

Asset SCMS – the right decision for Weyerhaeuser



Tim Petro, Asset Forestry's East Coast manager (left) and director Paul Robinson (right) at FI2006 – a highly successful start to the year for the company

Five months on from installing WSX, Asset Forestry's web-enabled supply chain management system, Weyerhaeuser New Zealand staff, despatch contractors, suppliers and customers are reaping the benefits. A streamlined despatch process, access to accurate wood-flow information in real time and seamless linking between the core business functions have dramatically improved operating efficiencies.

Weyerhaeuser supply chain manager Grant Wilson says, "We'd been talking to Asset over the years still using our manual despatch system. Then Asset really started moving on and I could see there was an opportunity but we lacked the core database ... the wood-flow system was manually orientated, our linked spreadsheets were cumbersome and there wasn't as much discipline as we wanted. It was pretty easy to enter a new product or customer without a lot of checks and balances."

Asset's WSX software enables the creation of log docket transactions at the point of despatch. As the despatchers instruct a driver to pick up a load of logs at a particular landing they enter the transaction into the system, updating the informa-

tion when the driver confirms loading, and again when the load is delivered.

"Previously the despatcher created a transaction, then the physical docket would be delivered back later in the day, keyed by someone in the weighbridge system and then interfaced into our accounting system. Now Despatch creates the transaction, finishing it off and interfacing straight into our accounting system," explains Wilson.

People with appropriate access to the system do not need to ring Despatch – they can track loads in real time via the Internet.

"Suppliers can dial up at night and check dockets, or the contract manager can see how the crews have done ... how many dockets or truckloads there are ... how the stocks are," says

Wilson. "Customers can also see what loads have been delivered, what loads are planned, and go back through the history as well."

To retain management and control of the database, Weyerhaeuser has distributed the roles required to manage, maintain and monitor the system.

Every Friday the wood-flow coordinator inputs the customer delivery and cut plans for the following week into the system, and then monitors and adjusts the wood-flow plan as required in the live WSX system. The transport manager ensures all the required trucks and lead distances are kept up to date, while the production manager enters all new crews or crew locations into the system.

"If the orders aren't in there, we don't despatch logs," says despatch contractor Margaret Baigent. "The computer will not let you proceed until all the required information is in the system."

"We expected the despatchers' workload would increase, because more information was being gathered as the transaction was taking place and less after the event," says Wilson. "We've redeployed one of the admin team as a despatcher. It's changed the focus of where we put effort ... it's smart to have more people at the coalface where the transactions are taking place. Ensuring they're correct at point of despatch and job creation means less checking and fixing up at the end of the process."

"Since we started this system the docket errors have been minimal," says Baigent. "We previously spent days each month just correcting bush dockets; now they is just a handful. The log stocks coming in from the gangs are accurate too. Now the log stocks are entered three times a day so they're virtually right up to date."

Asset Forestry director Paul Robinson believes collaboration is where the industry is heading.

"That message about collaboration is coming from the big transport firms and the large forestry companies. They're all saying we can't give the industry the efficiency it wants because we're struggling ... the only place it can come from is underutilised backload capacity, which means you've got to collaborate on the transport side. That's really what our system is about." ■

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