



During the conduct of the study, it became evident that a single best marketing approach for all types of forestry equipment does not exist. Rather, certain groups of equipment should be marketed to individuals who have the authority to make or at least influence purchasing decisions. For instance, most major timber holding and consuming corporations, for reasons to be discussed later in the Logging Equipment section, have completely discontinued company logging and, instead, utilize contract loggers. Although there usually exists a corporate timber and logging manager, he can only recommend the purchase of a particular piece of equipment to the contract logger. Therefore, for harvesting equipment such as skidders, feller/bunchers, etc., the marketing approach must be made to a large number of owners and operators of contract logging companies. Conversely, sawmill equipment, particularly components that stand alone such as headrigs, edgers, etc. should be marketed directly through sawmill owners and to consulting engineering firms. The details of these marketing recommendations and actual client identification is discussed in the equipment sections.

It is important for any Canadian manufacturer of forestry equipment that desires to sell their products in the southeastern United States to understand the unique nature of this marketing area, particularly the major differences in the timber resources and labor force from the Canadian and western United States areas. The forests of the southeast generally contain trees of smaller diameter and greater density per acre than other areas. The trees are fast growing and because of widely ranging site quality, the wood is extremely variable in fiber density. The trees are more crooked and have more limbs than other sections of the United States and Canada and tend to be vine covered. The forests are generally accessible to existing roads which eliminates the enormous costs of logging road construction and requires different equipment for log removal. Although stumpage costs have lagged behind other areas of the country, recent trends have reversed this condition which will change the harvesting practices of most firms. The labor force which will operate and maintain the forest equipment is distinctive. Their background is mainly agrarian which tends to result in poorer preventative maintenance and operator abuse or, at least, unintentional overloading of equipment. These factors require equipment design that is heavier than normal practice and as maintenance free as possible. For instance, the air cooled diesel engine is normally a selling point because of its operating efficiency and lower fuel costs compared to conventional diesels. Most southern operators however, resist the air cooled engine because of the potential fire hazard from material that adheres to the engine block and which can ignite if not regularly cleaned off. The climate is hot and extremely humid which requires oversize cooling system design. All these general factors must be considered in order to make a successful market penetration.