, you're probably already looking ahead to next year. You're not alone. All of us at C.N. Wood Company, Inc. are also looking forward to 2006 with great anticipation. But before we look too far ahead, let's take a quick look back.

Of course, final figures are not yet available, but it appears that construction "put in place" for the year will come in at about \$1.1 trillion, up roughly 9 percent from 2004. Private residential construction continues to lead the way. Analysts say part of the increase is a result of higher prices for materials such as cement, steel, copper and petroleum-based products — but despite that, gains were solid across-the-board.

Forecasters think things may slow a bit next year, but overall, construction will remain strong. The big question is how much long-term impact the devastation brought by Hurricane Katrina will have on the industry. New Orleans and the Gulf Coast are not only important energy-producing areas; their ports also handle many raw materials imported for use in construction. Unfortunately, that means prices will likely continue to rise, some perhaps by substantial amounts.

All of these issues are out of your control and out of ours as well. At C.N. Wood, our goal, as always, will be to provide you, our customer, with top products at a fair price, and to provide responsive, professional support that keeps you up and running.

Something we are very excited about is the many new Komatsu models with ecot3 engines that will debut in 2006. The units promise to be not only cleaner-burning, but also more productive and more fuel-efficient, which will almost certainly be increasingly important to you in the months and years ahead.

Please don't hesitate to give us a call for information about these new units or if there's anything else we might be able to help you with.

Sincerely,
C.N. WOOD COMPANY, INC.


Robert S. Benard
President

A glance back
and a look at
what's ahead



WOOD WORKS

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John Koetz, Director of Product Marketing and Planning for Komatsu America Corp., shares his thoughts on Komatsu's efforts to produce demonstrably superior equipment that's truly "unique and unrivaled."

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ATS EQUIPMENT, INC.

Putting the customer first means growth for this Boston-based rental company



John Connolly,
President

With the continuing consolidation of rental companies today, a family-owned rental business that is growing and expanding is unusual. One company that fits that description is ATS Equipment, Inc. of Boston.

Started in 1985 as Air Tool Services by John Connolly, the company changed its name and its focus 15 years ago when the emphasis moved from selling and repairing air tools to renting construction equipment to utility and general contractors.

The company also expanded into New Hampshire in 2001 when ATS opened another operation in Candia, just east of Manchester. Today, 42 employees work in both locations, which supply equipment for contractors throughout the metro Boston area as well as in southern New Hampshire and northern Massachusetts. Further growth is part of the company's overall business plan.

"We plan to open a new store in the near future," revealed Connolly, "and we plan to have up to five in operation five years from now."

A family affair

Connolly, who is president, started the business after working 25 years for a major rental company in the area. Within the last 10 years his three sons joined the business. Today, Brian Connolly is operations manager in charge of the Boston store, J.C. Connolly oversees the New Hampshire operation as well as computer-related issues, and Stephen Connolly is responsible for credit collections and back-office systems. John Connolly says he tries to stay in the background as much as possible, but is still very involved, particularly in goal-setting and financial areas.

"I'm very proud to have my three sons in the business," he said. "It's a great thrill to work

with your own family. It's the best thing that could happen in my life."

Although the company started as a small air tool repair and sales shop, today it is primarily a rent-to-rent house, according to J.C. Connolly. "We are a dealer for some lines of equipment, but our main focus is the rental market," he said. "We occasionally rent equipment for as little as a day, or up to a period of seven or eight months."

According to Chris Tyszk, Service Manager for ATS Equipment, the pieces of equipment in inventory number in the hundreds. "The smallest thing we rent is a Bosch electric chipping hammer," he said. "We also have air tools, compaction equipment, dehumidifiers and concrete finishing equipment, as well as our largest pieces of equipment, which are Komatsu excavators."

Fleet of 75 Komatsu excavators

More than 75 Komatsu excavators, including Dash-6 and Dash-7 models, are in stock, ranging from a PC9 to a PC300 and everything in between, according to Tyszk. "Now, some of our customers are asking for a PC400," he added. "We also rent Komatsu wheel loaders, bulldozers and tracked dump trucks."

ATS Equipment started purchasing Komatsu equipment from C.N. Wood about 10 years ago. Now, Sales Representative Brian Doherty calls on the family-run business. Tyszk, who helps make the purchasing decisions, said he and the Connollys are all in agreement that Komatsu excavators are best for their business.

"We went with Komatsu because of the reputation of the manufacturer and the ease of doing business with C.N. Wood," said John Connolly. "That made it very comfortable for us."

"Quality is also an important factor, along with parts support, service support, sales support and resale value," said Brian. "Chris (Tyszka) drives many of the purchasing decisions and he's sold on Komatsu."

Ease of maintenance

The company has its own mechanics — eight in Boston and six in New Hampshire — who do most major repairs as well as regular servicing under the supervision of Tyszka, who is a master mechanic. He said he likes that Komatsu keeps the same hydraulics on the machines throughout the product line and uses the same filters on all sizes of its equipment.

"Ease of maintenance is really one of the biggest reasons we stay with Komatsu, as well as the quality of the equipment," he explained. "The machines are durable and they'll take the abuse the rental market dishes out."

Although they always consider price when buying equipment, J.C. agreed that dealer support is equally important. "C.N. Wood works with us, especially Jimmy Burnham in the parts department, because parts are a critical aspect of our business in order to get machines that are down up and running," he observed. "The other important issue is service. Chris can always talk to someone on the phone at C.N. Wood and work through a problem if he needs to."

The company rents out many excavator attachments, including hydraulic hammers, augers, thumbs, grading and shaping buckets. "An especially popular machine is a Komatsu PC27 with 600 ft.-lb. hammer," said Brian. "We also rent PC220s with 5,000-ft.-lb. hydraulic hammers and PC120s with 2,500-ft.-lb. hammers. Because there is so much rock and ledge around Boston, hammers have become very popular. We have a variety of sizes that fit all different pieces of equipment."

ATS also recently started offering man-lift equipment to contractors and is considering getting into material-handling equipment. "We're always looking at new areas, new segments of the industry," explained John Connolly. "Everything we do is planned and targeted, and that gives us some discipline."



ATS Equipment has more than 75 Komatsu excavators in stock to meet a wide variety of rental requests. They range in size from a PC9 to a PC300.



Customers most important

The company tries to turn over its equipment every few years to keep an inventory of newer equipment available for customers. Those customers are the most important part of the business, Connolly pointed out. "We are in constant touch with our customers and try to treat them like family," he noted. "One of our fortés is that we don't allow any disputes to linger. We try to address them immediately. Every customer can reach an important person here at all times, including the owners. We think that's an advantage because customers are not only looking for the best equipment, they want people they can trust."

