Small-scale harvesting technology offers distinct advantages to the owner who expects a majority of his/her work to be in small tracts, on sensitive sites or in uneven-aged management activities. In the specialized market for thinnings and small harvest units, operators with appropriately-sized equipment may have a competitive advantage over those with only larger equipment. A primary advantage is reduced capital investment and operating costs. Lower levels of residual stand and soil damage are also important considerations.

As forests of the eastern United States become fragmented into smaller ownership parcels, there is a growing need for timber harvesting contractors who can economically harvest timber and perform silvicultural operations on small tracts. Traditional large-scale harvesting operators are ill-suited for work on small parcels, due to their high fixed costs. By contrast, small-scale operators, characterized by few workers and low capital investment, offer an opportunity to serve this landowner segment. Updegraff K, Blinn C (2000) Applications of small-scale forest harvesting equipment in the United States and Canada. University of Minnesota Staff paper series no 143, St Paul. West Virginia Division of Forestry (2010) West Virginia statewide forest resource assessment. School of Forest Resource and Environmental Science, Michigan Technological University, United States. The editor and reviewers' affiliations are the latest provided on their Loop research profiles and may not reflect their situation at the time of review.