



INDUSTRY

SCOOP

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Featured in this issue:

AHRENS CONTRACTING

The demolition of historic Busch Stadium is just the latest "little step" for this St. Louis firm

See article inside...



KOMATSU

Patty and Ted Ahrens, Owners





A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT



Ray Roland

**A glance back
and a look at
what's ahead**



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 Roland Machinery Co. 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 Roland, 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 Tier-3 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,
ROLAND MACHINERY CO.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Ray E. Roland". The signature is written in a cursive style.

Raymond E. Roland
President



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The demolition of historic Busch Stadium is just the latest "little step" for this St. Louis firm.

GUEST OPINION

Despite the passage of the new \$286 billion transportation bill, ARTBA's president Pete Ruane says it's not enough to meet the nation's highway/transit needs.

DOLLARS & SENSE

Want to maximize your bottom line? Here are guidelines for a 10-step process that can help your construction company be more profitable.

PRODUCT INNOVATION

Do you have very specialized equipment needs for material handling, logging, waste transfer or other industries? If so, you'll want to read about Komatsu's Working Gear Group, which can customize Komatsu excavators for almost any application.

NEW PRODUCT

Find out how Komatsu's new WA320PT-5 electronically controlled, hydrostatic, parallel-lift wheel loader can boost production on your next job.

PRODUCT IMPROVEMENT

Read all about Komatsu's new turbocharged compact excavators, the PC35 and PC50, and what makes them "unique and unrivaled" products.

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A SALUTE TO A CUSTOMER

AHRENS CONTRACTING

The demolition of historic Busch Stadium is just the latest “little step” for this St. Louis firm



Patty Ahrens

How do you go from being a part-time contractor delivering topsoil and railroad ties, to 20 years later, being the company that’s charged with completing one of the most aggressive demolition jobs in recent memory? St. Louis-based Ahrens Contracting did it by taking one step at a time.

Ahrens is demolishing the old Busch Stadium, the historic downtown home of Major League Baseball’s St. Louis Cardinals, and is also doing all the excavation-related work for the new Busch Stadium being built next door.

“You can’t walk up a hill in your backyard one day, then try to climb Mount Everest the next,” said Patty Ahrens, President of Ahrens Contracting. “We started very small and grew by taking little steps, one at a time.”

Patty and Ted Ahrens started their company in the early 1980s. “Initially, it was more or less moonlighting,” Ted recalled. “I had a full-time

day job as an operator for another company. At night, Patty and I would go out and look at jobs to bid that I might be able to do in my spare time. These were small, odd jobs of almost any kind.”

By the mid-1980s, the Ahrens’ had an adequate number of these small jobs that they were able to hire an employee. A year or so later, Ted left the comfort and safety of his other job to devote full time to Ahrens Contracting.

“From that point on, we just tried to meet the needs of our customers,” said Patty. “For example, we started doing landscaping work for a homebuilder. That led to digging basements and eventually larger-scale excavation work. It was never a big jump in a single year — just gradual and always based on what we could do for our customers. We wanted to take care of them and meet their needs, and our growth resulted from that.”

Excavation and demolition

Today, Ahrens Contracting employs about 75 people and is a highly diversified excavation and demolition firm. The company also has expertise in soil remediation, underground storage tank removal and asbestos abatement. While most of the company’s excavation-related work is in the St. Louis area, Ahrens will travel throughout Missouri, and indeed much of the nation, for its demolition work.

