



FORKLIFT NEWS

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BRUSH UP ON THE LAW AT EXAM TIME



Forklift trucks used in UK Industry require by law an annual Thorough Examination in addition to regular maintenance. As Steve Kirkwood, Thorough Examinations Manager of Barloworld Handling points out, there are many advantages of the Thorough Examination, not least improved safety.

The principle of a forklift Thorough Examination is the same as an MOT for a car, although the checks are far more rigorous. It is a means of reviewing and maintaining the safety of critical components of a forklift truck, identifying any defects, wear or damage that may compromise safety and checking that previously reported faults have been repaired.

As well as steering, tyres and brakes, it pays particular attention to the forks, mast, chains, hydraulics, carriage and parts such as chain-retaining bolts. Materials handling specialist, Barloworld Handling, is accredited to provide the HSE recognised CFTS* Thorough Examinations for any type or brand of lift truck and other types of lifting equipment.

Steve Kirkwood comments "It is important that Thorough Examinations are performed by qualified engineers from an accredited company like Barloworld, so that the truck

is inspected and tested to consistently high standards to ensure it is safe and legal". Before CFTS there was no industry recognised testing standard and some trucks could potentially become dangerous to operate because of the inconsistency of Thorough Examinations. CFTS gives lift truck operators the confidence their equipment has been checked to HSE guidelines. Legislation states that it is the responsibility of the truck operator, not the rental company or service provider, to ensure their forklift trucks have a valid certificate. Without a valid certificate, the company risks prosecution or invalidation of insurance and may be unaware of the truck's potential to cause serious accident or injury.

"There are many advantages of the Thorough Examination, particularly from the aspects of safety, efficiency and reduced cost" continues Steve Kirkwood. "Faulty equipment can work less efficiently and cause accidents. It can also intensify the fault, which could cost companies more in the long run in downtime and repairs".

The law states that all trucks must undergo a Thorough Examination at least every 12 months. However, certain equipment such as equipment that lifts

people, equipment with specialist attachments or equipment operating in harsh environments, such as a cold store, require more frequent examinations. Your Thorough Examinations provider should provide advice relevant to your particular application.

Barloworld provides routine maintenance for lift trucks as well as Thorough Examinations, providing customers with a complete service from a single source. Thorough Examinations are, however, completed independently to any other routine maintenance carried out on the lift truck, and are reported independently as governed by the CFTS scheme to ensure impartiality. By offering a full service, Barloworld enables customers to reduce their supplier base and concentrate on their core business.

It is important employers take ownership of their legal responsibility regarding Thorough Examinations. By offering a complete service from equipment provision to maintenance and Thorough Examinations, Barloworld's service helps companies to adhere to legislation and maximise the safety and efficiency of their fleet.

www.barloworld.co.uk



CLARK THE FORKLIFT

Forktruck Solutions Ltd

BY SIMON PENNY-SMITH



Simon Penny-Smith believed that by building his own company, he "could create real added value" for his customers, suppliers and his team. Ten years after he established Forktruck Solutions, the successful business has more than doubled the size of its premises – and set its sights on a £10 million turnover by 2017.

The company, which moved from its original HQ in Leeds to Ossett, near Wakefield last year (08), employs 19 people and expects a £2.5 million turnover in this financial year. Managing director Simon believes another move to an even bigger site will be necessary before their 2017 target date.

It is a long way from Forktruck's beginnings in 1998 when Simon, then regional sales manager within the forklift industry, when he felt that changes could be made to improve life for both his team and his customers.

"I decided I could make those changes if I had my own business," he says.

Relinquishing the security of employment – together with his with company car – he established the business in 2,500 sq ft premises on the Whitehall Industrial Estate – and employed his first engineer.

"I went out talking to customers, which was a role I knew. Then I came back to the office to type my notes, prepare estimates and invoices and everything else that needed doing," he says. "They were long days."

Within five years the business had grown from its first annual turnover of £60,000 to around £900,000. Then came a massive leap to £1.5 million in 2004, which proved to be a catalyst for Forktruck's future development.

"At that point I realised I needed help to move the business forward in the right direction," says Simon.

He contacted the Chamber of Commerce who referred him to Business Link who suggested a consultant should benchmark the company – and prepare a future strategy.

"the consultant asked one big question which really focused my mind 'what do you want the finished business look, feel & sound like?' " says Simon. "He made his meaning clear by pointing out that I would not ask a builder to start work on a house without architect's plans and a clear idea of what I wanted."

That's when Simon set his own targets of a turnover of £5 million by 2012 – and £10 million five years later, but more importantly he set his sights on FTS becoming a "World Class" organisation.

So what has been the secret of his success? "Good communication with our customers," he says. "They each have their own view of the world, and if we can tune in to what drives them, what is important to them, then you can help them with the best service possible."

"Much of the credit for the success of Forktruck must go to our team throughout the organisation – and of course we also rely on our loyal suppliers and customers."

