

Fulghum Industries

Enhancing Log Handling, Debarking, and Chipping Operations

The name of Fulghum Industries is noteworthy in the space of the forest products industry. Founded by Oscar Tommy Fulghum, Sr. in 1956, they have been providing heavy-duty equipment to pulp & paper mills and sawmills to refine their operations. Fulghum's journey started with their Rosserhead Debarker, which catalyzed their position in the industry. Today, they are among the most prominent companies providing versatile products, including diverse log handling cranes, debarkers, and chippers. Besides the equipment, they also offer

equipment-related services, assistance for installations, machinery-maintenance, and overall excellent customer services. And what runs behind the scenes is the rich leadership introduced by the owner and founder, passing it on to the other employees who have now taken over the company's charge. The current Executive Vice president, Chad S. McDowell, shared his rich experience in the company, starting as a mechanical drafter and designer back in 1994 through to the sales and managerial position. Working under the leadership of several technical and sales experts in the company helped him gather in-depth knowledge on both these fronts and engage efficiently with the customers. Such age-old customer-engagement capabilities and their strong team have brought Fulghum Industries a long way in their journey.

Fulghum Industries' offerings are designed to address the challenges that the pulp & paper mills, sawmills, biomass plants, and their major customers face today. One of the primary issues at the forefront is the truck turnaround time, where the mills desire higher uptime of the log handling cranes of around 98-100 percent to allow quicker unloading of the log trucks and reloading again to bring more volume of logs in a shorter time. Besides, it is crucial for the mills to improve their debarking processes to reduce the bark content in the logs for chipping. Another major issue that the pulp & paper mills face is obtaining uniformly sized wood chips." Our organization has endeavored to meet the needs of the forest products market by constantly paying attention to detail, quality, and innovation in technology and providing reliable equipment for effective log handling, debarking and chipping," mentions Chad.

Fulghum Industries presents a set of vital forest industry equipment to assist the customers in enhancing their mill operations. On the front end, they offer log handling cranes. Fulghum Log Cranes have a historical average of 98% uptime, which equates to higher production on the back end of the mill. These have now become the new standard of American woodyards. What has significantly helped them optimize their crane designs is

their focus on the customers' feedback, who are the actual operators. Fulghum has improved their safety features, including easier access to the maintenance areas, state-of-the-art controls that protect the crane from overloading the grapple, and a new operator's cab with more space, greater visibility, and a more ergonomic chair for comfort. Fulghum also provides Drum Debarkers, which have installed angle iron lifters that remove the bark and make logs cleaner before they are processed into chips. Another product is the Rosserhead Debarker, which is designed to debark one log at a time for the sawmill industry. The first Rosserhead Debarker was fabricated in 1957 and has withstood the test of time. The other core product that Fulghum Industries features is its Disc Chippers, which enables them to yield chips of uniform size, length, and thickness. The uniformity of the chips makes it easy to cook them in the digesters with a lesser amount of pulping liquor required—this aids in reduced costs for processing and increased profits.


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An add-on to their line of products is Fulghum Industries' 24/7/365 customer service. The customers can easily reach out to them for any equipment issues or any improvements in the equipment that they wish for. Their service technicians offer inspections and communicate with the mill managers to obtain information on customer

requirements. Accordingly, they incorporate the design-changes or modifications needed. The sales department also arranges for a follow-up in-person, after the selling and installation of new equipment, to get customer reviews on its performance.

Reflecting on their capabilities, Fulghum shared a client story where they built a new woodyard for a pulp & paper company in South Georgia. The client's existing woodyard could produce a low volume of approximately 1 million tons of chips per year. As a result, they outsourced chips from local sawmills and other suppliers to meet their requirements. So they wanted to escalate their chip production to 1.36 million tons per year. Here Fulghum effectively extended their machinery and services to cater to client requirements. After the first week, the customer increased the production to 2 million tons per year. This helped the client to accelerate their paper production by 100 feet per minute across all grades. They could also cut down almost 90 percent of their residual chip suppliers. Moreover, the excellent quality chips eased their pulping process and reduced costs, thereby generating greater profits. The mill has been averaging 2.1 million tons of chips per year for the last 12 years.

“Our customers' satisfaction is the key to our success,” remarks Chad. The silver lining to Fulghum Industries' offerings that differentiates them from the contemporaries is their deep focus on their customers. When serving the pulp and paper mills or sawmills, there isn't a fair probability of new equipment being sold every day. So it is the customer service that has to be ensured after the selling and installation of equipment. More importantly, achieving customer loyalty and satisfaction helps them secure a large number of new customers depending on the good reviews of the existing customers.

Being in the industry for several decades, Fulghum Industries is continuously growing to meet the current market demands and stay ahead in the game. One of the critical areas where they are focusing recently is reducing the man-hours for manufacturing the equipment. They have been investing in upgrading their CNC machines and decrease the double and triple handling of steel in their manufacturing plant. Upgrading their machines keeps the cost of the equipment very competitive. Besides, they are constantly updating themselves with customer feedbacks and industry standards to help mills further enhance their production. With their capabilities, today, they have emerged as one of the best companies to be associated with when it comes to rendering forest products machinery. “Fulghum is the name that managers associate with quality, dependability and credibility more than any other,” says Chad. 



Chad McDowell