

April 2023



UPDATE



KOMATSU

A Message from the Vice President



Bruce Truesdale



Dear Valued Customer:

Waukesha Pearce Industries LLC (WPI) has closed on its acquisition of H&E Equipment Services' Komatsu earthmoving distribution business, which covers the state of Louisiana and five counties in southwest Arkansas. The acquisition includes H&E's Kenner distribution facility and the assignment of H&E's lease of the Bossier City facility.

This territory will continue to be served by the six existing authorized Komatsu branches in Louisiana. WPI will operate from the existing H&E Louisiana facilities and retain all current distribution business and employees.

"We are honored by the trust H&E and Komatsu have shown in support of this acquisition," said Bruce Truesdale, Vice President of Operations, WPI. "H&E has an extraordinary team within their organization, and we look forward to working with them. Our combined industry-leading teams will enable us to better serve our customers, while growing our business."

"With almost a century of success in the industry as their foundation, we are excited to grow our partnership with WPI," said Rod Bull, Executive Vice President of Komatsu's North American Region. "Their expansion into the Louisiana market will be served well by their commitment to value and excellent customer service."

WPI is a fourth-generation, family-owned company founded in 1924 that now has 17 Komatsu branches focused on distribution, service and support of heavy equipment across three states.

Sincerely,

Bruce Truesdale
Executive Vice President & COO



New
territory
acquired



UPDATE

www.WPIUpdate.com

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Taking advantage of opportunities, providing quality service lead to exceptional growth for Gage & Cade Construction LLC



Kenny Warr,
President



Jason Reeves,
Vice President

When Kenny Warr founded Gage & Cade Construction LLC six years ago, his intent was to keep it simple and focus on ranch work around Bertram, Texas.

"One of our first contracts was to build a 3-acre pond on a ranch, and we ended up digging 25 acres worth of ponds and worked at that ranch for a year and a half," recalled Warr. "Another job came up in West Texas to build some solid waste landfills. That was like a steroid shot to the company."

Taking advantage of those two early opportunities put Gage & Cade Construction on a path to relatively fast growth. It also opened up additional possibilities.

"During the time we were doing those jobs, we needed more equipment, so our fleet grew quite a bit," Warr said. "We did some ranch work for a man who owned a general contracting company, and he kept telling me that we could branch out and do more types of projects. The first few times he mentioned it, I didn't think we were at the point where we were capable of doing that. Eventually, I said okay, and he gave us a chance to do some commercial jobs such as car washes and dealerships."

Clearing to paving

While it still does some commercial jobs, Gage & Cade Construction focuses on municipality work and rural subdivision projects. The company also occasionally buys property, develops the site and sells it.

Currently, Gage & Cade Construction has two subdivision projects in the works, including one near Bertram and another near Kerrville, Texas. The company's approximately 100 employees are doing all the sitework, including making 18-foot cuts through rock to get to grade on the Kerrville site.

"Start to finish, we take care of the clearing, mass to fine grading, utility installation, subgrade prep for the roadways, lime stabilization where necessary, and paving," said Vice President Jason Reeves, who joined the company about a year and a half ago. "Our capabilities and skills allow us to provide turnkey packages."

Warr elaborated, "In addition to the earthwork and utilities, we take care of concrete work in-house. We do flatwork such as sidewalks, parking areas and curbs, as well as foundations, utility structures and retaining walls. Recently, we

With a Komatsu PC360LCi-11 intelligent Machine Control (iMC) excavator, a Gage & Cade Construction operator loads a truck.

▶ VIDEO





▶ VIDEO

Gage & Cade Construction uses Komatsu iMC dozers, including a D71PXi-24, to cut grade and place subbase materials. "You don't need a surveyor to set blue tops, so we are saving time and material costs," said Foreman Humberto Posada. "With the GPS, I know where I'm at. You're going to cut exactly where you want to cut it. It's a good machine."

bought a distributor and a chip spreader to do chip sealing and coating for asphalt. I think our number one thing with our customers is speed, so we try to keep everything in-house because you can control the job site so much better if you're the only one who's there. You're not relying on someone else."

Warr estimates that about 90% of Gage & Cade Construction's work is done for repeat clients because the company meets deadlines and treats customers fairly.

"One of our first clients came from a referral, and we negotiated a price for spreading some base material," Warr said. "I called him on the way home from our meeting because I didn't think that the price was right, and we would need to adjust. He appreciated the honesty, and we are still working with him. We always want to do what's right to the mutual benefit of us and the customer."

"WPI to the bone"

Warr said relationships play a big role in Gage & Cade Construction's equipment-buying decisions. About four years ago, he started working with Waukesha-Pearce Industries LLC (WPI) Unit Sales Representative Cory Webb, who helped him find the right Komatsu

equipment for his company. Gage & Cade Construction has also purchased BOMAG rollers from WPI and rents BOMAG mixers for stabilization and reclamation.

"We started out super small, and none of the other guys in town really cared about us," said Warr. "Cory visited with us to determine what we were looking for. He outfitted us with the right machines and helped us get familiar with GPS in general, including building models. That set us up for success, and we have worked to turn what was a fairly mixed fleet into pretty much all Komatsu. We are WPI to the bone."

Gage & Cade Construction's fleet includes several Komatsu intelligent Machine Control (iMC) machines such as D71PXi-24 and D61PXi-24 dozers as well as a PC360LCi-11 excavator. It also runs a Komatsu GD655 motor grader equipped with an add-on Topcon GPS system.

"A D61i was our first unit, and when I operated it and saw the savings in not having to wait on surveyors or stakes or having to move material multiple times, I knew it was the way to go," said Warr. "We load the models into the machines and get after it. The accuracy has always been right on. We can run four or five GPS machines



Discover more at
WPIUpdate.com

Continued...

Substantial savings, increased efficiency with iMC

... continued

off one rover, and everyone knows exactly where they are in relation to final grade."

Reeves added, "Those machines increased our efficiency and speed. We like to hit the ground running, and the iMC machines and grader give us the ability to do that because there is so much less staking. They are also saving us a tremendous amount of time, and our cost savings from not over-digging and replacing material are substantial."



(L-R) Gage & Cade Construction's Kenny Warr and Jason Reeves work with WPI Unit Sales Representative Cory Webb to add equipment to the company's fleet. "We started out super small, and none of the other guys in town really cared about us," said Warr. "Cory visited with us to determine what we were looking for. He outfitted us with the right machines and helped us get familiar with GPS in general, including building models. That set us up for success."

WPI service technicians perform scheduled services on Gage & Cade Construction's newest Komatsu machines for the first three years or 2,000 hours under the complimentary Komatsu Care program.