And Simon is not daunted by the current economic climate. "I think it could be a blessing in disguise for SMEs as major national companies struggle with their pricing structures," he says. "It could be a great opportunity to continue spreading the word."



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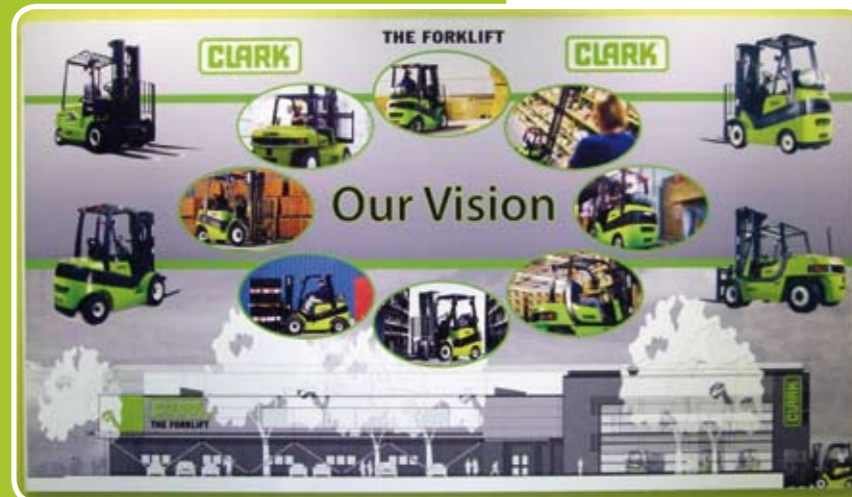
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CLARK THE FORKLIFT



Forktruck Solutions is celebrating its tenth birthday this year - a perfect opportunity to find out more about this rapidly growing Yorkshire-based business as we talk to Simon Penny-Smith, the company's Managing Director.

Forktruck Solutions' first ten years have been a decade of progress, of building a solid platform as the company seeks new horizons in the years to come.

It has also been a decade of change and evolution in the business world and a crucial element in Simon Penny-Smith's role as Managing Director has been to ensure that Forktruck Solutions has evolved with the changing times.

He believes that one of the most significant developments has been a change in his customers' demands and expectations in a world where value for money and quality of service have become more important than ever before.

"Today's customers are better informed than they have ever been about the products and services they wish to purchase," says Simon. "As a result, we are finding that they are less price-driven and more value-focused."

"I believe that it is now up to the industry as a whole, as well as individual organisations, to respond to customer expectations by adding the extra value customers are seeking."

He says that more customers are demanding better fleet management, which is no longer the sole domain of the large 50-250 truck fleet users.

"Smaller 5-20 truck users are also looking for greater management of their fleet, with the aim of driving standards up and costs down," he says.

"Customers are asking for Key Performance Indicators for downtime, uptime, repair and service intervals and utilisation of their fleet, as well as more information on equipment damage and nearly all other cost-related issues."

The higher expectations and demands of customers prompted Simon to examine the various IT solutions available and assess how they could help Forktruck Solutions to become a World Class supplier.

"We were determined to be a supplier who could offer the right customer support and give that crucial added value. We also considered how our business could not only evolve to cope with the demands, but also exceed the expectations of today's - and tomorrow's - market place."

His company's Mission is to become a World Class company within the Clark dealer network. With this in mind, he had to consider how Forktruck's Mission and Vision could not only benefit its customers but also enhance their businesses and partner their own Mission and Vision Statements.

"So we sought out and trialled industry-specific software," he explains. "And after a lengthy evaluation process, we made a considerable investment to install and implement a system capable of taking our business to £20 million turnover...and beyond."

"The system would also provide our customers with as much detailed analysis as they require to surpass their own expectations and also add real value to their business."

Forktruck's attention to detail is also illustrated by their partnership with Chaintec, the UK's leading supplier of off-the-shelf and



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specialist chain to the forklift truck replacement marketplace.

Complying with today's stringent safety requirements for forklift truck chains can be a health and safety headache. But Chaintec have developed a quick and easy-to-use solution by using their 15 years of industry experience to develop a chain wear gauge that operates in accordance with the latest regulations.

Using the gauge, health and safety representatives can monitor wear rates, co-ordinate replacement schedules and be alerted to potential safety concerns...before they arise.

"We use Chaintec's gauges while carrying out examinations and while servicing," says Simon. "We have dealt with Chaintec for nearly 10 years and have never been disappointed. The quality and value for money is excellent but more important, their service outstanding."

"When Chaintec commit to a delivery we can arrange our engineers around them, knowing that the lift chains will be delivered to us exactly when Chaintec say they will."

Forktruck Solutions, who provide Forklift equipment, parts and spot hire anywhere in the UK and Europe, moved from its original HQ in Leeds to a new home at Ossett, near Wakefield, this year. The move confirmed the company's progress during its first decade but the story does not end there.

Since its formation, the company has grown by almost doubling its turnover year on year, including the financial year ending 2008. Simon is already preparing for another move to an even bigger site as Forktruck aims for a £10 million turnover by 2017.