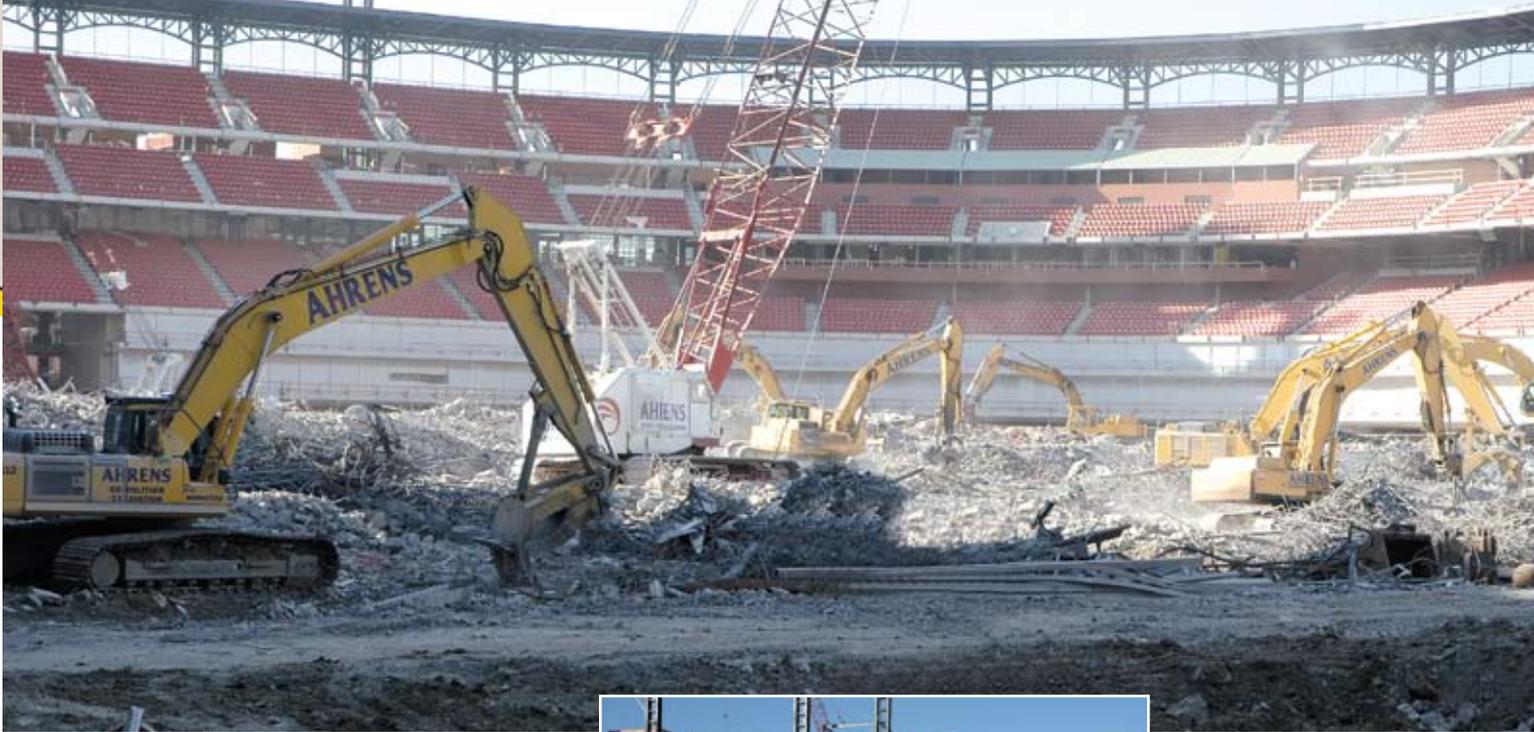
“We’ve been to Utah, Colorado, Minnesota and Michigan,” noted Ted. “Those jobs were all for repeat customers who were pleased with what we did for them, and asked us to travel to do more of their work. We’re able to cost-effectively do out-of-state demolition jobs because bad weather doesn’t impact a demolition schedule the way it can an excavation schedule.”



Ted Ahrens

Ahrens Contracting is demolishing the old Busch Stadium in downtown St. Louis (white structure on the right) and doing all the excavation work for the new stadium (brick structure on the left) that’s being built right next to it.





Over the years, Ahrens Contracting has worked at some of the most recognizable names in St. Louis including doing excavation work at the Federal Courthouse and Washington University; soil remediation at what is now the Edward Jones Dome, the home of the NFL St. Louis Rams; and demolition work at the Sheraton Hotel and Keil Auditorium.

The Busch Stadium job

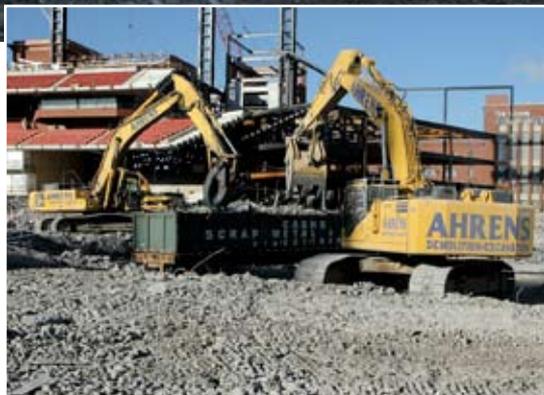
Ahrens Contracting's current work at the old and new Busch stadiums is not only the company's largest job to date, it's also one of the highest profile and most aggressively scheduled demolition and building projects in the country in recent years.

