



Think of an Application – any Application

Many inventions are often only limited by the imagination of the people using them.

So it is with Irish manufactured Multihog, the Mk1 version of which was designed simply to cut grass on a steep slope. That was three years ago and Jim McAdam's production machines can now be seen with airports and road and highway maintenance contractors in nearly a dozen countries all over Europe and Scandinavia.

The manufacturer challenges you to "think of an application" and the Multihog MH90 will probably be able to handle it.

One machine, one operator, endless applications. The cherished skid steer principle of a platform machine that can be used with countless different attachments is taken to a new level with the Multihog MH90.

Ex Moffett Engineering director Jim McAdam made the original Multihog with a special tilting seat to handle grass cutting on a slope at his home.

Fast forward a couple of years and his company Multihog, is installed in a new manufacturing facility, not far away from the Moffett plant in Dundalk, where they produce the Multihog range of products.

"We currently sell our product in 12 different countries through our ever expanding dealer network which includes Multihog UK in Darwen, Lancs," Jim tells *Equip*.

"Currently we have four specialist dealers in Germany alone but we actually need an additional eight German dealers to really penetrate this market.

"When we introduced the Moffett Truck Mounted Forklift in 1986 we sold 14 units in the 1st year. Today Moffett, which is now owned by Cargotec, produces in the region of 4,000 units per year and sells the product in over 50 countries.

"We have a lot of hard work ahead of us if we want to achieve similar results and market penetration."

Jim founded Multihog in 2008 and was shortly afterwards joined in the company by his daughter Ruth and then subsequently in March 2010 by Gerry McHugh after he sold his company Aisle-Master to the successful Combi-Lift Group. The company presently employs 35 people and is currently seeking a number of people to fill some key management positions to enable the company to meet its current orders.

"We use Pro Engineer 3D design software to develop our products. The main chassis and driver cabin are fabricated using special high tensile steel and then welded using high quality jigs. The frames are then painted using a special 2 coat powder paint process which is guaranteed to pass a 2000 hour salt spray test. This is probably the equivalent of 15 years in the field.

"Our products are designed for continuous use in heavy duty applications and our machines are built to last. We only use heavy duty high quality components from suppliers like Bosch Rexroth etc. The pumps we use are the highest rated so that high flow attachments like planers can be used to their full capacity with little worry about hydraulic failures."





Cab joins the chassis after the hydraulics are in place

AIRPORTS MAIN TARGET

There are some 50 main and regional airports in the UK with a further 11 in Ireland and over 600 in Europe.

"We know that airports will be one of our major sales targets for some time to come," admits technical director Gerry McHugh.

"We have sold units into a number of UK and Irish airports and will soon be announcing the sale of 14 units to one of London's major international airports.

"Multihog is not a runway clearing machine. There are larger machines designed specifically for this function but one area that can delay planes more than any other is at the "Head of Stand" – in other words where the planes are sitting after landing and during boarding.

"Multihog is so fast and manoeuvrable that in addition to clearing the main stand area it can also clear safely under wings and round the landing gear without any disruption whatsoever. One machine, when fitted with a front mounted combined snow plough and brush and rear mounted de-icing sprayer can handle initial snow clearing by using the blade attachment and then bring the tarmac 'back to black' by using the brush. It can then use the de-icing unit to spray the surface to prevent further freezing.

"The Multihog can be used for many

different applications outside the winter maintenance period."

HIGHWAYS & CIVILS

With a road speed of 40 kph the Multihog is no slouch. It gets to and from its jobs quickly and attachments can be changed in a matter of a few minutes.

"When asphalt planing an operator can leave his depot in the morning with a set of openings to be done and drive straight to the first job. Normally when using a skid steer it has to be transported from job to job by trailer or low loader. This constant loading and unloading takes time and also requires a second vehicle to transport the machine. The Multihog is self sufficient and fully road legal. It can cut an opening or remove white lines and leave ready for a resurfacing squad before travelling to the next job with a minimum of delay.



The gritting attachment offloads onto its own dedicated stand

FUTURE GROWTH

"We have ambitious plans," confesses Jim McAdam, "and we intend to produce 150 units in the next year.

"The site we operate from in Dundalk is a large one. We can easily increase our production facility and capability by taking over additional units. This would enable us to expand our assembly and fabrication as and when required.

"Our first priority however, which should be complete by the beginning of next year, is to be self sufficient in painting, an operation which at the moment is a bit of a pinch point although advance planning reduces this problem.

"A dry powder paint plant just opposite our assembly building will accomplish that. At the same time we will be adding more welding and fabrication facilities and we are looking for experienced welders all the time."

IN THE SEAT

The Yanmar engine, 3.3 litre, 87.5hp unit features a two-speed hydrostatic transmission which drives either two or four wheels and powers attachments at both the front and rear.

In the cab one is immediately struck by the visibility which allows an operator to see right down to the front attachment mounting. Turning circle is a revelation at 3000mm which in a vehicle which measures 3400 long is nothing short of amazing – virtually in its own length. It is this high manoeuvrability that has attracted much comment from both airports and highway contractors.

On the day we tried out four different attachment changes front and rear and none,



including the gritter with its own custom demount stand, took more than three minutes. Having driven many skid steer loaders, it is the smooth operation, seamless changing from high to low gearing and the 40kph road speed of this machine which impresses most. We didn't have a planer on the day but this is one particular application that is winning highway contracting customers in the UK.

NEW MODELS

No company can survive on a single model, never mind grow the market and so the next generation of Multihog machines is already at an advanced design stage.