"That's a big benefit to us because we know the machines are being taken care of on time, and it frees us up to focus on our jobs," said Warr. "They let us know when they are due, then get them done on-site. I also like that we get emailed reports on the machines that show how they are being used. We can see trends, and if there are issues, it allows us to address them right away with the field guys."

More expansion

Recently, one of Warr's sons joined Gage & Cade Construction full time as an estimator.

"My dad worked for a civil contractor when I was growing up, so I spent a lot of time with him in the field," recalled Warr. "I raised my two boys the same way."

Looking forward, Warr and Reeves believe Gage & Cade Construction will continue to grow exponentially.

"We are diverse in terms of the markets we serve, so if one goes down, we can easily ramp up somewhere else," commented Warr. "My background includes work in the oilfields, and we do some in that market too. We grew about 200% during this past year compared to 2021. We're definitely looking like we'll have 25% to 50% growth in 2023 with the contracts that we have right now." ■

At a subdivision project near Kerrville, Texas, a Gage & Cade Construction operator blades windrows and grades with a Komatsu GD655 motor grader equipped with a Topcon GPS system.

► VIDEO



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Lafayette-based IDIM Construction LLC provides exceptional service to customers in Louisiana and West Texas



Jude Dubose,
Owner and
Managing Member



Discover more at
WPIUpdate.com

In 2002, Jude Dubose recognized a good opportunity while working on a golf course construction project in Lafayette, La.

"I saw a need for someone to complete the infrastructure and start some residential development around the course," recalled Dubose. "I decided to go into business for myself, and four employees and I completed that project. By the time we finished, my phone was ringing, and away we went. Word got around that we were available, and we did good work."

Dubose took those calls, made connections with developers, and built a list of repeat clients in the Acadiana marketplace with his new company, IDIM (I'll Do It Myself) Construction LLC. Two decades later, the business is still serving some of its original customers in Louisiana from its headquarters in Lafayette.

A few years ago, the heavy civil and utility contractor took his customer-service philosophy to West Texas and built a similar following in that market. Dubose estimates that IDIM Construction's project list is now evenly split between the two states.

"We do our best to take care of our customers," stated Dubose. "Deliver the job on time, do it right, and I think that keeps them coming back."

In fact, a customer was responsible for IDIM Construction's move into West Texas.

"A developer we did a job for in Southwest Louisiana asked us to go out to West Texas and assist him with some projects," Dubose explained. "I told him no several times but finally caved. It proved to be a mutually good move for us and them, and we just remained in the market."

Focused on residential

IDIM Construction provides an extensive list of services in both Louisiana and West Texas, including earthwork, site preparation and storm drainage.

"Our main emphasis is single-family residential developments, which makes up the largest portion of our current workload, but we also work in the multifamily, commercial and oilfield markets, among others," Dubose explained.

"We can provide full site construction. In some instances, we sub out items such as utility and paving, but we aim to self-perform as much as

An IDIM Construction crew installs pipe with Komatsu excavators and a wheel loader. "Across the board, Komatsu gives us reliability and provides us with great value and productivity," said Managing Member Jude Dubose.





► VIDEO

With a Komatsu D61PX-24 dozer, an operator grades a job site. "The 61s are workhorses and will move a lot of earth quickly," said Managing Member Jude Dubose.

possible. It aids us in keeping jobs on track and not having to work around others' schedules."

Dubose added that a typical project's value is \$1 million to \$2 million. IDIM Construction has as many as 15 jobs in progress at any one time and a staff of up to 50 that keeps the company on track.

Support plays a big role

In addition to his team and the relationship they have helped build with customers, Dubose credits WPI Sales Representative Giles Peltier for playing a role in IDIM Construction's success.

"We have worked with Giles during the past several years, and he has been instrumental in not only helping us determine what equipment is best suited to our needs, but backing it with exceptional service," stated Dubose. "He fully supports us whether it's in Louisiana or West Texas. For example, we have several pieces of Komatsu equipment, and the newer ones are covered by the Komatsu Care program. Our previous Komatsu dealer kept a close eye on them with Komtrax, then alerted us when it was time for a service, and got it done."

Continued...



IDIM Construction focuses on completing single-family residential developments, and it does everything from clearing to paving. "We can provide full site construction," said Managing Member Jude Dubose. "In some instances, we sub out items such as utility and paving, but we aim to self-perform as much as possible. It aids us in keeping jobs on track and not having to work around others' schedules."

'Komatsu gives us reliability'

... continued

Dubose added, "It keeps us working in the field and not working on machines. We have full confidence that will continue to be the case with WPI, and we're looking forward to building that relationship with them."

With Peltier's assistance, IDIM Construction has recently added several Komatsu excavators,

including PC170LC-11, PC290LC-11 and PC360LC-11 models. IDIM Construction also has two Komatsu D61PX-24 dozers, a D51PX-24 dozer and a WA200-8 wheel loader.

"We use our 170s and 290s for utilities, and the 360s are primarily for mass excavation," said Dubose. "Because our work is so varied, we need a range of sizes. The 61s are workhorses and will move a lot of earth quickly. We have found that the 51 is our all-around dozer. It has adequate power for moving earth on smaller projects and does a great job finishing. Across the board, Komatsu gives us reliability and provides us with great value and productivity."

Dubose added, "Giles helped us see the value of having newer machines and keeping them, for the most part, under warranty. I think we will continue to evolve our fleet and keep it fresh going forward."

Top priority

Maintaining solid relationships is still Dubose's top priority. That's why he has put further expansion for IDIM Construction on hold.

"We want to sustain where we are; it's manageable, and we can focus on providing our customers with quality projects," Dubose emphasized. "We have found a real niche, and the kinks have been worked out of our plans, so to speak. I think we stay where we are and concentrate on what we know best." ■



IDIM Construction's Jude Dubose (left) and WPI's Giles Peltier discuss equipment and service at IDIM Construction's headquarters in Lafayette, La. "We have worked with Giles during the past several years, and he has been instrumental in not only helping us determine what equipment is best suited to our needs, but backing it with exceptional service," stated Dubose. "He fully supports us whether it's in Louisiana or West Texas."

With a Komatsu PC290LC-11 excavator, an IDIM Construction operator digs a utility trench.



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Bipartisan Infrastructure Law positively impacts transportation, overall forecast is mainly flat due to inflation concerns

In late 2021, President Joe Biden signed the \$1.2 trillion Infrastructure and Investment Jobs Act (IIJA) into law, which was a historic investment in the nation's infrastructure and transportation funding. The Bipartisan Infrastructure Law has had a positive effect and will continue to do so in 2023, according to several construction industry professionals as they forecast this year's outlook.