Here's what makes the project unique. The stadiums are not only next door to one another — they actually share some common outfield ground. Therefore, work on the new stadium could only go so far, then had to stop until the end of the 2005 baseball season. Of course, it still has to be finished and ready for the first pitch on opening day, April 10, 2006.

"It's the fastest-paced job I've ever seen," said Ahrens demolition superintendent and project manager Roger Kent. "The fact that the clock is constantly ticking and that there's no option but to have it done on time is what makes this job so pressure packed."

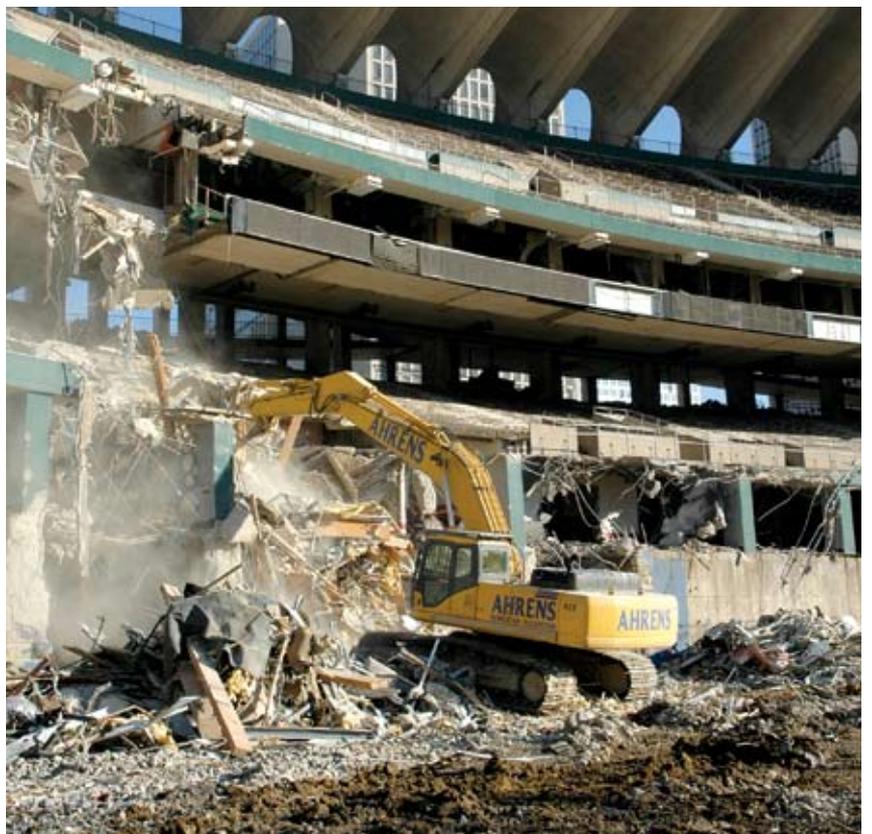
Ahrens is doing all the demolition, all the mass excavation, all the excavating for utility contractors like plumbers and electricians, and all the concrete excavation. Thus far, the company is more than meeting its scheduled

Continued . . .



As the new Busch Stadium rises in the background, Ahrens Contracting has nine excavators working to demolish the old structure to make room for the new playing field. The company is working 24 hours a day, seven days a week in order to meet and beat deadlines. Seven of the nine excavators on site are Komatsus, including the PC300LC-7 and PC600LC-7 in photo at left.

This Ahrens Contracting operator uses a Komatsu PC400LC-7 to rip into the old Busch Stadium. "We've tried other brands, but through the years we've found that Komatsu makes the best excavator for demolition work," said Ahrens Demolition Superintendent and Project Manager Roger Kent.



Busch Stadium demolition is ahead of schedule

...continued



**Roger Kent,
Demolition
Superintendent/
Project Manager**

obligations. It was required to have essentially half the stadium torn down within 35 days of starting. They reached that stage in a mere 12 days.

“We’re working 24 hours a day, seven days a week,” reported Ted Ahrens. “We’re well ahead of schedule and we plan to stay well ahead of schedule. This is an important project not just for us, but for the entire city, and we intend to do everything we can do to ensure that it’s a success.”

