



Material handling: Moving the goods around

By Joe Sargent

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On large sites, heavy building material is required to be shifted on a regular basis. Choosing the right tool for the job is essential, as Joe Sargent reports



The new 51m telehandler from Magni

In the world of material handling, there are many avenues to explore in terms of applications and machinery. This article aims to cover a number of those different niches in the sector and offer an insight into some of the most interesting machines in their categories.

Telescopic handlers (telehandlers) are one of the most popular construction machines in Europe, with sales over the last two years in the region of 30,000 units, according to specialist market research and forecasting company, Off-Highway Research. Only mini and crawler excavators sell in higher numbers.

One of the reasons for the telehandler's popularity is that these machines are also used extensively in agriculture as well as construction. Agriculture typically uses smaller machines with lift heights of 6m or less, while construction generally uses bigger machines.

That said, compact telehandlers also have a place in construction, and there is some evidence that they are replacing certain traditional small loading machines, such as backhoe and skid-steer loaders.

With the European construction equipment market currently at a peak, telescopic handler sales are expected to enter a shallow decline in the coming years, along with most other equipment types. However, they are still expected to maintain their relative popularity, accounting for some 17% of all equipment demand.

High demand

The main European markets for telehandlers are the UK and France, where sales are currently around 8,900 machines per year in each country. Demand for these machines has been stimulated by the presence of two of the pioneers of the telehandler – JCB in the UK and Manitou in France. In contrast, demand for telehandlers in Germany is only about half that of the UK or France due to the long-standing popularity of alternative materials handling equipment such as small and self-erecting tower cranes.

Though a quarter of its revenue is now generated from the US market, Magni Telescopic Handlers is looking to other regions in Europe, further than just its home market of Italy, with a promise of delivering higher safety standards on its products. The regions within Europe for Magni to focus on include predominantly northern European countries; Germany, Holland, Benelux countries, Norway Sweden and France.



Riccardo Magni, president of Magni Telescopic Handlers

Riccardo Magni, President of Magni Telescopic Handlers, spoke to CE's sister magazine Access International about the launch of its latest telehandler model and the company's recent plans to expand the company's current operations in the fixed telehandler market.

Magni explained that the company is at the top of the game when it comes to rotating telehandlers above 30m in boom lengths, saying, "We sell loads in Europe, but we don't have competition. It's a very small world. Merlo has a 30 metre, but its not really competing with us; Manitou also, though our performance is much better in terms of capacity."

Magni's larger rotating telehandler range includes a 30m boom model, a 35m, 39m, 46m and the latest addition to the range, a 51m boom model. At this length, Magni claims the title of producing the highest rotating telehandler in the world.

The RTH 6.51 achieves a lifting height of 51m, with a maximum load capacity of 6 tonnes. The boom is composed of seven sections with six extensions. In fact, for this type of machine the boom is so extreme in length, a dedicated solution had to be devised to maximise the section of the hydraulic pipes in order to ensure reduced pressure drops. According to Riccardo Magni, half of the company's telehandler production is delivering machines with a reach capacity over 30m in length. "We have five models for which we have almost zero competition," he says, "We are also moving to fixed boom as a way to increase our volume in the market, but we will do it our way. We want to comply with the EN 13000 standard for cranes."