"We appreciate our customers and take great pride in their success," Connolly continued. "When our customers succeed, we succeed. We've grown with so many customers that we have a personal relationship with them and we have a personal sense of pride in their growth."

ATS Equipment's Boston, Mass., operation is staffed by (l-r) Joe Fernandez, John Stanton, John "J.C." Connolly, Tom Fitzgerald, Jim Guarino, Brian Gallagher, Dean Archer, Tom Darcy, Stan Greeley, Chris Tyszka, Maureen Irwin, John N. Connolly, Frank Flemming, Mark Graziano, Stephen Connolly, and Brian Connolly.

Continued ...

"Service the way it used to be" is ATS Equipment's motto

...continued

and success. We want their business, we'll work hard for it and work hard to correct any mistakes. It's not about us, it's about whether or not they succeed."

"All-Star" employee team

To earn the trust of their customers, ATS needs knowledgeable employees who know the importance of good service.

"Someone told me we have an 'All-Star' team," said Mark Cooper, who has been manager of the ATS store in Candia, N.H., since it opened four years ago. "We know our job is to service people and we get the job done. We care. In fact, our motto is 'Service the way it used to be.' Our customers seem to appreciate it."

Most ATS employees have been with the company long-term and are extremely dedicated,

according to Stephen Connolly. "That's where we believe we set ourselves apart from the national rental operations," he said. "Our people care about whether or not you get your equipment on time, and will go the extra mile to satisfy you."

"There's no job that's beneath anyone here," emphasized Brian Connolly. "That's one of the fundamental tenets of working here. Everyone brings a different set of skills to the table. Everyone has some experience that helps the business in some way."

A few of the company's other key personnel in the New Hampshire branch include: Mike Cooper, Rick Morrisette, Kim Cooper, Fred Stepanek, Rick Meserve, Gary Minakin, Gary Krol, Keith Plourde, Stephen Webb, Nathan Racicot, Paul Palmer, Joe Elliott, Will Ross, Ray Racicot, and Dan Whitman. The ATS team is also strengthened by Boston branch employees Dave Yager, Janet Kirby, Ralph Daigle, Tom Darcy, Brian Gallagher, John Stanton, Frank Flemming, Tom Fitzgerald, Dean Archer, Joe Fernandez, Jim Guarino, Stan Greeley, and business manager extraordinaire Maureen Irwin.

Looking ahead

Looking into the future, all the Connollys forecast continued growth but in a controlled fashion. "If we find the right people, that growth will be achieved sooner rather than later," said Stephen. "But in our opinion, it's all about people. If we can find the right people and the right partners like C.N. Wood, we'll grow very steadily in the years to come. We foresee the construction industry and the rental industry doing very well." ■



At ATS Equipment's Candia, N.H., office, the company relies on (L-R) Mike Cooper, Rick Morrisette, Rick Meserve, Mark Cooper, Garrett Neeper, Keith Plourde, Fred Stepanek, Gary Minakin, and Nathan Racicot.

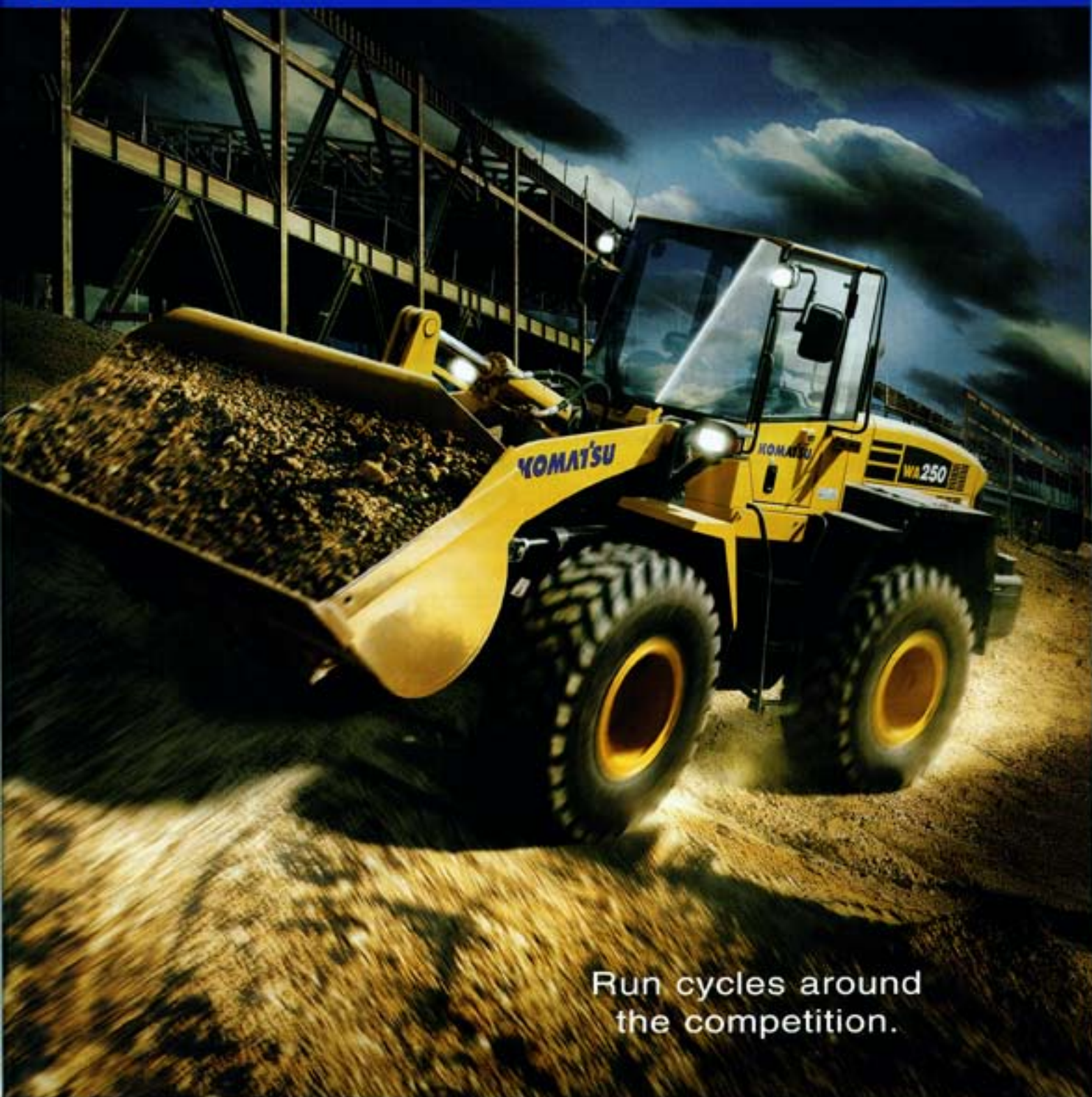
A popular machine ATS Equipment rents is a Komatsu PC27 excavator fitted with a 600-ft.-lb. hammer. Due to the amount of rock and ledge in the area, the company says hammers have become popular.



