



Where the world is heading, and how that affects us

A megatrend is a significant pattern that takes place in a large-scale environment, with a probable impact on our behaviour – or even on how we live our lives.

As part of Ponsse's strategy work, we thoroughly research and analyse global development from the forestry perspective. As a result of that work, we have determined two main development paths that must be properly addressed to ensure smart harvesting in the future, both when it comes to profitable operations and sustainable development.

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IS IN CRISIS

The sustainability crisis affects harvesting operations in several ways. The loss of biodiversity can be seen in the forests, and extreme weather conditions in the form of flooding, heat, humidity, snowfall and so on only intensify.

Targets for global carbon neutrality mean well but they are not enough. The time to take personal responsibility is now.

Streamlining and better precision are the two cornerstones needed to make forestry even more sustainable and to further extend the use of timber raw material.

TECHNOLOGY DRIVES ALL CHANGE

Looking for ways to make a change in our daily operations, we turn to technology. Thanks to digitalisation, we will be able to create systems that track the forest's condition, and how it is developing both as an ecosystem and as a recreational area, while at the same time following individual trees from the forest to the industrial processes – and finally, to the finished product.



To improve your business, you must first understand it

Alfred Einstein said that if he had one hour to save the world, he would use 59 minutes to figure out the problem and one to find the solution. While the proportions may be a little exaggerated, the same goes for harvesting. More often than not, good questions prove to be more valuable than mediocre answers. They will eventually pave the way to finding the right solutions – if not for saving the world, at least for making your business more profitable and sustainable.

SET AMBITIOUS YET ACHIEVABLE GOALS

For many entrepreneurs, defining clear, measurable business objectives happens just as conveniently as going to a dentist – it is something you'd rather avoid entirely. However, deep down you realise the necessity, so you drag yourself into doing it on an annual basis, still hoping to get by with minimum effort.

Start by figuring out the factors that currently have the biggest impact on your operations. What are the things that create success, and what are the things that slow you down? Can you achieve more during a day, given the ideal conditions – or are there ways to create savings by focusing on issues that might not seem that relevant on a daily basis but might accumulate significant expenses in the long run?

Figure out the strengths and weaknesses of your current operations and set objectives for the following years accordingly. Lift the bar high enough to create a challenge for yourself. There's no point in making it too easy for you, yet the goals must be close enough so that you can determine what kind of action – or change in how you currently do things – it will take to achieve them. Draw a clear roadmap so that you know what needs to be done and when.

STAY ON THE RIGHT TRACK

As the journey to the redefined objectives begins, it is essential to continuously monitor how things are going.

Define key performance indicators so that you have clear targets to aim at – and follow them unwaveringly. Focus on those selected KPIs and analyse continuously what you can do to achieve and even exceed them.

If you fall behind, focus on how much ground you must cover, and how much time you have left to do it.

Harnessing digital solutions to improving productivity

Based on the outlook of your business, you can determine what functions need to be digitalised to make them run more smoothly and optimally support your core tasks. A digital solutions expert knows what kind of digital tools are available, and how they can be harnessed to help you manage your fleet and operations efficiently.

Harvesters and forwarders already produce a vast amount of data about their operations, and with sophisticated solutions that can follow their movements, perhaps supported by a comprehensive ERP system, the real value lies in filtering the most relevant pieces of information and turning them into tangible instructions for how to optimally adjust operations.