During testimony before the Environment & Public Works (EPW) Committee in late 2022, American Road & Transportation Builders Association (ARTBA) President and CEO Dave Bauer told senators that 29,000 transportation improvement projects are moving forward thanks to the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law. Bauer highlighted ARTBA's economic analysis, showing that highway formula funds supported 2,500 more safety, mobility and maintenance improvements in 2022 than in 2021, while the number of \$100 million projects increased from 18 in 11 states to 24 in 14 states.

"Though each project has a unique story of need and solution, they are all tangible illustrations of the impacts underway from the leadership of this committee in delivering generational investments through

a multiyear surface transportation program reauthorization," said Bauer.

The Bipartisan Infrastructure Law reauthorized surface transportation programs for five years, investing \$110 billion in America's aging roads and bridges.

ARTBA estimated that highway and bridge construction spending will increase 13.4% this year to a total of \$119 billion, according to the article "2023 Forecast: Markets are Mixed for Year Ahead" published by Engineering News-Record (ENR). Dodge Data & Analytics Inc. is even more optimistic, predicting new starts will be as high as 20%, thanks to infrastructure funding. That would be an increase beyond the 23% rise Dodge forecast for the end of 2022. Dodge Chief Economist Richard Branch pointed out that only 19% of funding from the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law had been allocated by late last year.

"There's a lot of money still on the table waiting to be spent," said Branch in the Equipment World article "Dodge Economist: Prepare for a Rocky First Half of 2023." "We continue to think 2023 and 2024 are the best years for infrastructure construction. But, I could foresee, again, if we have appropriation delays, that maybe 2024 and 2025 are the best years."

Modest downturn, quick recovery

Infrastructure projects are bright spots in the overall construction industry, which has been slowed by several factors during the past year. Dodge sees it as relatively flat in 2023, with a slight decline. Fails Management Institute (FMI) forecasts a 1.3% decline.

"I don't think this is another great recession," said Jay Bowman, Principal of Industry Management Consultant for FMI in the ENR article. "I'll take flat over down any day of the week."

Branch noted that inflation will be a big factor going forward, along with other causes for concern such as the war in Ukraine and oil production cuts by the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC). Branch's forecast assumes that core inflation will improve, and there will not be any major shocks. If his predictions are correct and everything remains stable, Branch believes a "technical

Multifamily housing appears to be a bright spot in the residential sector. Dodge predicts a 1.4% rise in starts, while FMI sees a nearly 6% jump.





The Bipartisan Infrastructure Law will give a boost to projects such as roads, bridges, canals, broadband, utility upgrades and more in 2023, according to industry forecasters. ARTBA estimated that highway and bridge construction spending will increase 13.4% this year to a total of \$119 billion. Dodge is even more optimistic, predicting new starts to be as high as 20%, thanks to infrastructure funding.



recession" could be avoided with economic stabilization and recovery starting in the latter half of 2023. He added that a strong banking system and undersupplied housing market are favorable for the construction industry.

"We're sitting at 14- to 15-year highs in the Dodge Momentum Index, so it should provide some semblance of confidence and reassurance that developers and owners are continuing to put projects into the queue despite the fact that we're concerned about what might happen when interest rates keep rising and the economy slows down in 2023," said Branch.

In its most recent outlook, the Portland Cement Association (PCA) projected a near-term demand decline of about 3.5% for 2023, the first decline in 13 years. It expects the slowdown to be short, with growth returning in 2024.

"Due to inflation and rising interest rates, economic growth is expected to remain sluggish through mid-2023 with unemployment

reaching 4.7%," said Edward J. Sullivan, PCA Chief Economist and Senior Vice President. "Inflation is expected to remain high, leading to further monetary policy tightening through this year and into early next."

Sector gains

While both Dodge and FMI predict overall construction starts to be down in 2023, both foresee increases within several sectors. Dodge predicts a slight increase in total residential construction, including 1.4% in the multifamily category. FMI anticipates a nearly 6% jump in multifamily, despite overall residential starts being lower.

Dodge and FMI have opposing outlooks on total non-residential as well. FMI is optimistic of a 4.4% rise, led by the manufacturing sector with a jump of 15.4%. It sees lodging, amusements and recreation, education, health care, commercial and public safety all getting boosts. Dodge predicts increases for hotels and motels, stores and shopping centers, and education. ■

Which tight tail swing excavator is right for the job?



Kurt Moncini,
Senior Product
Manager,
Komatsu

Ensuring high production when digging in tight spaces and confined job sites can be challenging. Machines with traditional counterweights may not be ideal because of the likelihood they could swing into an obstruction, making tight tail swing excavators a much better fit. However, with so many tight tail swing sizes and models available, choosing the right one for the job takes some careful consideration.

"Tight tails allow operators to be more efficient because they typically have better situational awareness and can concentrate on the task at hand while reducing the chances of swinging into an obstruction or into a lane of traffic," stated Kurt Moncini, Senior Product Manager, Komatsu. "Typically, the upper structure is revolving within the confines of the undercarriage, which is why they are great for a variety of tasks in urban areas, or where space is limited."

To increase versatility, consider adding attachments such as blades or breakers to your tight tail swing excavators. Most of the machines are already plumbed and ready to run the right-sized attachments.

What's the digging depth?

According to Moncini, digging depth is an important consideration when choosing the right-sized tight tail swing excavator.

"Pipe typically comes in multiples of 8-foot sections, so taking that into consideration, I always like to look at the 8-foot level bottom digging depth because that's the maximum depth I can dig and excavate an 8-foot flat bottom section of trench," said Moncini. "As an example, if the required pipe run trench depth is 10 feet, my most efficient machine size will be one that can excavate an 8-foot level bottom to that depth. I need

to size the machine accordingly and try to go with the smallest tight tail that will do the job most efficiently."

How much do I have to lift?

Lift capacity is another major factor in choosing the right excavator. While you want to be able to move the machine as little as possible, you need to consider what you may need to move on-site in addition to digging.

"If you are excavating utility trenches in an urban environment, there is a good chance you will have to handle trench boxes and set steel plates to cover up the trench at night, or you may have to pick up and install heavy concrete pipe or structures," said Moncini. "It's vital to have a machine with sufficient lift capacity to handle the job. Ideally, I really want to be able to handle over the side as much as I can lift in front."

Moncini added, "The heavier the required loads become, the bigger the machine I'm going to need. Having a machine that can also lift the materials off the trailer when they arrive is important too. I need to be able to lift, handle and place materials until it's time to use them, then have the ability to rehandle and lay them in the trench."

Do I want versatility?

"Most smaller machines come standard with a blade, which extends versatility," said Moncini. "The ability to push material and backfill is an added advantage and may be able to eliminate an extra machine on the job."

Moncini also added that a blade can help you get better over-the-front lift capacity.

Additional tight tail swing versatility can be achieved by equipping the excavators with attachments such as breakers, but you must properly size them to the machine.