In addition to the demolition and excavation work, Ahrens Contracting is also doing all the backfilling at the new stadium and much of the earthwork associated with the reconnection of Clark Street, which was severed in 1966 to make way for the original stadium.

“We’ve been on the Busch job since the fall of 2003 and we won’t be totally finished until a month or two after the new stadium opens next year,” said Patty. “When we leave, we’ll have been there almost three years. We know there aren’t many jobs of this size and this stature and we’re very proud to be involved in such a signature project for the city.”

A Komatsu PC400 with a universal processor handles material at the Busch Stadium demolition project.



Difficult jobs are a specialty

Jobs like the Busch Stadium demolition are definitely a challenge, and because of that, some companies prefer not to do them. Ahrens on the other hand, seeks out difficult and challenging jobs.

“That’s something we’re known for,” observed Ted. “Jobs with accelerated timetables, jobs that require special skills, jobs that are located downtown or in a difficult environment — things like that may be problems to some contractors, but to us, they just make the job a little more challenging — and we enjoy a challenge.”

“We hope people within the industry see us as a company that will get in and get the job done in a timely manner, no matter how tough it is, and not nickel and dime them along the way,” added Patty. “We think what really separates us from many of our competitors is our ability to do both the earthwork and the demolition work on the same job. Many contractors can do one or the other, but few if any do both as well as we do. By handling both aspects, we often have cost and/or time savings that we can pass along to the owner.”

The Ahrensens say there’s no job too big or too small for them to take on. “For large jobs, we can mobilize a substantial crew and equipment fleet,” said Patty. “For a small job, we can send out one man with one machine. We try not to limit ourselves in any way.”

Equipment longevity

In order to do the difficult, fast-paced jobs it’s known for, Ahrens Contracting relies on a large fleet of excavators, most of which are Komatsu machines from Roland Machinery in Bridgeton. All told, the company has more than a dozen Komatsu excavators, including a new PC600LC-7 and a new PC400LC-7.

“We also have a PC400LC-7 we bought about a year ago, a PC400LC-3 and five PC300s,” reported Ted. “The PC400LC-3 is more than 10 years old and has more than 10,000 hours on it and it’s still out there crunching for us right now. That kind of longevity is almost unheard of in this industry, which is definitely tough on equipment. And

we haven't done much of anything to it. It's been a great machine."

"We've just had really good luck with Komatsu excavators through the years," added Kent. "We've tried other brands, but in terms of productivity, reliability and longevity, we've found that Komatsu makes the best excavator for what we do, particularly on the demolition side of the business."

Ahrens also has two Komatsu dozers, a D65P and a D37P.

"We have an excellent mechanic, Jeff Haudrich, so we do most of our own equipment repairs, as well as routine maintenance," noted Ted. "But we also know we can count on Roland and our salesman Steve Helton for any additional support we need."

Family atmosphere

Although the company has grown considerably since the early days, Ahrens Contracting has retained a family-like atmosphere. In part, that's because along with Patty and Ted, the company also employs their son Ted Ahrens Jr. and Ted Sr.'s brother Tom, as operators. Other key employees, in addition to Roger Kent, are estimator/project manager Fred Biermann and longtime operator Bart Buselaki.

The Ahrens credit their business success to their ability to keep overhead low and to their employees, many of whom have been with the company for a long time. "They know how to get their jobs done and get them done right," Patty acknowledged.

Still growing

Back when they were starting the business on a part-time basis, neither Patty nor Ted suspected that one day they'd be doing jobs like the demolition of Busch Stadium.

"We didn't have a plan to get this big," admitted Patty. "It just happened. We just went to work every day and did our job to the best of our ability, then did the next one the same way. People say to us, 'This Busch Stadium job must be the ultimate for you!' Well, it's definitely a signature job, but it's no more significant to us than our first basement job



The old stadium (right) will be gone by the time the new stadium (above) is filled for opening day, April 10, 2006.



(L-R) Ted Ahrens and Roger Kent of Ahrens Contracting meet with Roland Machinery sales representative Steve Helton.

that got us started 20 years ago. We approach it just the same way — by doing our best for the customer.

"How much bigger we'll get is anybody's guess, but as long as the economy remains strong, we're optimistic that we'll continue to win our share of jobs — but as in the past, we're never going to bite off more than we can chew. For us it's always going to be one small step at a time."