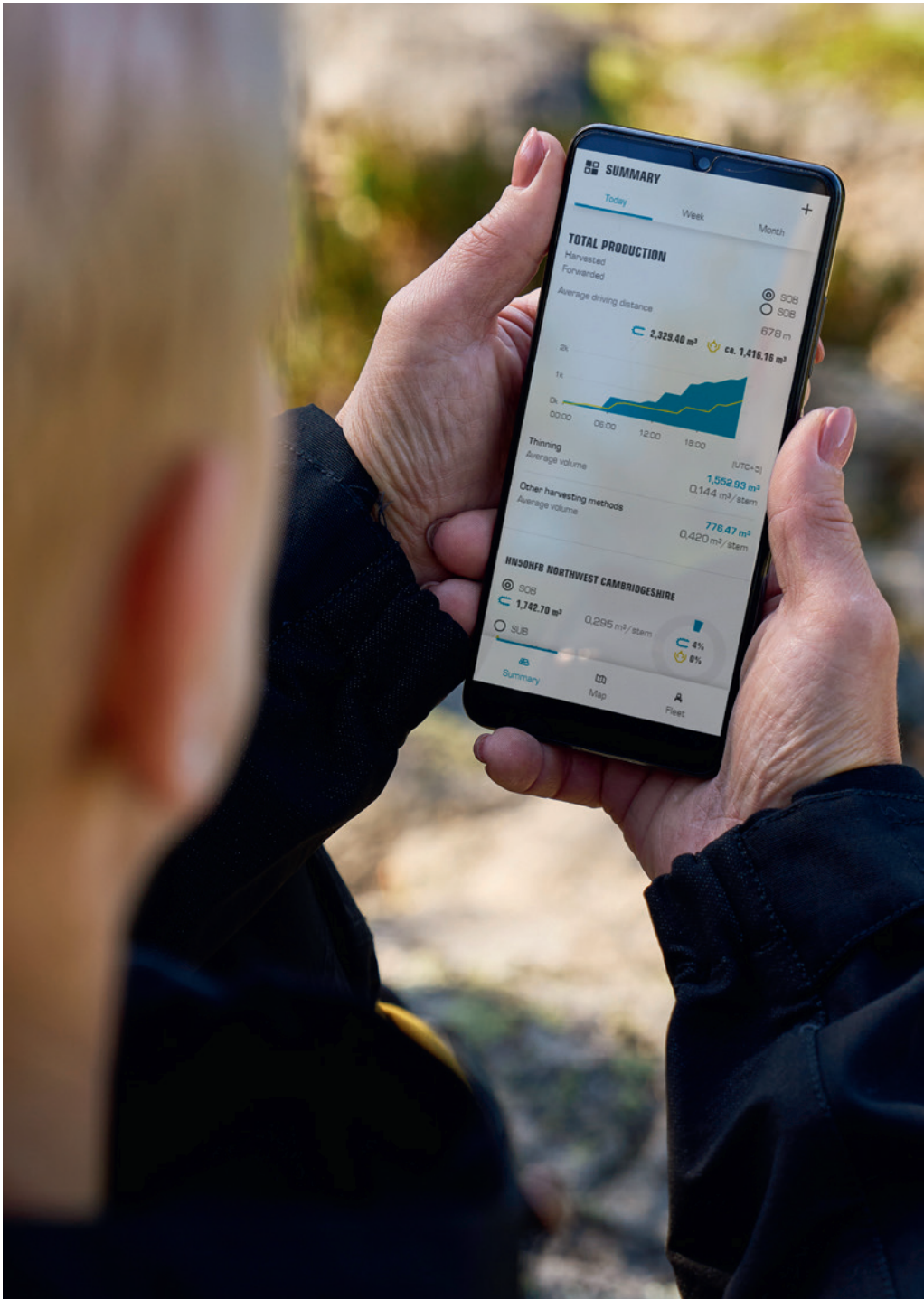
While a vast selection of digital tools is also available, only those that make sense for your business should be chosen. Getting hold of all the modern, fancy and versatile gadgets and applications does not automatically guarantee improvements in harvesting productivity or smoother fleet management. This is where understanding the conformities to the laws of cut-to-length harvesting becomes critical. To get the most from a digital audit, ensure that the expert who is doing the work also knows the environment where these tools are going to be used.

Understanding the fundamentals of harvesting, as well as its versatile and sometimes even complicated nature, is absolutely essential to developing appropriate functional tools that can support operations properly. Many fall into the trap of thinking the same legal conformities apply to harvesting that apply to any other industry. This leads to generic standardised solutions and other types of shortcuts which will soon make the entire solution insufficient and unable to provide the right kind of help for the entire production chain.

Harvesting is a unique industry – however, this doesn't mean support functions like digital solutions must be overly complicated and difficult to use. When its basics are well understood, the solution can focus on what matters most and can leave out everything that does not contribute to the overall outcome.