"If the job calls for breaking up old pavement or other concrete structures, you should first size the breaker for the task, then ensure the excavator is big enough to handle it and has the correct hydraulic flow to operate it," said Moncini. "There are a wide range of attachments — from compactors to mowers and more — that you can use with a tight





Komatsu manufactures eight tight tail swing models, ranging in size from the approximately 6,800-pound, 24.4-horsepower PC30MR-5 to the roughly 54,000-pound, 165-horsepower PC238USLC-11. "Tight tails allow operators to be more efficient because they typically have better situational awareness and can concentrate on the task at hand while reducing the chances of swinging into an obstruction or into a lane of traffic," stated Kurt Moncini, Senior Product Manager, Komatsu. "They are great for a variety of tasks in urban areas, as well as others, where space is limited."

tail swing. The good news is that most are already plumbed and ready for attachments."

Which boom design is right for me?

Komatsu manufactures eight tight tail swing models, ranging in size from the approximately 6,800-pound, 24.4-horsepower PC30MR-5 to the roughly 54,000-pound, 165-horsepower PC238USLC-11. There are five MR (minimum-radius) models and three US (ultra-short) models.

"The MR excavators have a swing boom, and the US models have a standard boom," Moncini noted. "Our MR design allows the operator to pivot the boom left or right to get right next to a structure and dig parallel to the tracks, so they are much more versatile. The advantage of a standard boom is that it's a little lower price point. Additionally, the standard boom overextends toward the back of the machine to tuck the bucket in tight."

What about tracks?

Track selection may play an important role when working in urban environments.

You want to avoid breaking up pavement, damaging sidewalks and ruining grassy areas.

"Having to fix an existing surface could be a major hit to your profit," said Moncini. "Our smaller tight tail swing excavators come standard with rubber-belted tracks. Not only do they minimize ground disturbance, but they are quieter and faster than steel tracks. Road liners, or conventional tracks with rubber pads, are very popular in our mid-sized to larger models when working on improved surfaces."

Who can I talk to?

For additional information, Moncini suggests consulting with your Komatsu distributor.

"Our distributors have the knowledge and expertise to help you determine the right-sized machine to most effectively get the job done," said Moncini. "Tight tail swings can be excellent tools for limited-space job sites and can also offer high production in open areas too. If you are not using them, consider checking them out to increase your versatility." ■

Editor's Note: To learn more about Komatsu's tight tail swing excavators, visit <https://www.komatsu.com/en/products/excavators>.



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Proprietary iMC 2.0 promotes significant productivity gains and is now available on Komatsu PC490LCi-11 excavator

Designed to lessen the skills gap between new and experienced operators and help improve the bottom line for contractors, Komatsu's largest intelligent Machine Control (iMC) 2.0 excavator, the PC490LCi-11, offers sophisticated productivity-enhancing automation. An excellent match for excavation, trenching, slope work or fine grading, the PC490LCi-11 helps minimize over-excavation to empower operators to dig straight to grade quickly and accurately.

Built on Komatsu's iMC platform and developed with input from leading construction companies, iMC 2.0 offers additional new features.

Upgraded iMC monitor

A new 10.4-inch iMC monitor features increased memory capacity, processing speed and pinch-to-zoom functionality in a smaller lightweight package for improved performance and ease of use.

Bucket angle hold control

The new bucket angle hold control helps operators reach final grade with speed

and precision. It automatically holds the bucket angle to the design surface during arm operation, enabling operators to perform finish grading using only arm input.

Both features build upon the semi-automatic functions that were part of the first generation of iMC excavators, including the ability to switch from manual to semi-automatic mode. The existing technology and new features can help increase production and efficiency while reducing costs. ■



Learn more

Quick Specs

Model
PC490LCi-11

Net Horsepower
359 hp

Operating Weight
105,670-107,850 lbs.

Bucket Capacity
1.47-4.15 cu. yd.

The PC490LCi-11 is Komatsu's largest intelligent Machine Control (iMC) 2.0 excavator.

It's an excellent match for excavation, trenching, slope work or fine grading. New features include an upgraded iMC monitor and bucket angle hold control.



Five ways drones can help reduce costs and increase efficiency on construction sites

As technology continues to change the construction industry, a potentially dynamic investment companies can make isn't iron on the ground, but a drone in the sky.

Drones are more accessible than ever with relatively affordable prices and simple operating controls, which make it possible for any organization to start drone operation.

If you're ready to expand your fleet, here are five ways drones can help reduce costs and increase efficiency on your job sites.

1. Streamline communications

Being able to streamline information and connect your entire staff can help increase your workplace and job site efficiency.

With a timeline function, drones can take photographs from the same coordinates during the duration of a project to provide a timelapse of the progress. This can keep everyone up to date on the project's status.

"The drone technology allows us to have somebody go out and drone sites two to three times a week," said Greg Sutton, Vice President of Operations at Aspen Earthworks Inc. in Reno, Nev. "Even if I can't get out here and see what production has

happened on a site, I still feel like I visited the job site through the drone technology."

2. Spend less time surveying

Depending on the site, conventional surveying can take days — with drones, it can take minutes.

"I think the greatest change after adopting drones or being exposed to drone usage is using the high accuracy survey grade data that they provide," said Jason Anetsberger, Director of Customer Solutions at Komatsu. "Instead of having to walk a site or drive a site to map it terrestrially, they can now fly the site in a much larger area, in much higher resolution, in much less time, and get a highly accurate survey of that terrain. It has opened a whole new world for contractors to extract value from utilizing a drone."

A company can quickly and accurately collect objective data of its job site with a drone, and that information can be used to help increase productivity and efficiency in the field.

3. Get accurate material estimates

Having the incorrect number of materials for a project can waste time and money. On construction sites, drones can quickly provide a precise representation of the area, so you can get an accurate estimate of everything you will need for the project.

During a preconstruction flight, you can compare the real site to the engineer's model, which allows you to fix any miscalculations. By correcting those errors, companies can quickly see a return on investment.

"We had a customer recently who realized they had to move 40,000 cubic yards more than what the engineer quantities were saying they needed to do at the beginning of the job," said Jim Petry, Construction Project Modeler for Komatsu. "For them, that was a big revelation. That was the first time that they used a drone. They quickly found a lot of value in it. They can see where their cut and fills are on the site, where that is taking place, and if it's a large site, they can make better decisions on equipment."

With more accurate measurements in the early stages of projects, companies can adjust their

Drones are more accessible than ever with relatively affordable prices and simple operating controls, which make it possible for any organization to start drone operation.





With a drone, a company can quickly and accurately collect objective data of its job site, and that information can be used to help increase productivity and efficiency in the field.

fleets accordingly to help increase production and have more precise data collection throughout the process.