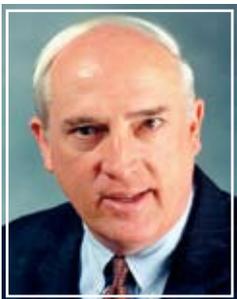
For more information on Ahrens Contracting and its list of services, visit the company Web site at www.ahrenscontracting.com. ■



GUEST OPINION

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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DOLLARS & SENSE

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 Hardhat 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.hardhatpresentations.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.”

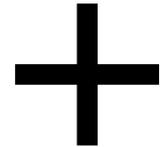
10. Continuously innovate & improve

“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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PRODUCT INNOVATION

“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 carboodies 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."



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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 IMPROVEMENT

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.

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.

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



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KOMATSU & YOU

“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

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Customers such as Material Service Corporation enjoy the convenience of ordering parts online

Producing between 7 million and 10 million tons of limestone annually, Material Service Corporation's Thornton Quarry near Chicago is one of the largest quarry operations in the country. To keep its large fleet of Komatsu equipment up and running, the quarry not only has a staff of mechanics, but also a two-person parts department.

“Equipment availability (machine uptime) is crucial in our industry to maintain productivity, and when we need to make a repair or just do routine maintenance, we don't want to be waiting around for a replacement part to arrive,” said Jay Morriss, one of the parts specialists at Thornton. “That's why we have our own parts storeroom and keep an inventory of around 4,000 consumable wear parts.”

When it comes to keeping the storeroom adequately stocked, as well as placing emergency parts orders, Morriss usually just goes to his computer and makes the transaction online at Komatsu's epartscentral.

“What I like best about Komatsu's epartscentral is that it makes everything a little quicker,” said Morriss. “It gives me updated, real-time parts availability and pricing. I also like that it lets me specify the delivery location, which helps get the part to its final destination a little faster and with more certainty. Another plus is that it generates a confirmation e-mail, which would be helpful if a question should ever arise regarding an order.

“Roland Machinery's parts department, especially at the Bolingbrook branch, where we do most of our ordering, has always been great — the best we work with,” he added. “But about the only time we call them is when we need a major component or we have a question.”

User-friendly and convenient

To order Komatsu parts online at epartscentral, you must first register at mykomatsu.com, which you can reach by clicking on the parts section at komatsuamerica.com. Register each machine individually with model and serial number to ensure that you'll have access to the correct online parts book. Before you can start ordering, Roland will verify your information and ensure that everything is ready to go.

“It's a user-friendly process that benefits all Komatsu customers as much as it benefits companies like Material Service Corp.,” said Dave Larsen, parts manager at Roland's Bolingbrook branch. “For many customers, maybe especially the smaller ones, the biggest benefit of online parts ordering is convenience. It's open 24/7 so you can place the order any time of the day or night, any day of the week, and know that you're going to get next-day pickup or delivery.” ■

For more information on online parts ordering, contact the parts department at your nearest Roland branch location today.

Jay Morriss (left) and Cal Gierman run the parts department at Material Service Corp.'s Thornton Quarry, one of the largest quarries in the U.S. “We order the vast majority of our Komatsu parts online through epartscentral,” said Morriss. “What I like the most about it is that I get updated, real-time parts availability and pricing.”



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CONFIDENCE IN HIS EQUIPMENT

Distributor Certified Used excavator helps one-man operation boost productivity

Lance Alspaugh owns and operates Alspaugh Family Farms, a small Ohio land-clearing company that specializes in tree and stump removal. The company also grinds wood and sells it as mulch, and does small excavation jobs including pond building.

A few months ago, with his workload increasing, Alspaugh began looking for a larger excavator to complement a Komatsu PC120 he's had for many years. "The PC120 was a good machine and still is, but I needed more capacity."

Specifically, Alspaugh wanted a larger machine that would be both productive and reliable, but wouldn't cost him an arm and a leg. "I'm basically a one-man operation and I like it that way," he said. "But even if you're small, and maybe especially if you're small, you need equipment you can count on. I didn't need a brand-new machine, but I did need something that would work for me every day."

Alspaugh turned to his Komatsu dealer, who recommended a 2001 Komatsu Distributor Certified Used PC200LC-6 hydraulic excavator with about 4,500 hours on it.