ATS Equipment President John Connolly (right) works with C.N. Wood Sales Rep. Brian Doherty for much of his equipment needs.



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TRANSPORTATION FUNDING

Industry group praises passage of highway bill, but says much more needs to be done



Pete Ruane,
President and CEO,
American Road &
Transportation Builders
Association (ARTBA)

In August, President Bush signed a six-year highway funding bill into law. The Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act — A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU) authorizes more than \$286 billion in spending on highway and transit programs.

Pete Ruane, President and CEO of the American Road & Transportation Builders Association, made the following comments about the new law.

"SAFETEA-LU is a step in the right direction, but will not come close to meeting

the nation's highway/transit needs identified in repeated government reports.

"President Eisenhower embraced a vision for transportation 50 years ago when he created the Interstate Highway System. It's now time for policymakers and the President to formulate a new transportation vision for the next 50 years. I believe it can be done, but it's going to take unprecedented involvement and leadership of the business community, and political will by Congress."

Adjusted for inflation, Ruane says SAFETEA's average annual funding gains are only 1.8 percent, compared to increases of 6 percent annually in the previous law. He says that spells trouble now and especially in the future, when there will be many millions more drivers on the road. The goal of policymakers, he says, should be major rebuilding and modernization of existing infrastructure, adding significant capacity across all modes of transportation.

"Toll-financed, truck-only lanes should be considered for existing Interstate highway right-of-way, where appropriate. New Interstates, free-trade corridors, elevated roadways and trains, high-speed rail routes, and tunneling in some urban areas should also be seriously considered as options. Modernization and expansion of ports, waterways and airport runways should also be part of the mix.

"The cost of improving and modernizing America's transportation systems will be significant, but the cost of doing nothing for future U.S. economic growth, traffic congestion, air pollution levels and highway safety is far greater." ■

Transportation groups like ARTBA call SAFETEA-LU, the new highway bill, "a step in the right direction," but say it won't come close to meeting the nation's highway needs in the years to come.



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MAXIMIZING YOUR BOTTOM LINE

A 10-step process that can help your construction company be more profitable

“There’s a four-letter word that best describes owning a construction company,” says George Hedley, a business-building expert and professional speaker who also owns and manages a \$75-million construction and development company. “The word is risk. In a business with all the variables of construction, you may never be able to totally eliminate risk, but there certainly are ways to minimize it.”

In order to help contractors do just that, Hedley has developed a 10-step program

Because of all the variables involved in construction, there’s probably always going to be a certain amount of financial risk on each and every job you do. But careful planning and attention to detail can help you minimize the likelihood of a money-losing job.



aimed at maximizing profits, which he presented at a seminar during CONEXPO 2005.

1. How much profit?

The first step, he says, is to determine how much profit you think you should make.

“The industry average is 2 percent to 3 percent net profit before tax,” he said. “Is that really enough for you to be successful? Probably not, because with all the risk and variables, the fact is, 65 percent of construction companies don’t make any profit, which is why there’s a high failure rate in the industry.”

“One way to look at the situation is to ask, ‘If I were investing in a construction company, what kind of a return on my investment would I want?’ The answer is probably at least 15 percent, so that can be a starting point. Personally, my priority is to make a 30 percent minimum return on equity, and I shoot for a specific dollar amount of profit on each job and for the year as a whole.”

2. Set clear targets & goals

“Once you’ve determined how much profit you need and want, set clear targets with specific deadlines to help achieve it. You must have a plan and you must always be making progress toward it. If you aim at nothing in particular, you’ll hit it every time. It would be like playing golf without a green or a hole, or playing a football game without keeping score.

“It’s important to be specific and to be able to measure your progress. I use the initials SWAT.COM to keep me on track. My goals are Specific, Written, Attainable, Time-dependent, Clear and Challenging, On-purpose and On-target, and Measurable.”



One of the most important aspects of construction company profitability, especially for companies with large equipment fleets, is to know your cost of doing business. The true cost of any machine, of course, is much higher than the purchase price. It includes interest, insurance, maintenance and repairs, and fuel. Likewise, your employees cost you significantly more than their hourly wage rate. Accurately determining and tracking your true cost of doing business is a crucial aspect of ensuring profitability.

3. Use formula to always make a profit

"Whether you measure annual profit as a 'Return on Overhead' or a 'Return on Equity,' it's either a 12-step or 13-step formula, but they both will get you to the same place. It basically involves projecting expenses, inserting your return goals, factoring in projected profit and overhead — then determining the volume you need to reach those goals.

"From your company history, you probably have an 'average job size,' so you know about how many jobs you're going to have to do. You probably also know your bid-to-hit ratio, so you know about how many jobs you're going to have to bid, and you should keep track monthly to make sure you're staying on track to meet your goals."

4. Know, track, measure and control costs

"It's amazing to me, but 70 percent of contractors don't know their fixed cost of doing business. Without that information, it's a wonder any of them make money. For example, if you're just figuring the base pay of your employees, you're probably going

to be underestimating the true cost by 30 percent to 50 percent. Similarly, the cost of your equipment and trucks must include not only the purchase price, but also the interest you're paying plus insurance, maintenance and gas. It's important to assign an hourly cost to both your personnel and your equipment in order to determine what your bid should be.

"Keep your overhead low and track everything. And when you assign an hourly rate to a crew member, make sure they're earning it relative to your best employees, your 'A' players. If they're not — if they're 'C' players — get rid of them and make room for somebody who is or might become an 'A' player for you."

Continued . . .

The information for this article came from a CONEXPO seminar presented by George Hedley. Mr. Hedley owns his own construction company, and as the founder and owner of Handhat Presentations, is also a nationally known motivational speaker who specializes in providing profit-building information to construction-related groups. For more information, contact Mr. Hedley at 1-800-851-8553 or visit www.handhatpresentations.com.