"Komatsu's Smart Construction Drone has enabled Aspen Earthworks to reach new levels," said Aspen Earthworks President Ryan Dustin. "With day-by-day information, it's enabled us to really dial in our estimating and our production rates that I believe have helped put us near the top of our market, and it was incredibly easy to get started. With that moment-by-moment information and real-time data, we can work with our project manager and superintendents to help us reorganize and redo the way we approach our dirt and utilities projects to increase efficacy."

4. Connect clients to every site

You can also use drone technology to quickly and accurately connect beneficiaries to the job site, which can help save time, avoid future headaches, and secure repeat clients.

"With drones, you can give clients confidence that they're getting the production that they're paying for," said Anetsberger. "That could help contractors secure future business. There's more trust in that relationship if you're feeding

them near-real-time data or opening a digital twin, so they can follow alongside."

Plus, drones can reduce the amount of time spent providing documentation for invoices.

"Instead of spending a day doing that conventionally, you're doing the flight in just a few minutes and can accurately compare that against the last flight to be able to put their invoices forward and get paid as progress moves along," said Petry.

5. Create dynamic marketing content

Aside from using drones for surveying, they can also be used to collect photographs and videos on job sites, or even at the office, that can be used for marketing, recruitment and public relations campaigns.

The maneuverability of drones can create dynamic photographs and videos that a person on the ground simply cannot easily replicate. Also, you don't have to cut into your marketing budget for a camera.

While any drone can adequately survey, photograph and record a job site, Anetsberger and Petry recommend a robust model if you want high accuracy with good stability to get the most out of your investment. ■

Komatsu's HD1500-8E0 helps increase production at quarry, aggregate and mining operations, keeps operators comfortable



Sebastian Witkowski,
Product Manager,
Komatsu

Quick Specs

Model

HD1500-8E0

Net Horsepower

1,570 hp

Operating Weight

550,229 lbs.

Rated Payload

153.2 tons

Heaped Capacity

102 cu. yd.

Komatsu's new HD1500-8E0 mechanical haul truck delivers high performance with less fuel consumption than its predecessor. It is purpose-built to increase production and efficiency in multiple applications.

Does your operation need an efficient 150-ton haulage solution that can deliver performance on grade while providing energy-saving technologies to help achieve lower fuel consumption? Komatsu's rigid frame off-highway haul truck, the HD1500-8E0, is purpose-built for mining, quarry and aggregate applications.

Delivering performance with a 1,570-net-horsepower, Tier 4 Final Komatsu engine, the HD1500-8E0 helps drive high levels of productivity. It has a seven-speed, fully automatic transmission with two configurable reverse speeds. Komatsu's advanced transmission with an optimum modulation control system provides electronic shift control with automatic clutch modulation. Optimized clutch engagement at every gear provides smoother shifting without losing torque, which offers a comfortable ride and helps reduce material spillage.

To promote productivity and control the life cycle costs of the truck, an integrated payload meter manages the payload of each hauling cycle by analyzing production volume and the working conditions of the machine.

"When designing the HD1500-8E0, Komatsu's focus was improving performance and durability and helping reduce total cost of ownership," said Sebastian Witkowski, Product Manager, Komatsu. "In addition to best-in-class speed on grade, and

downhill brake retarding performance, the truck has a host of new efficiency and operator environment technologies."

The HD1500-8E0 is equipped with hydraulic, wet, multiple-disc brakes on all four wheels that act as a highly responsive retarder, providing operators with confidence at higher speeds when traveling downhill. Operators can also control their downhill descent by setting a desired travel speed with the automatic retard speed control (ARSC), which applies the brake retarder to maintain the desired setting.

Easy maneuverability

With a tight turning radius of 36 feet, 9 inches, operators in the HD1500-8E0 can maneuver in and out of tight spaces when spotting to be loaded or positioning to dump. Komatsu's Traction Control System (KTCS) provides excellent control in loose or slippery haul road conditions by monitoring the rear wheels for slippage and automatically applying pressure to the independent wheel brake assemblies.

The redesigned cab features a seat heater and ventilator, and the hydropneumatic suspension gives operators the smooth and comfortable ride they need for long shifts. Designed with a convenient layout, the ergonomic cab is equipped with an air-suspension seat to help dampen vibrations, and the low-noise engine, fan clutch and cab sealing provide a quiet, low-decibel operating environment. ■





Now there is an easy, affordable way to bridge the technology gap

Smart Construction Retrofit equips legacy machines with 3D guidance and payload monitoring — tools to drive accuracy and efficiency at your job site.

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Want grade control for your standard excavators? Here's a solution with an added bonus

If you have an excavator without GPS grade control, you may be missing out on time and costs savings. What if there was a new solution that reduces staking, surveying and over-digging and allows you to do it cost-effectively with an added bonus?

"The new Smart Construction Retrofit Kit gives customers who want an entry-level, indicate-only system a solid choice," according to Ron Schwieters, Senior Product Manager, iMC and Hardware, Komatsu. "It is three-dimensional, so operators get the advantage of seeing where they are on the project, as well as their relation to target elevation."

Multiple components make Smart Construction Retrofit highly accurate, Schwieters added. The kit includes four inertial measurement units (IMU) mounted on the bucket, arm, boom and frame of the excavator. Two GNSS antennas for GPS are on the rear. There are options to transfer design data to and from the Smart Construction Cloud.

"Users download our Smart Construction Pilot app from the Google Play Store, and use it with their connected device," Schwieters noted. "They can set audio alerts that will change tones the closer they get to finish grade. That, along with the visual representation on the app, helps

keep operators from digging too deep, saves valuable time and lowers costs."

A key differentiator

Schwieters said that the added bonus of Komatsu's Smart Construction Retrofit Kit is a payload system.

"As you load the bucket, it weighs the material, and operators see that in real time," said Schwieters. "If you're loading trucks, that helps ensure you are putting the proper amount of tonnage in and not overloading or underloading. Typical aftermarket systems don't offer that. It's a great feature for quarries, batch plants and construction projects to accurately monitor materials loaded onto trucks."

To remotely track progress, that information and production data can be sent to project managers and other stakeholders using other Smart Construction solutions. Design changes can be sent to the machine using the cloud.

"The Smart Construction Retrofit Kit can be used with practically any brand or size of construction excavator," Schwieters noted. "Installation can be done easily by your distributor or dealer. We recommend you contact them for more information about this valuable solution." ■



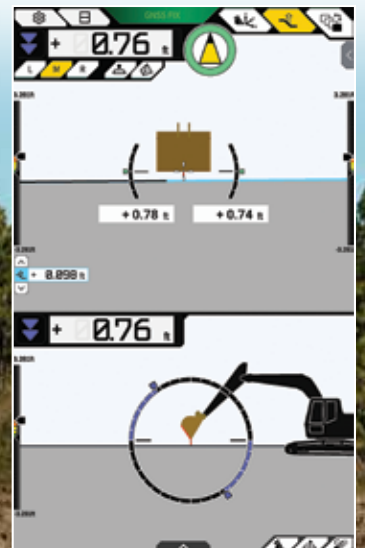
Ron Schwieters,
Senior Product Manager,
iMC and Hardware,
Komatsu



Watch the video

The Smart Construction Retrofit Kit gives customers who want an entry-level, indicate-only system a solid choice. It is three-dimensional, so operators get the advantage of seeing where they are in relation to target elevation, and the payload system is an added bonus.

