

# DEP

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At the heart of the operator environment on the Altoz TSX 561 are adjustable hand controls and a shock-absorbing platform.



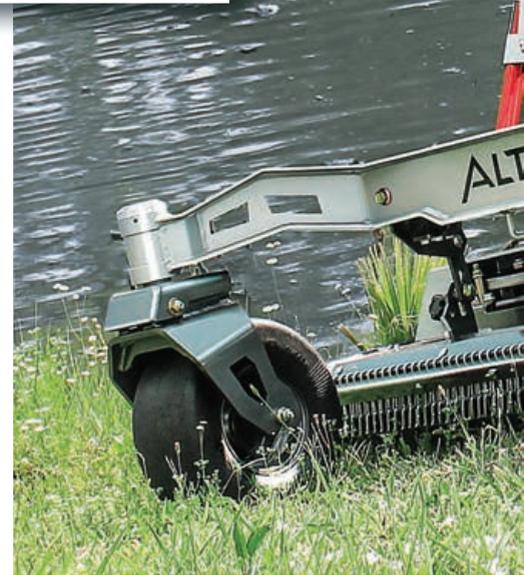
# FRESH APPROACH NEW OPPORTUNITIES

Tracked stand-on and riding turf care machines helps Altoz reach new customers. By **Chad Elmore**

**W**hen the Altoz brand of zero-turn mowers launched at the GIE+Expo show in 2012, entrepreneur Dennis Brazier said he and his team were driven by the desire to build a turf care machine that consumers and professionals would be proud to own and run – and perhaps even wash and wax on the weekend. The company's turf care product line has grown considerably since

then, thanks in part to a range of new features and its dedication to stay true to the brand's emphasis on function, quality and style. That approach has helped the company and its dealers open new markets.

Altoz released the TSX 561 a few months ago, and it is a machine that is immediately identifiable thanks to its patented rear track system. The tracked





The tracked turf care machines from Altoz, such as this TSX 561 stand-on mower, have helped commercial cutters tackle challenging areas, such as retention pond shorelines and solar farms.

of the terrain,” said Karl Bjorkman, Sales & Marketing director, Altoz Inc., Greenbush, Minn. “The tracked machines have certainly opened up new markets for us because they help create a great value proposition for people who have challenging areas to maintain.”

The track system and rear torsion axle suspension used on the stand-on mowers work together to deliver high traction and stability with low ground pressure and minimal compaction. The 11 in. wide tracks are made from a molded rubber composite with lateral reinforcement. The undercarriage includes a lug drive driven by a steel sprocket that was engineered to provide gear reduction and produce the torque required to traverse soft terrain and steep slopes without a significant reduction in speed, said Altoz. The positive internal drive lug is a direct-drive system. The debris-deflecting chute and self-cleaning design works sand, mud and grass out of the track, while steel inner and outer idler wheels and track alignment lugs keep it all lined up.

#### DEALER EXPANSION

When the Altoz brand was launched, it entered a highly competitive zero-turn mower market. In short order, the new product line helped even out the seasonal nature of Brazier’s Central Boiler outdoor furnace manufacturing facility and kept the place humming year-round. Today, the facility that is home to mower and furnace manufacturing has been expanded in terms of employees and overall footprint. The company has added new equipment and purchased an additional manufacturing facility to keep up with increased demand and continues to grow its dealer

stand-on mowers join a stable of similarly equipped TRX zero-turn riders.

“We’ve found a lot of our success has been with commercial cutters and municipalities. With our high speed tracked vehicles – both the sit-down and the stand-on – they’ve found that they can mow areas they couldn’t traditionally mow with a wheeled mower because



## A WALK-AROUND OF THE TSX

At the heart of the TSX 561 control center are ergonomic, adjustable hand controls and adjustable shock-absorbing rider platform. The low center of gravity platform allows ample room for foot movement, and side-mounted foot stands provide secure footing and increased control while mowing off-camber terrain. Electric dial throttle controls are intuitive and within easy reach, said the company.

The 61-in. HV All-Terrain Deck is built for tough environments and gets a laminated seven-gauge steel deck with three steel spindles, six swing blades, and a sloped back rear discharge to process heavy and damp material. Replaceable galvanized 0.200 in. safety chains on the front protect against flying debris and aid in mowing taller material by allowing it to stand before cutting.

Power comes from a Kawasaki FX850V-EFI gasoline engine rated 29.5 hp, equipped with a multi-port EFI fuel management system that adjusts power to the load continually to keep blade tip speed constant and ground speed steady. Commercial Hydro-Gear PR 16cc pumps and Parker TF series wheel motors deliver responsive control to the track system for cutting speeds up to 10 mph.

Other standard TSX features include a keyless ignition switch (operators enter a unique four-digit code and push a button), and the patented SoftStart clutch control, which decreases mechanical wear and significantly increases belt life.



network for outdoor power equipment.

“The majority of the zero-turn mower sales are to the states along the Mississippi River and east,” said Bjorkman. “With the tracked machines we are expanding to the west, to states where the terrain is more rugged and hilly.”

The tracked stand-on mowers can help smooth out travel over rough terrain and give lawncare professionals the ability to mow slopes.

“The design allows us to reach out to customers in new markets where they can use our products in environments that traditionally wouldn’t be cut or cut safely by a zero-turn wheel mower,” said Bjorkman. “For example, solar fields are growing fast across the South, and those places need vehicles they can get between panels and into tight areas. When they get to the end of a panel row, they have to turn around and head back down the next row, all within a tight area.”

Other areas in which tracked mowers perform well are retention ponds

and drainage ditches that are usually maintained by a four-man crew wielding hand-held string trimmers all day.

“Commercial cutters and municipalities can cut that same water retention pond in an hour with one Altoz track machine,” said Bjorkman.

### INNOVATIVE SPIRIT

The company’s reputation for innovative features and designs come from a combination of things, said Bjorkman.

“We have a passion for the product here in rural Minnesota. We all grew up mowing grass and being outdoors, so we understand the product and the needs of customers that use it. Dennis Brazier has always had a passion for it, too, and he enjoys mowing grass. He’s got a passion for it and that trickles down to the rest of us. This is truly a company with a group of people who enjoy what they’re doing and who come up with a lot of the ideas.”

Dealers and sales reps also provide feedback from the field, as well as the

customers themselves.

“We visited with the solar panel people, for example, and we have worked directly with people involved with water retention to design and develop a product that fits their needs, something that will make their life easier and more profitable.

“Product development at Altoz really comes from three places,” said Bjorkman. “It’s feedback from end-users and dealers and the fact we have a sincere desire, internally, to make innovative and differentiated products.”