Ten steps to profitability

... continued

5. Charge the right markup

"The amount of markup you factor into a job for both overhead and profit should reflect the amount of risk you're taking to do the job. The higher the risk, the larger the markup. To calculate the right markup for your company, start by figuring the return you want on your equity and overhead. I recommend a 15 percent to 25 percent return on equity and a 25 percent to 50 percent return on your overhead costs. Add this profit amount to your overhead budget. This is the total overhead and profit you want to make. Using that amount as a goal, you then can calculate your markup rate based on your anticipated volume."

6. Install operational systems

"Operational systems are essentially formalized company standards and guidelines that keep everybody on your team on the same page. By installing systems, you're able to produce the same results every time, like a fast-food restaurant or a top hotel line. Customers always know what they're going to get from you; they like that consistency and because of it, they become repeat customers."

7. Open your books & share the wealth

"By opening your books to your employees, you're not only showing them respect, you're

also showing them exactly what it takes to make a profit and why it's important that each person does his job. Incentive bonuses should be part of the 'open book' policy when the company has done particularly well on a job — or for a month or quarter or year."

8. Sell more to make more

"Know your customers. Visit with them face-to-face. Focus on your most profitable customers. Target them and others like them, then go about making them repeat customers. Point out things that differentiate you from your competitors and exploit your expertise."

9. Do what customers value

"Value is what something is worth. Money is a measure of value. To make lots of money, do what your customers value highly. Basically, all customers want first-class quality, top service and the lowest price. It's very hard to give them all three. Quality and service are what you should always strive to provide because those are the things you can control, whereas low price depends on what others decide to bid. Look for opportunities to do things that set you apart from the competition and add value in the customer's eyes. In that way, make the low price a matter of comparing apples to oranges."

10. Continuously innovate & improve

"I advocate cutting or controlling costs throughout every aspect of your business except marketing and new technology. That's because effective marketing will increase your business and new technology will help you cut your overhead costs. Yes, there's an initial outlay for the marketing and the technology, but the payback is typically many times greater than the cost."

"If you're not going forward in the construction industry, chances are you're going backward; and with the pace of change today, it doesn't take long to be left behind. It's always better to be early rather than late to the party when you're talking about technology. Anything you can do that puts you a step ahead of your competition, even if it's for a short period of time, could result in getting a new customer that might become a customer for life." ■

Business-building expert George Hedley strongly advocates adopting and embracing new technology as a way to streamline your operation and cut overhead. "Of course, there's an initial outlay, but the payback is typically many times greater than the cost."





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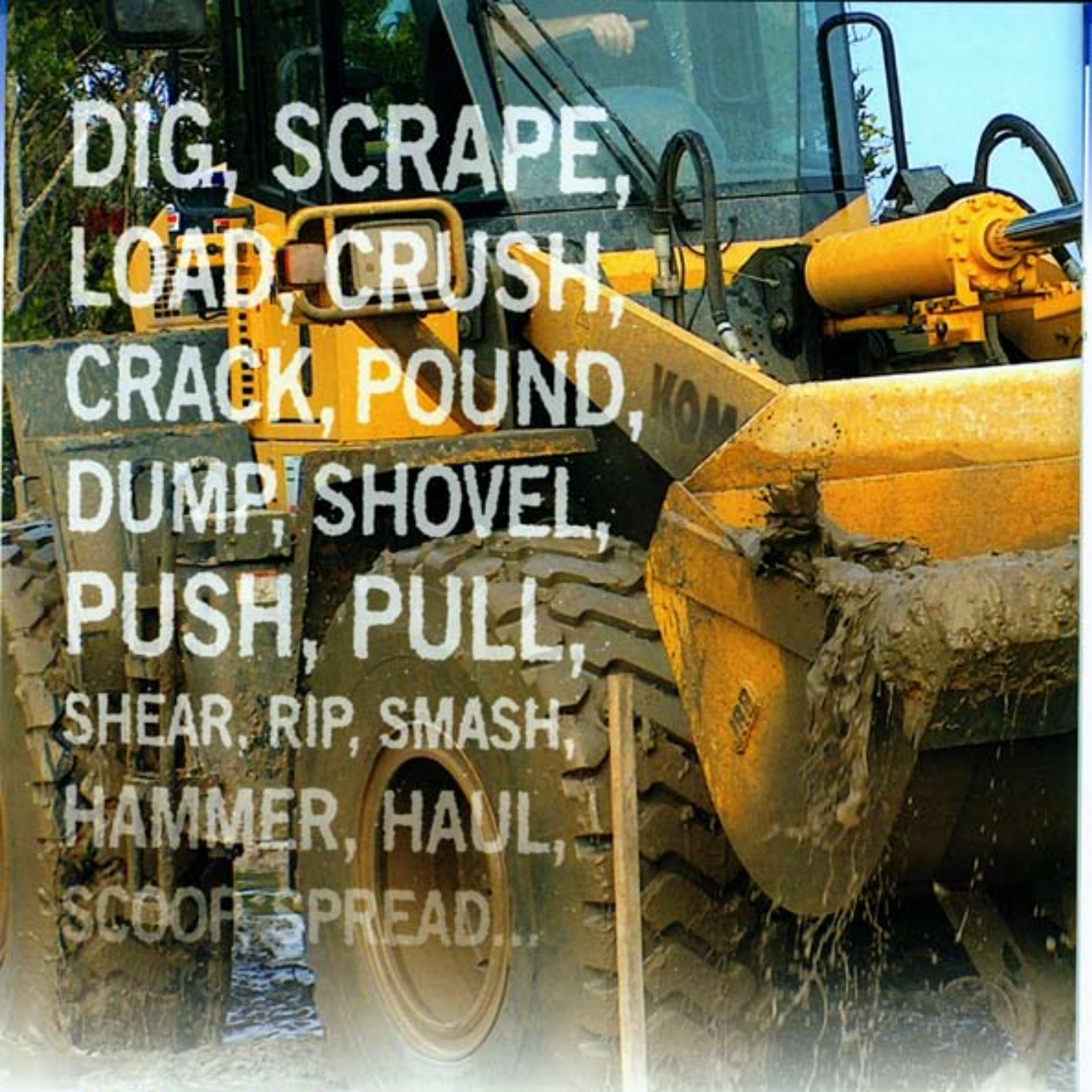
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PALADIN HEAVY CONSTRUCTION

"WORKING GEAR" MACHINES

By utilizing excavator core technology, Komatsu develops industry-specific equipment

Hydraulic excavators are primarily digging machines. Of course, you can lift with them, do demolition work and some other tasks — but for the most part, the excavator is for going underground. In recent years, however, core excavator technology has also been applied to many different above-grade applications.