► VIDEO



Fast Track accelerates technician training and certification for increased efficiency and decreased downtime



Cris Perez,
Regional
Operations
Manager,
WPI

It's no secret that there is a technician shortage in the heavy equipment industry, but companies such as Waukesha-Pearce Industries LLC (WPI) are diligently working to remedy that by recruiting and training new technicians — including getting them Komatsu-certified. WPI has teamed up with other distributors to create the Fast Track program to accelerate the process.

"In the past, our technicians would go through a 12-month (one week a month for 12 months) certification program," noted Cris Perez, Regional Operations Manager at WPI. "We have narrowed it down to eight weeks over a four-month period. Komatsu has partnered with OSUIT (Oklahoma State University Institute of Technology) where the Komatsu-specific certification program is held. Technicians attend class for two weeks straight and two weeks back at the dealership. Fast Track is designed for technicians to get their certification within a short time frame."

Technicians going through the Fast Track program must have a strong background

on machinery or have completed training at a technical school. That allows them to be Komatsu-certified at an accelerated pace compared to the traditional program.

"The Fast Track program goes beyond the basics, so what's normally a 12-month process is condensed down to four months," said Perez. "We require technicians to have five-plus years of experience, graduated from a tech school, or military background with the appropriate experience in diesel technology. When technicians have completed their certification, they will have the criteria needed to cover all mechanical aspects of Komatsu equipment and more."

WPI recently completed its second class of technicians in the Fast Track program. Perez said he hopes to build up to three classes per year.

Training in Cartersville

Fast Track technicians spend time at OSUIT, WPI and Komatsu's Training Center in Cartersville, Ga., where they get classroom training and hands-on experience. Classes are

(L-R) WPI Technicians Kyle Koska, Luis Gonzales and Nick Hawkins use technology to diagnose issues with Komatsu dozers during a Fast Track training session. "Experienced mechanics like myself get a little more detail with the Fast Track program, especially with the newer HST (hydrostatic transmission) machines," said Koska. "It's definitely been helpful with diagnostics with a lot of in-depth training on systems."





Technician Courtney Hardy attends a Fast Track class at Komatsu's Training Center in Cartersville, Ga. "The Fast Track program has helped me tremendously because it's directed toward Komatsu, so you are learning those specific systems," said Hardy. "It gives you a ton of knowledge and helps you be better prepared to work on Komatsu machines."

led by distributor trainers, including Perez, and Komatsu instructors such as Casey Zbinden.

"Fast Track is beneficial because of how fast the technicians are brought up to speed, so they can excel more quickly in their job when they return to the field," said Zbinden. "Because they are already grounded in the fundamentals, we can give them additional deeper testing than they normally would get in a traditional training environment. Additionally, when they come to Cartersville, they get an opportunity to spend almost an entire day operating equipment in our demonstration area and a day to tour the Chattanooga Manufacturing Operation. Those experiences add value to a very unique program."

Technicians appreciate the program

Technician Courtney Hardy, who works in WPI's Houston shop, came to WPI with experience in hydraulics from working as a "torpedo man" in the U.S. Navy. He loves getting his hands dirty and solving problems.

"It's a great feeling to resolve an issue for a customer, so they can get their machine back and running," said Hardy. "The Fast Track program has helped me tremendously because it's directed toward Komatsu, so you are learning those specific systems. It gives

you a ton of knowledge and helps you be better prepared to work on Komatsu machines."

Field Technician Luis Gonzales, who worked in the automotive industry and on diesel machinery before transitioning into construction equipment, likes to minimize customer downtime. Thanks to the Fast Track program, he now understands how the equipment works on a deeper level, which has helped him diagnose and fix problems faster.

"My favorite part of the program is just the learning experience," said Gonzales, who is based in WPI's Corpus Christi, Texas, branch. "It actually has made me become a better technician."

Field Technician Kyle Koska worked on agricultural and small construction equipment before joining WPI's Buffalo, Texas, branch.

"There are some similar aspects to heavy equipment such as hydraulics and engines, but the Komatsu equipment is just on a bigger scale," said Koska. "Experienced mechanics like myself get a little more detail with the Fast Track program, especially with the newer HST (hydrostatic transmission) machines. It's definitely been helpful with diagnostics with a lot of in-depth training on systems. I would encourage any tech to consider going through it." ■



Discover more at
WPIUpdate.com



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Scott Hamende's winding career path leads him back to WPI, now he is the Assistant Branch Manager in Austin, Texas

It seems almost inevitable that Scott Hamende would become a heavy equipment technician.

"My father and grandfather were both technicians, so I'm third generation," explained Hamende, Assistant Branch Manager, Waukesha Pearce Industries LLC (WPI). "When I graduated from high school, I went to trade school for awhile. My first job was working in a manufacturing plant doing warehouse stocking and delivering parts to the production line. I went quickly from the warehouse to the parts manufacturing side where we actually fabricated the individual parts that went into the process of building the trucks and cranes, then I went to the machining department."

Hamende left the manufacturing industry and worked in fleet maintenance for a couple of rental houses. He also spent time with a construction company before joining WPI in 2001 as a field technician. Within a year, he was assigned to be the resident technician for a large coal mine that was leasing multiple Komatsu D375-5 dozers from WPI. He spent five years on-site before returning to regular field work.

"I did that until March of 2009, which is when I went to work directly for the mining company that bought the mine where I had been a resident tech," recalled Hamende. "In late 2017, we were told that the mine was going to close. On the way home from that announcement, I got a call from a former co-worker at WPI who had already heard about the closure. That led me to come back to WPI as a shop technician."

Hamende eventually returned to field service before taking on the role of field foreman, then District Service Manager. In the fall of 2022, he was promoted to his current position.

"I am overseeing anything and everything regarding service for the Austin branch, as well as for those situations where there is overlap between stores, whether it be commonality of customers, equipment that is shared between territories, or rental equipment that's shared between branches," explained Hamende. "I manage the parts, quotes, estimates and final invoicing."

A tight-knit group

Hamende's duties also include leading a staff of nine field technicians, seven shop technicians, two lube technicians, a field foreman, a shop foreman, and two administrators. Hamende said he appreciates the work they do and their ability to adjust on the fly, which helps retain customers and keep them satisfied.

