

Toyota Material Handling – Strandbags

Strandbags selects Toyota Material Handling for new state-of-the-art warehouse

Retail chain Strandbags chose Toyota Material Handling equipment for its new 8500 square metre state-of-the-art global distribution centre at Erskine Park in Sydney's west.

A fleet of eight sit-down pantograph reach trucks, two wire guided high-level order pickers, a low-level order picker and an electric counter balance forklift were selected as the optimum equipment to meet the growing demands of the warehouse operation.

One of the largest privately owned speciality retailers, The Strandbags Group comprises of over 400 outlets – including the Equip chain of fashion jewellery and accessory stores – with locations throughout Australia, New Zealand the Middle East and South Africa.

“We have a very busy warehouse which operates 6am to 6pm five days a week. This is set to increase as Strandbags plans to open an additional 22 stores by the end of the year.” said Strandbags Group Logistics Manager, Steve English.

“The majority of orders are to replace sold store items so our order pickers are really put through a heavy workload sourcing items at heights up to seven levels and at various locations throughout the warehouse, while our reach trucks are constantly moving to re-stock racks and pallet pick locations.

“On average we move 10 million items per year so we needed a material handling equipment supplier that can offer peace of mind with equipment and support,” Steve said. “The sheer size of Toyota Material Handling gives a great deal of comfort to a company like ours.

“One of the great aspects of dealing with Toyota Material Handling,” says Steve “Was we had a supplier that could offer all the various technologies from Europe, Japan and the US. This meant they were focused on the most suitable solution for our particular requirements, not just convincing us to go with one specific technology.”

“We worked with their warehousing equipment experts to refine our exact requirements in the critical areas of safety, comfort, performance and cost-effectiveness and chose the most appropriate style of equipment for our needs,” he said.

“The BT pantograph sit-down reach trucks were chosen because we needed the capacity at height and our drivers are dedicated to these trucks, spending the bulk of their shift at the controls, so sit-down positioning was critical.

“The features of these reach trucks that impressed us most was the auto height selector and indicator and the 360 degree electronic steering for exceptional manoeuvrability. These features really make working at seven levels a lot easier and safer for our operators.

“Similarly with the order pickers we had a choice between North American and European. The Raymond order pickers offered some outstanding driver control features that really suited our needs.”

The Raymond order pickers feature auto-steer centring, which reduces the risk of damage to the truck or racking by automatically centring the drive tyre at start-up, an AC drive which requires less maintenance than DC and an intuitive mapping handle that was designed by a fighter pilot, simplifies operation.



Equipment demonstrations were conducted at Toyota Motor Corporation Australia in Caringbah NSW, and Strandbags personnel visited several sites already utilising the wire guided high-level order picker system to evaluate its practicalities for their new warehouse.

Steve was very impressed saying “This is the first time we have used a wire guided system and Toyota Material Handling were invaluable with their advice”

Almost a kilometre of cabling was installed in the slab for the wire guided order pickers. Toyota Material Handling engineers liaised with the concreter and oversaw the installation of the cabling to ensure precise specifications were adhered to.

Toyota Material Handling representatives were also active in the design layout of the warehouse.

The aisles are purposefully set apart so two order pickers can work in the same aisle simultaneously. If one is undergoing routine maintenance, then a reach truck and order picker can work without impeding each other to maximise efficiency and productivity.

“Toyota Material Handling’s technical expertise, understanding of our business and operations plus the extensive knowledge of their sales representatives and engineers culminated to provide a package that was unmatched by any other supplier,” Steve said.

“In these times where companies have to look at smarter, more efficient ways of operating, there’s distinct comfort that comes from dealing with a world-leading company that has virtually limitless resources at their disposal which they can pass on,” he said.

“Toyota Material Handling provides much more than material handling equipment, if that’s all we needed we could have gone with any supplier.

“While the equipment is important so is the service we receive and this is where Toyota Material Handling’s backup and ongoing support really comes into its own. There’s no use having the best equipment in the world if you can’t get it serviced and running to full capacity fast.

“They’re a solutions provider not just an equipment supplier,” Steve commented.

Toyota Material Handling tailored a five year rental agreement to meet the evolving needs of Strandbags.

“The flexibility of the rental agreement offered by Toyota Material Handling is excellent,” said Steve. “If we alter the configuration of the warehouse or our needs change, we can interchange our equipment without incurring any financial penalty.

“This gives us great peace of mind knowing that we are not stuck with anything less than the optimum equipment, both now and in the future,” he said.

For more information contact Toyota Material Handling Australia on 1800 425 438 or visit online at www.toyotamaterialhandling.com.au

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