"By utilizing the core technology found in Komatsu hydraulic excavators, we've been able to develop many specialized, purpose-built machines," said Mike Murphy, the excavator specialist for the Komatsu Working Gear group. Working Gear was formed several years ago to enable Komatsu, with the help of allied suppliers, to meet the needs of specific industries that require customized equipment. They include material and scrap handling, logging and waste transfer stations.

"In some cases, we essentially start with a blank sheet of paper in developing these purpose-built machines," said Murphy. "In many ways they may resemble hydraulic excavators, and their roots certainly lie in the proven world-wide componentry expertise of Komatsu excavators. But make no mistake, Working Gear machines are not excavators. They've been extensively modified at the factory level to increase productivity, reliability and longevity in specific applications."

Material-handling series

Komatsu material handlers serve as good examples of how purpose-built Working Gear machines borrow from — but also differ significantly from — traditional hydraulic excavators.

Komatsu offers six material-handling models, ranging from the PC270LC-7 up through the PC1250LC-7. The units, which are

primarily used for barge loading/unloading or scrap processing, include the popular PC300-, PC400-, PC600- and PC750-model sizes.

The Komatsu material-handling series features elevated cabs (78-inch, manual-tilt

Continued...

Brief specs on Komatsu Material Handlers

Model	Output	Operating Weight	Reach (standard)
PC270LC-7	174 hp	70,000 lbs.	46 ft.
PC300HD-7	242 hp	89,960 lbs.	46 or 48 ft.
PC400LC-7	330 hp	118,211 lbs.	54 or 55 ft.
PC600LC-7	385 hp	144,014 lbs.	55 or 60 ft.
PC750LC-7	454 hp	203,700 lbs.	55 or 62 ft.
PC1250LC-7	651 hp	259,474 lbs.	62 or 70 ft.

All Komatsu material handlers, including the PC300HD-7 shown here in a scrap application, feature elevated cabs for better visibility, and reinforced front attachments to handle the stress of swinging heavy loads.



Customized Working Gear machines

... continued

For more information on Komatsu Working Gear machines, contact your sales representative or our nearest branch location today.

cab risers with platform and hand rails) as standard equipment. "Up and out" risers are available as an option for improved visibility in barge work. Other changes to the standard excavator are stronger structural components to better stand up to the specialized nature of the work; front window guards for increased safety; and widened carbodies and additional counterweights for better stability.

Komatsu also equips all models with hydraulic generators and electrical cables to power and operate large magnets; centralized lube plumbing and lube points; plumbing for grapple operation; and a hydraulic control package to open, close and rotate grapple with control handles and switches in the cab.

Allied suppliers

Komatsu material-handling machine fronts are designed specifically to handle the stress and strain of swinging heavy loads above grade. The units are outfitted with either a two-piece or three-piece Young Corporation front attachment with underslung hydraulic cylinders. Attachment options include shears,

magnets, grapples, orange-peel grapples and clamshell buckets.

"Young Corporation is definitely a leader in its field, as is Pierce-Pacific, another primary Working Gear affiliate whose specialty is forestry applications," Murphy noted. "In looking for Working Gear partners, we seek out companies that have expertise beyond our own, who can add significant benefits for our customers. Both Young and Pierce-Pacific certainly do that."

Because of the partnerships, Komatsu material handlers can be as personalized as a customer wants and needs a machine to be.

"Very often, we or one of our partners — or both of us together — will visit a customer's jobsite to see the operational layout and take measurements," explained Murphy. "After doing that, we're able to make very specific recommendations as to what size of material handler he needs and how it should be configured to meet his production requirements. If a standard machine is not the best fit, we'll customize it to accomplish what needs to be done."

For example, Murphy notes that Komatsu's normal "up and out" cab riser option is eight feet up and four feet out. "But if a customer needs to go out six feet for optimal visibility and productivity, then that's what we'll do. We'll custom make it. That's not at all unusual for us. In fact, we do it all the time."

Best of both worlds

Like the basic Komatsu excavator, Working Gear products, including the material-handler series, feature Komatsu's patented HydraMind™ hydraulic system, which ensures smooth, powerful, efficient operation.

"If you like Komatsu excavators for their durability, their reliability, their performance features and their technological sophistication, you're going to find the same characteristics in our material handlers and all our other Working Gear machines," said Murphy. "All we're doing is taking the existing product's strengths and adding value to it in order to give customers an industry-specific equipment solution. We think it gives them the best of both worlds." ■

Komatsu material handlers like this PC1250LC-7 are often customized for a specific jobsite. "If our standard machine is not the perfect fit for a particular operation, then we'll custom-make a machine," says Komatsu Working Gear excavator specialist Mike Murphy. "It's not unusual. We do it all the time."



NEW PRODUCT

NEW PARALLEL TOOL CARRIER

Komatsu introduces its largest parallel-lift wheel loader

Komatsu's Dash-5 line of unique, electronically controlled, hydrostatic wheel loaders now includes a 166-horsepower parallel tool carrier. The new WA320PT-5 joins the WA200PT-5 and WA250PT-5 in the Komatsu tool carrier lineup.

"It's the next size up for customers who want and need a little more production than they can get from the smaller machines," said Komatsu Wheel Loader Product Marketing Manager Mike Gidaspow. "The WA320PT-5 is about 25 percent larger than the WA250PT-5 and is ideal for large construction and sewer jobs, as well as for use in government, waste and agricultural markets."

The primary benefit of parallel lift that you get with a toolcarrier is that the forks stay level throughout the boom's arc, which lessens the likelihood of dumping or spilling a load and improves safety. The trade-off is a little less breakout force than a traditional wheel loader with Z-bar linkage.

The WA320PT-5's standard hydraulically actuated quick coupler makes changing attachments easy for maximum versatility.

Hydrostatic transmission

Komatsu is the only wheel loader manufacturer that uses a hydrostatic transmission (HST) in machines as large as the WA320PT-5. HST allocates only as much power as is needed in a given application for maximum efficiency. A one-pump, two-motor system also improves efficiency while providing high tractive effort. When decelerating, HST acts as a dynamic brake on the mechanical drive system and can even hold the loader in position on most workable slopes.

Hydraulic cycle times to raise, dump and lower a 3.5-cubic-yard, loaded bucket on the

WA320PT-5 is 11.4 seconds. The unit has a top travel speed of 23.6 mph.

As with all Komatsu wheel loaders and parallel tool carriers, the WA320PT-5 comes standard with the manufacturer's Equipment Management Monitoring System for advanced maintenance, repair and diagnostics. In addition, the cab is 5 percent larger than previous models, providing more leg room and storage space for the operator. ■

For more information on the WA320PT-5, contact your sales representative or our nearest branch location.