"When showing the MH90 in Holland it was pointed out to us that the standard machine would be too wide for most narrow cycle and canal tow paths and be too tall for servicing multi story car parks," adds Gerry McHugh.

"We are now addressing the former with a narrower model and the latter with a model where we are reducing the height of the chassis and cab.

"This is not a simple matter of scaling down the MH90 by cutting down the chassis width or making a shorter cab.

"New EU emission standards mean we will need a new engine for these applications which in turn require new components. These all have to fit into a smaller footprint and so in short we are designing a completely new model from the ground up.

"We have it on computer at the moment and envisage the first prototype early next year. From that a new range of products is planned to give us access to a new raft of sectors and applications.

"Our R&D figure for the last twelve months would not be far short of a million euro."

The enthusiasm of Jim McAdam and Gerry McHugh is undeniable and in the MH90 they have a machine that literally can do anything that is thrown at it. Multihog is undoubtedly a company that is on the road to success.

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"OK

it's a compact size, but
there's no compromise
on lift height"



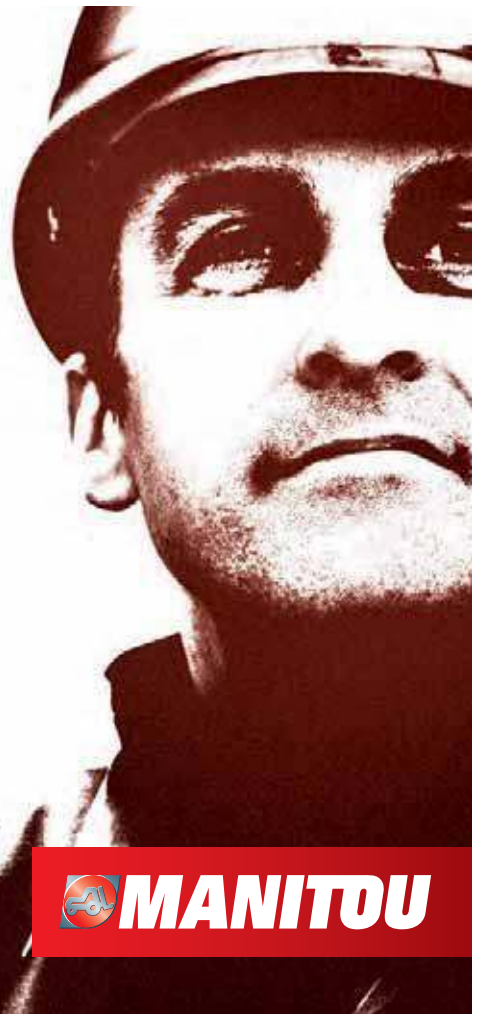
MT 625

Since its arrival in April 2010, the new 'baby' Manitou MT625 is busy doing what comes naturally... lifting, loading and handling. No matter how restricted the site, thanks to its compact size, the MT625 ensures maximum productivity and efficiency.



Contact your MANITOU dealer by visiting www.uk.manitou.com

 **MANITOU**



Multihog Solves Grass Cutting Dilemma



1.1 million sq. metres is the area of grass facing those contractors who cut the verges along the sides of our motorways and carriageways. That's 150 plus football pitches, having to be cut every few weeks at the peak of the summer growing season.

Visibility is the name of the game but the established method of tractor, flail mower and a squad with strimmers is not exactly the most efficient in the world and crash barriers are awkward to cut around. They have become a common safety site on all roads but to be effective they must be kept clear of all obstructions and vegetation. The traditional method usually averages out at 3 kilometres of grass cut in a 9 hour shift.

With their long experience of supplying vehicles and more importantly solutions to the municipal sector, McCreath Taylor were invited to supply machines for the M1/A1/A4 section, but they went one further and offered to supply the manpower as well to the maintenance contractor, Amey.

"We had looked at a number of options and our first solution was to use JCB 360 compact tractors with mowing heads backed up with strimming squads. This required the use of impact protection vehicles (IPV) in what turned out to be a very labour intensive operation," ventures David Johnston.

"Then I saw a Multihog MH90 on YouTube and wondered if we could adapt an application.

"We have to cut 1200mm wide to the left of each carriageway and all grass in the central reservation all the way up to the give way lines at the junctions. The maximum grass height should be 300 mm. This seems a relatively easy task until you consider that motorways have exits and entrances, on ramps and off ramps and crash barriers yet there are some with no median breaks for 20 kilometres. That's a total distance of nearly 80 kilometres times four for each cut.

"The cutting season is usually from the first week in April to the end of October and we cut the full length

three times in each season.

"We cut from the Sprucefield junction all the way to Ballygawley on the M1/A4 and on the A1 from Sprucefield all the way to the border at Newry.

"New motorways like the M1 in the Republic have all this planned in from the design stage such as crash barriers set back to give a flat cutting area. Others have sown the verges with slow growing grass to reduce cutting intervals but our motorways date back to the early '60's and nobody then allowed for this sort of thing.

"When I saw the Multihog I realised this was something we could use and in addition to the standard range of front and back end attachments, Multihog designed the first Barrier Cutter for us which with spring loaded, twin cutting heads allows us to cut both the sides and central reservations going with the traffic flow with only one IPV vehicle and minimising the use of strimmers to only tidying up around the endsupport struts.

"We can cut on average 2/3km per hour as opposed to the original 3km per 9 hour shift and is providing the cost efficiencies Amey were looking for."

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