"It was big enough to give me the added production I was looking for," said Alspaugh. "But the best thing about it from my perspective was that, even though it was used, I knew it had been thoroughly inspected by my Komatsu dealer and that any needed repairs had been made. I was able to look at the inspection report myself and could see that the machine was in good operating condition."

Dealer support

Beyond the inspection, Alspaugh says the "Distributor Certified" seal gave him

additional peace of mind. "To buy a machine at auction or online or from somebody you don't know well — that's risky, and it's a risk I didn't want to take. With the Komatsu Distributor Certified program, I knew exactly what I was getting. Equally important, if any issue does come up, I know my Komatsu dealer is going to back it up and be there for me."

Alspaugh also cited very favorable finance rates which made the unit even more affordable. "I think Komatsu Distributor Certified machines probably represent the best value in used equipment in the country," said Alspaugh. "You may be able to find something cheaper, but when it comes to knowing what you're getting and paying a fair and appropriate amount based on real information and trust, I don't think you can beat it." ■



For more information on Komatsu Distributor Certified Used machines, talk to your sales representative or call or visit our nearest branch location.

Lance Alspaugh of Alspaugh Family Farms recently bought this Komatsu Distributor Certified Used PC200LC-6. "I like the fact that it's been thoroughly inspected by someone I trust, my Komatsu dealer," said Alspaugh. "In my mind, the inspection considerably reduces the risk of buying a used machine."





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Purchasing Komatsu Distributor Certified Used Equipment makes sound business sense. You'll receive good value for your money and a reliable and productive machine that will get the job done for years to come — we guarantee it!

To learn more about Komatsu ReMarketing's Distributor Certified Used Equipment, contact your local Komatsu Distributor or go to our Web site at www.equipmentcentral.com and click on "used equipment."





ROLAND

USED EQUIPMENT SPECIALS OF THE MONTH

Manufacturer/Model	Year	Hours	Price	Location
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EXCAVATORS

Komatsu PC78US-5	'00	1,265	\$50,488	Franksville, WI
Komatsu PC228USLC-1	'99	3,800	BEING REPAIRED!	Franksville, WI
Komatsu PC200-6	'93	11,051	\$33,258	Green Bay, WI
Komatsu PC200-6	'97	6,841	\$56,029	Green Bay, WI
Komatsu PC200LC-6	'97	6,000	BEING REPAIRED!	Marengo, IL
Komatsu PC200LC-6	'99	5,955	\$81,970	Bridgeton, MO
Komatsu PC220LC-6	'94	11,197	\$46,939	Green Bay, WI
Komatsu PC220LC-6	'94	11,251	\$43,620	Green Bay, WI
Komatsu PC220LC-7	'02	5,700	\$129,293	Bridgeton, MO
Komatsu PC220LC-6	'97	5,121	\$92,792	REDUCED! Marengo, IL
Komatsu PC250LC-6	'95	8,141	\$149,872	REDUCED! Palmyra, MO
Komatsu PC300LC-5	'93	10,242	\$48,500	Bridgeton, MO
Komatsu PC300LC-6	'97	6,775	\$72,500	Columbia, MO
Komatsu PC300LC-7L	'03	2,723	\$210,634	Marengo, IL
Komatsu PC400LC-6	'98	10,500	\$124,972	Green Bay, WI
Komatsu PC400LC-6	'96		\$71,280	Cartersville, IL
Komatsu PC400LC-7L	'04	2,000	\$328,015	Bolingbrook, IL
Komatsu PC400LC-6	'03	2,588	\$269,000	Chicago, IL
Komatsu PC400LC-6	'03	2,653	\$269,000	Chicago, IL
Komatsu PC400LC-7	'04	2,613	\$315,000	Chicago, IL
Komatsu PC400LC-7	'04	2,532	\$315,000	Chicago, IL
Komatsu PC400LC-7	'04	2,365	\$315,000	Chicago, IL
Komatsu PC400LC-7	'04	2,187	\$315,000	Chicago, IL
Komatsu PC400LC-7	'04	2,000	\$328,015	Marengo, IL
Komatsu PC750LC-7	'04	2,963	\$587,500	Chicago, IL
Caterpillar 312CL	'01	4,300	\$78,174	REDUCED! Eau Claire, WI