Brief Specs on the WA320PT-5

Output	Operating weight	Bucket capacity	Breakout force
166 hp	32,161-33,968 lbs.	3.5 cu. yd.	27,225 lbs.

The WA320PT-5, which features a hydrostatic transmission for maximum jobsite efficiency, is Komatsu's largest parallel lift loader.





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PRODUCT IMPROVEMENTS

TURBOCHARGED "COMPACTS"

Komatsu PC35 and PC50 excavators are now available with more horsepower

Komatsu considers its compact hydraulic excavators in the 8,000-pound (PC35MR-2) and 11,000-pound (PC50MR-2) classes to be "unique and unrivaled" products.

One of the prime areas of differentiation from competitive units is a ROPS and top guard that provide unmatched operator safety. The machines also offer more foot space and a large reclining seat so operators can work comfortably for a longer period of time. Additionally, easy access to components simplifies maintenance, while a high-strength, X-track frame deters mud and debris buildup.

Now, the standard machines are also available with a turbo engine as an option. The turbo option will boost horsepower in the PC35MR-2 from 29.1 hp to 34.1 hp and will increase output in the PC50MR-2 from 39.4 hp to 43.8 hp.

"The turbo option was developed specifically as a high-altitude machine, to compensate for the thin air, but we expect contractors all over will want the extra horsepower," said Mike Conley, Komatsu Product Marketing Manager for compact hydraulic excavators.

Rapid growth

The compact hydraulic excavator market has grown rapidly in recent years. In 2004 alone, the compact excavator market grew 40 percent to about 22,000 units.

"General contractors, landscapers, electricians, plumbers — they're all seeing the benefits of owning a compact excavator and skid steer loader instead of, or in addition to, the traditional backhoe loader," noted Conley. "The main advantage is they're getting two machines for about the price of one, which

enables them to work multiple jobsites and to be more productive.

"The other advantage is the compact excavator's ability to work in confined spaces. Many jobsites today are cramped and crowded," Conley observed. "With its tight-tail-swing design, the Komatsu MR-2 series of compact hydraulic excavators can work productively in much smaller spaces than a backhoe can."

As opposed to some competitive models, Komatsu designs and manufactures its own compact excavators. "Komatsu has passed its expertise in full-size hydraulic excavators onto the compacts," Conley pointed out. "We invite anybody who hasn't tried one yet to do so. We think they'll be surprised at how productive the machines are." ■

For more information on Komatsu compact hydraulic excavators, contact your sales representative or our nearest branch location.

Brief Specs PC35MR-2 and PC50MR-2 (Turbo Version)

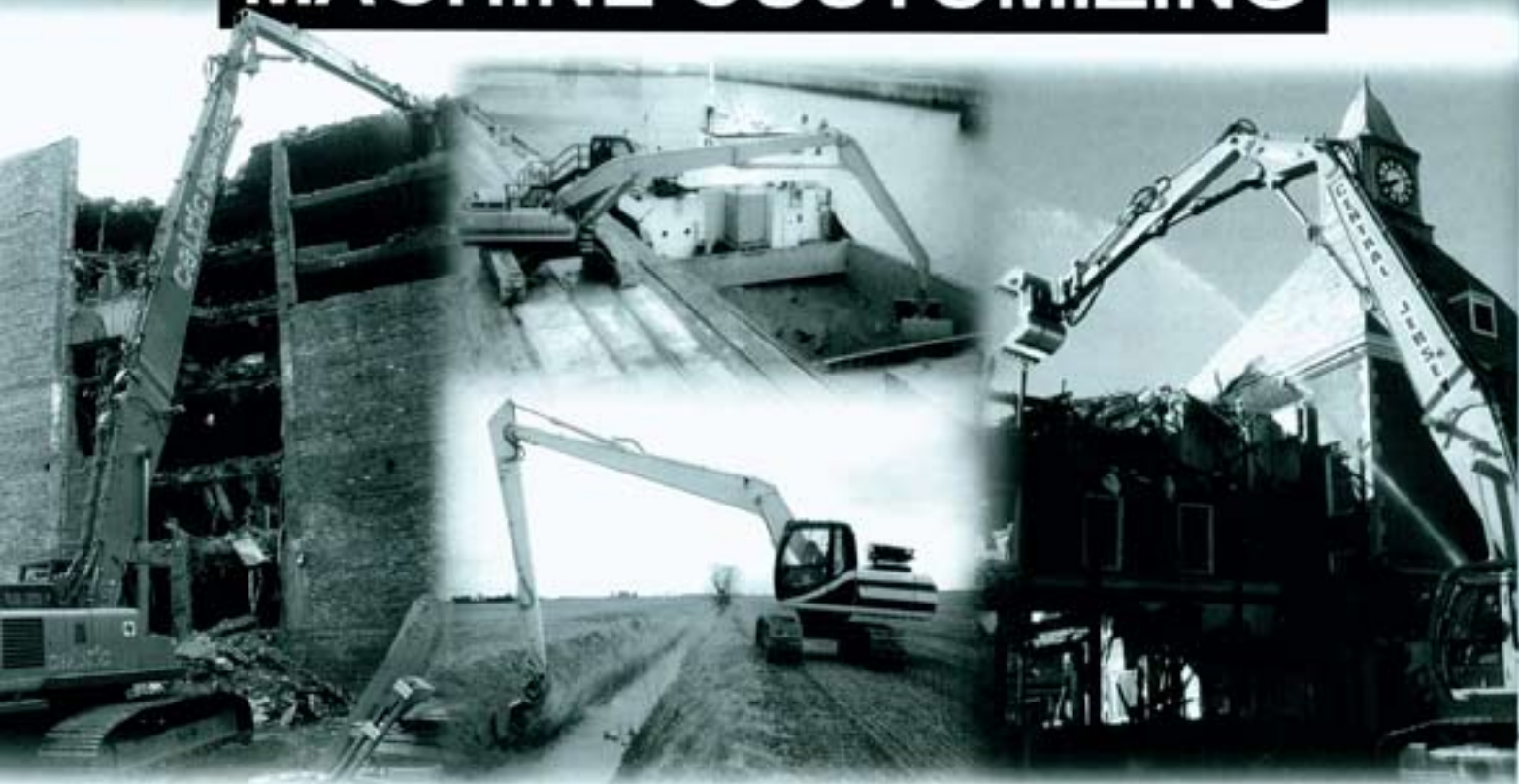
Model	Output	Operating Weight	Bucket
PC35MR-2 Turbo	34.1 hp	8,245 lbs.	14-25 inches
PC50MR-2 Turbo	43.8 hp	11,010 lbs.	12-25 inches

The turbo version of both the PC35 and PC50 boosts output from the standard machines by about 17 percent in the PC35 and about 13 percent in the PC50.





