

Cutting back capacity, stepping up variety

The recent trend in saw technology has indicated a demand from the sawmilling industry for machines that will allow them greater variety in their operations along with optimal recoveries

It's been a tough couple of years for sawmillers, who are increasingly relying on new technology to remain profitable with falling throughputs. This is done largely through optimisation technology but also with the aid of improved sawing machines and better blade quality, which go a long way toward improving recoveries.

Adding to the demand for recovery this year is an increased need for versatility, as operations look to broaden their selling markets to protect against downturns in various sectors. It's no surprise that those groups that fared best through the economic crisis were those that catered to either specialty markets, or, companies that had a range of products so were able to chop and change between runs to maximise profitability.



The aligning system leading to the Holtec cross-cut saw

Companies that are able to process long logs in addition to the short logs made available by mechanical log harvesters have two distinct advantages, according to German logyard specialist **Holtec**. Firstly, in purchasing, they are an interesting partner for state and communal forest owners as they are able to take all available logs. The same applies for purchasing logs from the private sector where the logs are still traditionally harvested. Secondly, in sales, the processing of these long logs in the sawmill makes length selection easy. In these difficult market conditions, this is a competitive advantage not to be underestimated but, for several years, there was a feeling that long logs could no longer be easily accommodated in modern streamlined sawmills. This has recently been proven to be wrong.

Holzwerke Ladenburger is a business already familiar with the advantages of cutting a large range of logs thanks to its success at its existing German mills in Edernheim and Bopfingen. It was therefore an easy decision to incorporate long logs into the log yard design at its most recent

addition, at Kerkingen.

During the log yard design, Holtec was able to provide a powerful 'price-performance' argument in favour of the long log. The system installed was the Holtec standard 'Solid Plus', which caters specifically for the needs of multi-shift operations. Behind the Holtec feeding system, a butt reducer and a Nicholson debarker were integrated. Jorg Elektronik provided 3D scanning, the Jorg Woodarchiv, which takes pictures of every log and files the photographic images.

After scanning, the logs are cross cut on a 2.3 m diameter circular saw. The capacity of a long log line is defined by the speed of the cross cutting section, so an uncompromising drive unit with 132 KW of power was installed. A specially designed feeding and aligning system with spike rollers not only provides acceleration, but also high centring and alignment accuracy. The cut cycle time is reduced further by a new hydraulic control system. Cutting lengths up to 6.2 m can be produced with the cutting line and are sorted into 50 boxes fed from a conveyor.



The recently installed Holtec cross-cut saw