"Out of all the different companies that I've worked for in my career, WPI has always had the most family feel to it," commented Hamende. "That has always been the biggest draw to me. We're a very tight-knit group. We all get along. It's probably the best group of people I've ever worked with in my life."

Scott and his wife, Danielle, have four children, and he has two children from a previous marriage. The couple enjoys camping, traveling and keeping up with all the kids' activities. Scott also likes to fish and hunt. ■



Scott Hamende,
Assistant Branch
Manager,
WPI,
Austin

Assistant Branch Manager Scott Hamende (left) collaborates with Shop Technician Noe Salazar to diagnose and repair a machine in WPI's Austin, Texas, shop. "Out of all the different companies that I've worked for in my career, WPI has always had the most family feel to it," said Hamende. "It's probably the best group of people I've ever worked with in my life."



Preventive maintenance clinics ensure your equipment is calibrated to optimum levels for high production



Chris Wasik,
Director,
Life Cycle Solutions,
Komatsu

Many factors impact your equipment's productivity and health, including ambient temperatures, the operating environment, operator habits, regular maintenance, the quality of fluids and filters, and working applications.

Ignoring any of these can accelerate component wear and cause costly, unexpected failures as well as unplanned, extended downtime. Overall performance and operating efficiency can also be affected when pressures and speeds cause longer cycle times. A heavier burden on mechanical systems drives up fuel burn rates too.

A thorough preventive maintenance (PM) clinic provides a detailed inspection of your equipment, including a look inside to measure pump pressure, engine speeds, blowby, idle and cycle times, oil quality, internal component wear, and more.

Minimize downtime

"The United States Department of Energy estimates a good proactive preventive

maintenance program paired with thorough machine recalibration and inspection, such as a PM clinic, can significantly save operations and maintenance costs compared to a reactive approach during a machine's life," said Chris Wasik, Director, Life Cycle Solutions, Komatsu.

When pressures or speeds deteriorate beyond adjustable ranges, planned replacement strategies for key parts or components can bring the machine back to a nearly new level of performance as well as minimize repair costs and downtime, according to Wasik. Measurements taken are compared to Komatsu's recommended operating ranges and can usually be calibrated to optimum levels for better machine performance.

"For a more detailed list of system measurements and checks performed during a standard PM clinic, consult your specific machine's shop manual," Wasik advised. "Check with your Komatsu distributor or dealer for specials and incentives when they conduct a PM clinic on your Komatsu equipment." ■

A preventive maintenance (PM) clinic provides a detailed inspection of your equipment. Measurements are compared to Komatsu's recommended operating ranges and can usually be calibrated to optimum levels for better machine performance.



Tackle demanding forestry processing environments with Komatsu's new PC230F-11 swing machine

Your forestry crews need equipment that can deliver exceptional performance in difficult environments, control downtime and drive productivity. The robust design of Komatsu's new fuel-efficient PC230F-11 swing machine lets operators delimb, cut and stack.

Operators can more easily move large trees with the PC230F-11's powerful swing system and large swing circle. The machine has a reach of up to 29 feet and high maneuverability to help drive productivity. An extra-rugged exterior protects against falling limbs with a 1.26-inch-thick polycarbonate front window and metal designed to withstand demanding environments. Heavy-duty service undercover guards, thick rear compartment doors, and a right corner guard with a standard tree deflector help protect the processor.

Designed with a high and wide undercarriage, powerful swing motor and ability to withstand high-debris conditions, the PC230F-11 is backed by excellent service, easy access to parts and an industry-leading warranty. When operators are working in high-debris conditions, the wide-fin radiator is protected by heavy-duty forestry screens and a variable-pitch reversible fan that helps improve airflow.

Operators can quickly adjust to sudden changes in load weight without losing productivity with the Auto Power Max feature. It automatically senses the difference and reacts with a 7-second burst of additional horsepower to help pull the trees during the delimbing process.

Komatsu's new PC230F-11 processor features a powerful swing system and large swing circle. It has a reach of up to 29 feet and high maneuverability to help drive productivity.

More fuel efficient

To reduce operator fatigue, the PC230F-11 provides a quiet, comfortable work environment. Cabs are climate-controlled and equipped with Bluetooth technology. The cushioned air-suspension seat can be heated and cooled.

The PC230F-11 can achieve exceptional performance with low fuel consumption thanks to a powerful PC290LL-class-size, factory-installed Komatsu Tier 4 Final engine.

Plus, operators can spend more time on the job and less time refueling with the additional fuel storage on the PC230F-11. The tank is in the rear of the carrier and built into the counterweight, which delivers double the fuel capacity. Because the fuel tank was moved to the rear, there is a large tool storage area on the side for the operator to store an extra 5-gallon bucket of oil, extra chains and other tools. ■

Learn more about the PC230F-11 and other forestry products at <https://www.komatsu.com/en/products/forestry/>.



Discover more

Quick Specs

Model
PC230F-11

Net Horsepower
197 hp

Operating Weight
67,516 lbs.

Swing Torque
58,334 lbs.-ft.



WPI adds high-quality TimberPro forestry machines to its list of products



WPI now carries the complete lineup of TimberPro forestry machines, such as tracked bunchers and harvesters, wheeled harvesters, forwarders and felling heads.

Waukesha-Pearce Industries LLC (WPI) now carries the complete lineup of TimberPro (a Komatsu-owned company) forestry machines. TimberPro manufactures several models of tracked bunchers and harvesters, wheeled harvesters, forwarders and felling heads.

"There are a large number of forestry customers in East Texas, and the TimberPro line of high-quality, innovative machines gives them a solid choice for their harvesting needs," said WPI Sales Representative Clint Woodcock. "With its long history, TimberPro has a great reputation for efficient and high production in all types of wood. We're excited to take on the TimberPro line."

TimberPro's lineup includes its latest D-Series models that feature larger cabs with improved visibility and more fuel-efficient engines with longer maintenance intervals that contribute to reduced operating costs and lower overall cost of ownership compared to previous models. Two felling heads for feller bunchers — a 32-inch bar saw and a 22-inch disc saw — are available in a 40-degree tilt design or a 360-degree wrist design.

"WPI has a (nearly 100-year) history of ensuring their customers have the resources and support, when and where they need them," said Doug Morris, Vice President of the Forest Machine Business for Komatsu. "We are excited that TimberPro customers will have that kind of outstanding dealer support in Texas and look forward to working closely with WPI." ■

Interior Department allocates \$560 million to clean up wells

The United States Interior Department is giving \$560 million to 24 states as part of an effort to start cleaning up high-priority derelict oil and gas wells. It said up to 10,000 wells could be dealt with as part of an orphan well cleanup program that was created under the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, which was passed in 2021.