Ponsse has been developing its digital solutions in close collaboration with its customers. Backed by the company's long expertise in cut-to-length harvesting, our digital innovations address the right issues and provide relevant support for both professionals working on site and those responsible for smooth and efficient fleet management.



What harvesting companies want from a digital solution

CONVENIENCE

Creating the ideal digital solution for harvesting professionals begins with understanding that while they may understand the benefits of the outcome, they will not particularly enjoy using it. The best way for them to spend their days is operating a harvester, managing the fleet or overseeing operations – in other words, at the core of their business. The less time they have to spend on support functions like digital tools, no matter how much help they can provide, the better.

Ponsse Manager 2.0 is a comprehensive solution that gathers Ponsse's entire digital offering into one convenient package. The user only needs to sign up once, and all the digital services that are required to improve operational efficiency are at the user's disposal.

PERSONALISATION

It's also important to realise that even and especially when it comes to using digital services, every harvesting professional is different. The nature of daily work leads them to prefer and utilise different kinds of data, and their natural instincts about digital tools often affect things even more. If a digital solution is to gain acceptance across the harvesting industry, it must be able to show its ability to take these personal needs, preferences and instincts into account.

In Ponsse Manager 2.0, the user can create a personalised home page that focuses on the data that matters most. Every important piece of information is immediately visible, variations can be quickly discovered, and corrective action can be taken immediately.

A CLEAR ROLE AS AN ENABLER OF BETTER PRODUCTIVITY

As digitalisation has transformed the world, digital solutions tend to bring an additional amount of hype and excitement. This sometimes leads to quite understandable but also challenging situations where the roles between different tools become blurred. To keep the tail from wagging the dog, roles and responsibilities must be clear. The only value a digital solution should – and can – provide is the best possible support to the overall business. At the end of the day, this is the user's responsibility, but it goes without saying that even in the development phase, the roles must be clear. A good digital solution is a practical tool for harvesting professionals, not a developer's ticket to fame and fortune – at least not before the real job is done.



The evolving role of digital solutions in modern forestry

One of the ground-breaking advantages with advanced digital solutions is their ability to improve productivity by quickly discovering the reasons for any problems or challenges – as well as for success. It's therefore no surprise that forward-looking forestry companies are already increasingly digitalising their operations.

REAL-TIME INFORMATION AS A TOOL FOR BETTER SITE PERFORMANCE: COLIN BROLLY FORESTRY

Colin Brolly Forestry operates 26 harvesters and forwarders, mainly in western Scotland. Due to the often challenging terrain, transporting machines from site to site requires careful planning. Digital solutions have already made a massive difference: before they were introduced, the back office had to get all the information directly from the machines. Managers had to pay regular visits to the sites or rely on the information they received from the drivers.

"All forest managers today want real-time production information," says Jude Brolly, the director of the company. "A lot of the wood goes out by boat, so it's important to see exactly how the site is performing, and when the boat is expected to be ready to depart. For example, we can react quickly when the need arises to put an extra machine on the site to get the boat ready on time."

As modern solutions boast advanced features like the load-counter option, forest companies know exactly how much load – and what kind of logs – the forwarders have carried to the side of the road. This helps them arrange transports accordingly, which helps the entire production chain run smoothly.



Conclusion

As climate change intensifies, and natural resources become scarcer, the role of the circular bioeconomy is becoming crucial. The more ways we can find to responsibly use exhaustible resources, the more efficiently they can replace fossil materials and fuels.

Digital solutions are already right at the heart of creating and developing these opportunities, and their role is continuing to grow rapidly. It's no exaggeration to say that digitalisation today is already an absolute prerequisite for both sustainable and productive forestry.

From forestry companies' perspective, it's also important to note that while the time to adopt digital solutions in daily operations is now, this alone doesn't guarantee automatic success. The foundation for new opportunities is built by thoroughly understanding the principles and drivers of companies' own business operations. Again, this serves as a solid basis for tuning processes to optimally serve this purpose.

With a clear overview of business and purpose-built processes, digital solutions offer a favourable foundation for providing forestry companies with the kind of help that makes the most sense. A comprehensive selection of advanced tools enables just the right ones to be chosen for each project and situation, thus helping companies meet the targets on all fronts.