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"UNIQUE AND UNRIVALED"

Komatsu expands efforts to produce demonstrably superior equipment

QUESTION: In 2004, Komatsu announced what it called a "unique and unrivaled" product strategy. Please bring us up to date on that effort.

ANSWER: When we talk about a machine as "unique and unrivaled," it's much more than a marketing strategy. A Komatsu "unique and unrivaled" machine is demonstrably better than any competitive model and we can prove it by spec and by performance. It may be better because of markedly superior performance or production features. It may be better because it uses significantly less fuel. It may be better because it's much roomier and more comfortable. It may be better because of all those things.

QUESTION: Which Komatsu machines fit into that category right now?

ANSWER: We have a number of "unique and unrivaled" products already on the market. These include our PC35MR-2 and PC50MR-2 tight-tail-swing compact hydraulic excavators; the PC400LC-7 hydraulic excavator; the D475A-5 bulldozer; the BR380JG mobile crusher; and our entire line of Dash-5 wheel loaders with hydrostatic transmissions.

QUESTION: Are there more "unique and unrivaled" products about to be introduced?

ANSWER: Yes. Many will be coming onto the market in 2006 with the new Komatsu "ecot3" engines. Now, not all of our machines with the new engines will be "unique and unrivaled," but a fair number of them will be. We have about 160 base machines. Eventually, we expect about 25 percent of them, or about 40 to 50 machines, to be in that "unique and unrivaled" category.

Continued...



This is one of a series of articles based on interviews with key people at Komatsu discussing the company's commitment to its customers in the construction and mining industries — and their visions for the future.

**John Koetz, Vice President,
Product Marketing and Planning,
Komatsu America Corp.**

As vice president of product marketing and planning for Komatsu America Corp., John Koetz is responsible for construction equipment machine marketing strategies and planning future products.

A licensed professional engineer, Koetz earned a bachelor's degree in mechanical engineering from the University of Illinois and a master's degree in engineering from Carnegie Mellon University. He also holds an MBA degree from Loyola University in Chicago.

Before joining what was then known as Komatsu Mining Systems in 2001 as product manager of crawler dozers and motor graders, Koetz was the program manager for large tractors with CNH Global and also had served as deputy product manager for construction/material handling equipment as a major in the U.S. Army.

When he's not on the job, Koetz says his favorite thing to do is spend time with his family. "I know that sounds like a pat answer, but it's true. We work some long hours and I travel a lot for work as well, so when I get some time at home, I really enjoy going to my boys' soccer and basketball games and things like that. My wife and I are also very active in our church."

"Unique and unrivaled" program expands

... continued



Advanced monitors incorporating satellite technology will benefit Komatsu equipment users in the future by providing more precise maintenance and repair information.

The new Komatsu "ecot3" engine, which will begin appearing in new models in 2006, is designed not only to reduce emissions, but also to improve fuel economy and performance.

The Komatsu Dash-5 series of hydrostatic wheel loaders is an example of the company's "unique and unrivaled" product strategy, which is a concentrated effort to produce specific machines that are significantly different from, and better than, the competition.

QUESTION: You mentioned the Komatsu "ecot3" engines. How do those fit into the Komatsu "unique and unrivaled" product strategy?

ANSWER: All manufacturers have to meet Tier 3 air quality standards, but they are not all doing it the same way. We believe our Tier 3-compliant "ecot3" engines will not only lower emissions, but will also provide improved machine performance and fuel economy. We're not convinced other manufacturers will be as successful as Komatsu will be in meeting the emissions requirements,



Komatsu is now manufacturing articulated trucks in Chattanooga, Tenn., in addition to Japan to improve responsiveness to North American contractors.

and at the same time making a more productive and cost-effective machine.

QUESTION: What part does technology play in Komatsu's product development efforts?

ANSWER: It plays a large part. We invest a tremendous amount of money each year on research and development (R & D) and consider ourselves a technological leader in the industry. But for Komatsu, technology is not about bells and whistles — it's about nuts and bolts. All our product planning and R & D goes back to the needs of our customers and finding ways to help them be more productive, more efficient and more profitable.

QUESTION: One problem that's surfaced in the last year or two is equipment availability. What is Komatsu doing to try to improve the supply side?

ANSWER: Market demand over the past couple of years has been unprecedented. At Komatsu, we've increased both our machine and component production capacity to improve the supply side.

For example, one product that's been in great demand, especially in North America, is the articulated truck. Because of that, we've added production at our Chattanooga plant for our artic to shorten lead time and provide additional manufacturing flexibility.

QUESTION: What's the next big thing in construction/mining equipment?

ANSWER: Many of the changes and improvements are going to be the result of advances in information technology. A decade ago, there wasn't anything like today's monitoring, diagnostic and locating systems. That type of equipment, whether it's our state-of-the-art VHMS or Komtrax II, is already standard on many Komatsu models, and in the not-too-distant future, will likely be standard on all construction equipment models.

What that will do is help everybody lower their owning and operating costs by ensuring that maintenance is done as scheduled, and by speeding up troubleshooting so that repairs can be made more quickly. Side benefits will include greater machine reliability and longevity and resale values. ■





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PRODUCT SUPPORT SALES REPS

They are an important part of C.N. Wood's commitment to customer service

Product support — and keeping customers' equipment running as economically and efficiently as possible — has always been a goal at C.N. Wood Equipment, Inc. In recent months that goal has been given a higher priority by increasing the number of product support sales representatives (PSSRs) from two people to five.

"We want to completely service customers with everything they need, from parts and service to attachments — everything up to selling the iron," said Jim Burnham, corporate parts manager.

The PSSRs who call on customers are John Hann, who works the South Shore and Cape Cod; Jeff Toppin, who covers western Massachusetts; Glenn Sawyer, in the North Shore; Dan Ibbitsen, in Rhode Island and Bernie Kennedy, who works with municipalities.

John Hann and Glenn Sawyer were both mechanics whose experience helps them communicate especially well with customers.

Komatsu equipment and more

Each PSSR calls on up to 100 customers a month. And they are not just concentrating on selling parts and service for Komatsu equipment, according to Burnham, who has years of experience in the parts industry.

