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A Shift in the U.S. Mindset Considering Articulating Machines

Brian McGavic, McGavic Outdoor Power Equipment

We have seen a recent trend with European equipment technology starting to take off in the U.S. commercial market. The articulating loader with multi-tool attachment capability is proving very efficient and useful in many applications. A shift in the US mindset from typical skid steer loaders is giving landscapers a nice competitive edge economically and a better end product.

The articulating machine is smaller, lighter weight, and utilizes almost half the horse power while still performing a similar work load to the skid steer lifting capacity up to 3,800 lbs. There are many advantages to a small light weight machine that articulates.

- **Less Turf Damage:** This is probably the most significant benefit in grass & artificial turf applications for the landscaper or arborist. A machine that weighs 4640 lbs and capacity to lift up to 3,800lbs only has 3.33PSI footprint on the turf. Getting into a back yard to remove a tree, carry material for a patio, setting up a tent, or driving across artificial turf doesn't require ground protection anymore.

- **More Attachability:** Almost 200 attachments in addition to compatibility with the universal, MT, and mini skid steer market. It is amazing how many existing attachments are available in the existing market coming from Europe. This "tool carrier" concept opens the door for a single machine to perform many tasks all seasons of the year.



- **Extendable Booms:** Booms will reach up to a height of 122” allowing the truck loading task to be performed without additional platforms. Reaching for objects to pick up and stack also makes material handling simple & quick.
- **Improved Operator Efficiency:** The articulating aspect is simply a more efficient material handling method. The time to load material can be drastically reduced. The time to clean up or repair turf is almost eliminated.
- **Faster Transport Speeds:** Articulating machines have the capability of much faster ground transport speeds up to 19mph. This is almost double what we see today with skid steers. Large campus or municipal applications can drive the machine to the job site opposed to trailering in many cases.

(A Shift in U.S. Mindset Considering Articulating Machines *continues on page 18.*)



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A Shift in U.S. Mindset Considering Articulated Machines

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- **Safer Operation:** The operator platform is wide open with 360 degree visibility. There are larger cab windows and no booms on the side to block eye site.
- **Reduced Tire Wear:** Loaders operated on asphalt and concrete will recognize less wear on tires as they articulate and steer opposed to skidding.
- **Simplified Trailering:** The largest machine in this category weighs approximately 4,700 lbs. This equipment can be towed using standard landscape trailers without the CDL requirement in most cases.
- **Side Entry:** Operators enjoy a safe entry from the side opposed to climbing over a sometimes wet or slippery bucket to get into the cab of the machine.
- **Better Fuel Economy:** Smaller engines doing the same work in a short amount of time equate to big savings in fuel cost.
- **Lower Emissions:** Smaller diesel engines ranging up to 57hp help reduce emissions compared to 100hp skid loaders to do similar work.



The president of AVANT Tecno USA, Jukka Lyly-Yrjanainen, compares the articulating technology to today's cell phone technology. The skid steer is an older technology similar to a "flip phone." It performs three functions very well: digging, lifting, and pushing. The articulating machine is a tool carrier similar to a "smart phone". It performs the same three functions, but also a larger number of tasks at much faster rate. The price tag is a little higher in some cases, but the efficiency and safety benefits far outweigh the cost similar to smart phones. Although there is still a need for the standard three-function machine, the European "tool carrier" concept offers many advantages that we are starting to recognize in the U.S. markets. Markets including: material handling, property maintenance, ground care, landscaping, digging/construction, farming and stables, forestry, municipality, and more. This technology is taking off fast around Indiana specifically for snow removal, landscaping, tree/arbor, tents/party, farming, and artificial turf.

About the Author

Brian graduated from Purdue University with a degree in Electrical Engineering. A second generation engineer and a second generation businessman working with his father Pat McGavic to grow the family business in Indiana. McGavic Outdoor Power has been a leader in the landscape equipment industry since 1978, serving Central Indiana. We are dedicated to continuing our tradition by "serving those who work and shape the land." Three convenient business locations in Indiana serving the Kokomo, Marion, and Noblesville surrounding communities.

Special Events –

- October 19-20, 2017: GIE, Louisville KY, www.GIE-expo.com
- March 2, 2018: McGavic Open House, Noblesville IN, www.McGavicOutdoorPower.com

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