DOZERS

Komatsu D41E-6	'98	2,103	\$67,914	Bolingbrook, IL
Komatsu D41E-6	'00	3,140	\$52,169	DeForest, WI
Komatsu D41P-6B	'02	2,534	\$75,500	Green Bay, WI
Komatsu D61PX-12	'02	3,764	\$101,945	Eau Claire, WI
Komatsu D65PX-12	'97	4,965	\$82,500	Springfield, IL
Komatsu D65PX-12	'96	2,219	\$120,126	Springfield, IL
Komatsu D32P-1	'98	2,536	\$28,500	Green Bay, WI
Komatsu D37E	'93	3,500	\$24,979	Schofield, WI

FORESTRY

Timbco 415D Harvester	'00	9,500	\$125,000	Escanaba, MI
Valmet 544X	'90	2,200	\$48,000	Escanaba, MI
Hood Mobile Slasher	'84	7,200	\$45,000	Escanaba, MI
John Deere 548B Grapple Skidder	'89	15,000	\$28,000	Escanaba, MI
Timberjack 1270	'94	10,000	\$65,000	Schofield, WI
Komatsu PC150/Hytec	'98	8,500	\$50,000	Escanaba, MI
Case 1187 Delimber	'85	7,256	\$25,000	Escanaba, MI

Manufacturer/Model	Year	Hours	Price	Location
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WHEEL LOADERS

Komatsu WA600-1	'96	11,214	\$87,500	REDUCED! Franksville, WI
Komatsu WA250-3	'02	5,300	\$81,129	Bridgeton, MO
Komatsu WA180PT-3MC	'01	5,250	\$58,038	DEMO! Schofield, WI

COMPACTION, MILLING & PAVING

Vogele 2116T Paver	'05	560	\$255,000	Bridgeton, MO
Blaw Knox PF172	'92	3,538	\$17,500	DeForest, WI
Case W-70	'90		\$3,600	Marengo, IL
Leeboy L8000T	'87		\$6,450	Bridgeton, MO
Leeboy 8000	'97	728	\$30,966	Bridgeton, MO
Leeboy 8500LD	'00	2,000	\$31,953	Bridgeton, MO
Allatt 750P	'88	1,515	\$10,477	Bridgeton, MO
Rosco Deluxe III	'01		\$7,500	Green Bay, WI
Rosco Rollpac III	'92		\$2,500	Green Bay, WI
Ingersoll-Rand DD-110HF	'97	2,416	\$49,750	Bridgeton, MO
Hamm 3011D	'94	2,032	\$26,306	DeForest, WI
Hamm HD090V Tandem Roller	'04	650	\$79,500	Cartersville, IL
Hamm HD090V Tandem Roller	'04	854	\$79,500	Cartersville, IL

MISCELLANEOUS

Caterpillar 966F II	'94	17,156	\$78,906	Green Bay, WI
Caterpillar 988B	'80		\$32,961	Green Bay, WI
Caterpillar 320BL	'99	6,120	\$92,296	REDUCED! Green Bay, WI
Caterpillar 235	'84	21,132	\$32,736	Bridgeton, MO
Caterpillar 330L	'93	10,835	\$59,342	Bridgeton, MO
Caterpillar 953 Crawler Loader	'87		\$38,474,	Franksville, WI
Caterpillar 416B TLB	'94	6,000+	\$27,500	Bridgeton, MO
Dresser TD7H	'98	6,000	\$33,258	Green Bay, WI
Dresser TD8E	'87	375	\$28,637	REDUCED AGAIN! Franksville, WI
Gradall G3W	'82	5,698	\$10,781	Franksville, WI
Gradall 440G	'77	2,722	\$7,285	Escanaba, MI
Gradall G3WD	'90	7,907	\$15,362	REDUCED! Portage, IN
JD 6410 Farm Tractor W/ Mower	'98	2,567	\$42,274	Eau Claire, WI
Komatsu CD60R-1 Crawler Truck	'97	1,843	\$71,000	Cartersville, IL
JCB 8052 Mini Excavator	'00	975	\$33,910	Franksville, WI
Takeuchi TB175 Mini Excavator	'02	3,100	\$52,363	Marengo, IL
Bobcat 328 Mini Excavator	'00	3,200	\$16,302	Franksville, WI
Rosco Sweeppro Broom	'03	160	\$29,403	DeForest, WI
Case 9030 Excavator	'93	5,187	\$34,858	Springfield, IL
Fiat-Allis FR15 Wheel Loader	'85	11,495	\$16,338	Escanaba, MI
John Deere 892DLC Excavator	'90	13,272	\$37,500	Springfield, IL



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