"(The Bipartisan Infrastructure Law) is enabling us to confront long-standing

environmental injustices by making a historic investment to plug orphaned wells throughout the country," said Secretary Deb Haaland.

According to the Interior Department, more than 129,000 orphaned wells have been identified on state and private land. It said the number is expected to increase with more research. ■

Komatsu's new 845-1 forwarder offers high crane capacity, maneuverability in rough terrain

Does your forestry operation need a dependable log forwarder that can operate in rough terrain conditions? Komatsu's 845-1 forwarder offers a combination of high crane capacity, maneuverability and rough terrain capability.

With high productivity for thinning and light clear-cutting, the 13-ton forwarder offers several frame-length options. Designed for smooth and precise operation, the 845-1 has a long reach with excellent lifting power and slewing torque.

Even when fully loaded, operators can maneuver with confidence in the most rugged forests. The chassis and suspensions on Komatsu forwarders are designed for performance under demanding conditions. Komatsu Comfort Bogie axles with a high portal offset and V-shaped frames provide some of the highest ground clearance in the industry and maximize ground contact when navigating on steep terrain.

Designed to maximize performance with high power and torque with a fuel-efficient engine, the sophisticated control system on the 845-1 automatically adapts to changes in engine load. The computerized HST system considers machine load, terrain conditions, power and torque output to give you exceptional tractive force. The hydraulic retarder overspeed protection ensures the driveline won't run too fast.

"The 845-1 is a powerful, yet nimble, forwarder for the North American market," said Rob Warden, Senior Product Manager, Komatsu. "It is perfectly matched to selective harvesting techniques. The harvester has a short nose design due to the four-cylinder diesel engine that requires less space than a six-cylinder. This provides great visibility to the front."

Operator benefits

The spacious and open cab provides excellent visibility, ergonomic controls and a seat that delivers all-day comfort for better productivity. Operators also get the benefit of machine controls they can

fine-tune for sensitivity and speed or for smoothness and accuracy, whatever the job demands. The state-of-the-art MaxiXT system monitors and controls everything from engine and crane to the transmission and service ladders.

A standard diesel heater system heats the engine coolant, hydraulic oil and the batteries to facilitate cold-weather starting. Maintenance is quickly and easily completed with a service-friendly design that features an electronically powered tilting hood. All filters are located together for easy access under the hood.

"The 845-1 completes Komatsu's lineup of Tier 4 Final forwarders for the North American market," said Warden. "It shares the comfortable cabin of our larger forwarders. We encourage anyone who needs a solid forwarder to check it out." ■



Rob Warden,
Senior Product
Manager,
Komatsu

Quick Specs

Gross Load
26,455 lbs.

Horsepower
188 hp (at 1,900 rpm)

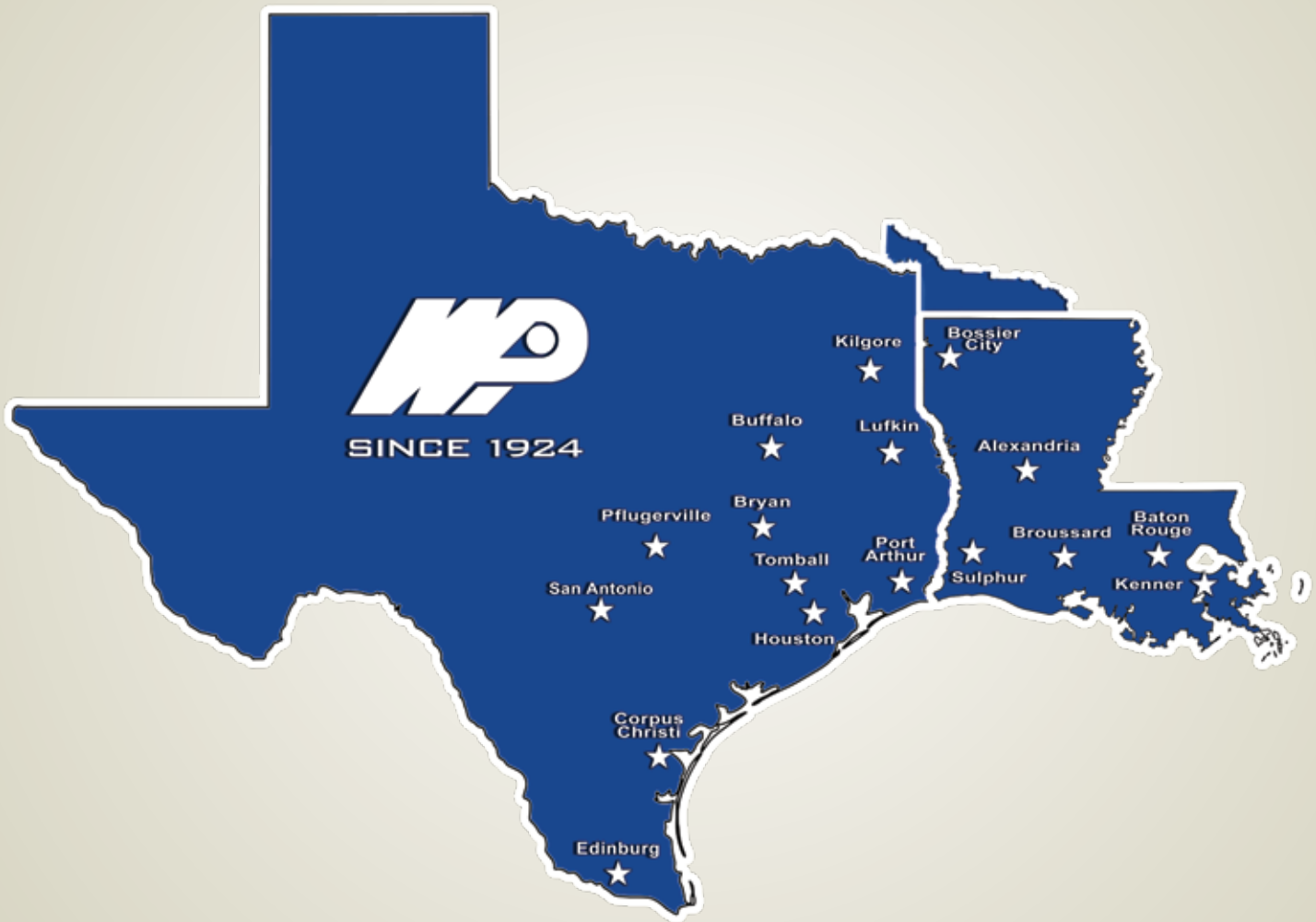
Tractive Force
38,218 lbf.

Even when fully loaded, operators can maneuver with confidence in the most rugged forests with the Komatsu 845-1 forwarder. It has a long reach with excellent lifting power and slewing torque for smooth and precise operation.



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