"We want to help with our customers' needs for virtually all brands of equipment they run," he said. "Since Komatsu purchased Hensley, we can get a tooth for virtually any machine that's out there. And we are the largest Esco dealer in New England, so now we have the resources to get multiple styles of teeth, which is a big step for us."

PSSRs can also sell all kinds of cutting edges, not just OEM edges, he added. "We have found

that our customers want C.N. Wood to give them resources for all their machines, not just Komatsu equipment."

Multiple filter programs are also available, although Burnham stresses the importance of using OEM filters for Komatsu equipment rather than settling for after-market filters. "If you have any problem with a machine, the first thing Komatsu is going to do is look at the filter. It will save the customer a lot of time and aggravation if he uses OEM filters."

While price may have been a factor in some decisions in the past to go with after-market filters and other parts, Burnham said they are now addressing that issue. "We have much more aggressive and competitive pricing today," he said. "We are fighting to be competitive with other parts suppliers. If a customer feels a part is too expensive, we want him to come talk to us to see what we can do about it. We try to work with our customers."

Continued...

(L-R) PSSR John Hann, Corporate Parts Manager Jim Burnham and PSSR Glenn Sawyer stand ready to address customers' parts and service needs.



PSSRs offer variety of services

...continued

E-Care undercarriage program

C.N. Wood's PSSRs not only sell parts, they help customers set up in-house programs such as lube contracts and service contracts. Komatsu's E-Care undercarriage management program is also used extensively.

"Undercarriage work is something that we've really started to get into," said Burnham. "We usually measure between 10 and 20 machines a week. We're trying to be proactive with undercarriage work, to give customers a forecast on when they need work done on their machines. We're using E-Care, which is a professional, online software program from Komatsu, which is excellent in predicting when an undercarriage should be turned."

Service technicians and PSSRs start measuring a dozer's undercarriage at 500 hours and usually recommend a bushing turn at 1,000 to 2,000 hours, according to Burnham. "It's critical not to exceed 50 percent wear," he said. "A turn done at 30 percent to 40 percent will save a significant amount of money."

As PSSRs, their job is also to talk to owners and operators about how to use the equipment to extend its life, he added. "High-speed reverse is the worst, along with continuous turning," said Burnham. "On excavators, the easiest way to save the undercarriage is to use the work equipment to turn the machine, use the boom to actually pick

up the machine and turn. It saves a lot of damage, especially when working in ledge or any kind of rock, which is what we have around here."

GET consignment inventories

Another practice many customers are implementing at their shops is consignment inventories using the GET management program. "We offer emergency delivery service and will put an inventory in their shops and manage it for them," said Burnham. "Our PSSRs will go in weekly or bimonthly to check the inventory and bill them as needed. We don't bill them for a part until it is used, and it has worked out very well."

Komatsu's new parts depot in Bridgeville, Pa., has been a huge plus for them, according to Burnham. "We can get parts the next day between 6 a.m. and 7 a.m.," he said. "That is very important to our customers. The warehouse has 18,000 line items right now and that number will go up to 25,000. We have the fast-moving items in stock at C.N. Wood, while the parts depot carries slower-moving parts."

Another PSSR responsibility is creating a recommended parts list when a customer buys a new machine. The PSSR goes out at the time of delivery to help familiarize the customer with that machine. A big emphasis right now, according to Burnham, is compiling equipment lists for customers. "If there is ever a problem with a machine," he explained, "we'll have a history in the computer of that machine and what tools have been used on it."

Anticipating needs

When C.N. Wood's PSSRs call on customers, they are trying to anticipate customers' parts and service needs. And, according to Glenn Sawyer, they all stress honesty and trust with their customers. "We try to keep them ahead of the game by stocking parts at their shops and maintaining undercarriages ahead of time," he said. "That way they know six months down the road they only have so many hours left on the track and can keep breakdowns to a minimum."

"We're here to support the customer as best we can and I believe they trust us," he added. "When they call, we get out to them as soon as possible. The parts department here is incredible, too. They do everything they possibly can, and that's what it's all about." ■

Corporate Parts Manager Jim Burnham shows off a bin of parts in C.N. Woods' parts warehouse.



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STRETCHING YOUR FUEL DOLLAR

These tips can help you conserve fuel and control your equipment operating costs

As an equipment user, you've probably always been concerned about fuel efficiency. But now, with the price of diesel at a record high, chances are you're more concerned than ever before, and you're likely looking for ways to reduce your fuel bill.

With its Tier-3-compliant engines due to be introduced within the next few months, Komatsu has made fuel efficiency a top priority. But beyond the machines themselves, there are things you and your operators can do to further stretch your fuel dollar. Here are some fuel-saving tips from Komatsu Ltd. (The figures used apply to a 20-ton hydraulic excavator, but similar savings can be gained in any size class and any type of machine).

- 1. Avoid idling.** By turning the machine off rather than idling when you're not producing, you can save more than five gallons a month (based on one hour of idle time per day).
- 2. Avoid relieving pressure.** Pulling the control lever continuously to try to lift a

too-heavy load doesn't move the machine, it simply relieves oil pressure. If you can maintain smooth digging, you can save more than 18 gallons a month.

- 3. Lower engine speed.** By dialing back by 10 percent, you can reduce fuel consumption by 12 percent (you do lose about 7 percent in productivity, but the net gain in fuel efficiency is still 6 percent).

4. Eliminate unnecessary/inefficient movement. For example, in truck loading, reducing swing angle from 90 degrees to 30 degrees will improve fuel efficiency by 3 percent. Shortening cycle times through improved excavation techniques can provide as much as 8 percent better fuel efficiency.

- 5. Reduce your travel speed.** Slowing down 10 percent may improve fuel efficiency by up to 8 percent.

6. Perform regular maintenance. A smooth-running machine maximizes fuel efficiency.

For wheel loaders and dozers, similar common-sense operating initiatives can help you save a lot of money on fuel. The biggest factors include reducing engine speed and travel speed whenever possible; preventing tire or track slippage; in V-cycle loading, making sure you're in the position that lets you do the work with the least amount of travel and the shortest cycle times; and preplanning to minimize the number of passes you have to make.

If you can implement these fuel-saving techniques, the higher fuel cost may actually be advantageous for you because your operating costs will be much less than competitors who continue to operate as they did when fuel was \$1 a gallon. ■

Reducing fuel consumption will be increasingly important as the price of diesel fuel escalates. Komatsu recommends reducing engine speed and travel speed where possible, and being efficient in your movements on a jobsite by proper positioning and preplanning to minimize the number of cycles or passes.





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