He says, "we began by asking ourselves: 'Who are we and what kind of business do we want to build?' We knew that we wanted our business to grow; we knew that we needed not only to meet, but far exceed, the expectations of our business partners in a fresh and innovative way. We wanted to be World Class."



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And too ensure optimum accuracy & record consistency of wear we've designed our gauges to measure over 10 pitches, as recommended by chain manufacturers, for chain sizes: ½" (12.7mm) - 2½" (63.5mm) pitch.

Make sure your Forklift Inspection Checks measure up - order your Chaintec Chain Wear Gauge today.

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MEASURING FLT CHAIN WEAR JUST GOT EASIER

Complying with today's stringent safety requirements for FLT chains can be a headache for health and safety representatives. There are numerous regulations and legislation to consider: The Factory Acts 1961, The Provision and use of Work Equipment Regulations 1998, The Lifting Operations and Lifting Equipment Regulation 1998, to name just a few.

A quick and easy-to-use solution to this problem has been provided by Chaintec, the UK's leading supplier of off-the-shelf and specialist chain to the FLT replacement marketplace. Chaintec have used their 15 years of industry experience to develop a chain wear gauge that operates in accordance with the latest regulations. Using the gauge health and safety representatives

can monitor wear rates, co-ordinate replacement schedules and be alerted to potential safety concerns, before they arise.

Chaintec's new chain wear gauge measures over 10 pitches and works with chains supplied by Chaintec and all other manufacturers. The gauge accurately measures 2% and 3% wear on chain sizes from ½" (12.7mm) to 2½" (63.5mm) pitch.

The chain wear gauge is a simple and cost effective tool that requires no special training to use and avoids the need for slide rules or complex data conversion.

Chain wear gauges are available from stock by contacting Chaintec on + (0)161 877 7373 email info@chaintec.co.uk

short answer is growth. We have been planning the recent move for the last three years. We already know the next step in Forktruck Solutions' evolution and are planning the next move to a larger capacity site in 2012."

So it is clear that Forktruck Solutions, who provide new, refurbished or used Forklifts to hire or lease purchase, have a vision for the future as they look to build on their first decade.

Does Simon have a personal dream? "We are in the business of dreams," he says. "I like to think we provide a vehicle for each team member to reach his or her full potential. As well as educating ourselves and everyone we work with, we will also ensure that our customers make educated decisions about the equipment they wish to purchase.

"We will always offer quality products and value for money, our service will be World Class and our

customer care will be second to none. Our aim is to show the world that good business ethics can benefit everyone.

"Improving the quality of products, improving the quality of service and, most important, improving the quality of life for everyone; that must be our ultimate goal."

What, then, can Forktruck Solutions customers expect in the future? Simon is aiming high. "World Class is defined by the Webster's dictionary as 'being of the highest calibre in the world.'

"When you see World Class in your day-to-day life, you recognise it instantly, whether it be cars, homes, design or sport. So when you take on a supplier, service provider or a business partner that is World Class, they should be instantly recognisable as a world-class company.

"This is the future for our team, our suppliers and our customers. This is the Forktruck Solutions future."

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The History Of Clark Forklifts



CLARK
THE FORKLIFT

Forktruck Solutions are a dealership for Clark, the oldest name in forklift trucks, and Simon Penny-Smith believes such a high-pedigree product has major benefits for customers.

"A product such as Clark offers a history of innovation and a proven record of manufacturing quality equipment," says Simon. "Since Eugene Clark invented the world's first Forklift in 1917, Clark has been a premier equipment and forklift manufacturer."

- 1920. Clark produces the first hydraulic powered lift upright
- 1923. Clark introduces the first petrol powered three-wheel tow tractor
- 1924. Clark produces the first petrol powered forklift
- 1942. The Clark Car Loader is introduced and Clark produces the first electric-powered forklift, capable of working a full day's shift
- 1943. Clark is the first manufacturer to put warning decals on its forklifts
- 1952. Clark becomes the first forklift manufacturer to provide operator training programs
- 1956. Clark produced the first nested I and U beam constructed upright. This design dramatically improves strength, vision and load stability

- 1967. Clark is the first forklift manufacturer to provide drivers' overhead guards as standard equipment on all sit-down rider trucks. Clark produces the first highly manoeuvrable three-wheel electric forklift
- 1983. Clark pioneers the first operator seat restraint system in order to protect the operator in the event of tip-over
- 1996. Clark produces the first AC powered electric truck
- 1997. Clark produces its one millionth forklift. Clark is the first forklift manufacturer to obtain ISO 9001 for all its manufacturing plants worldwide
- 2003. Clark celebrates its 100th anniversary and, under new ownership, re-dedicates itself to the continued pursuit of manufacturing the most durable and reliable forklifts in production
- 2007. Clark celebrated the 90th anniversary of the invention of the forklift, underlining their logo: Vision From Tradition. 90 years Of Innovation.

Simon adds: "Clark has a 'Built to Last' philosophy, reflected in the design and strength of its products. It's a global company with global organisation and businesses and state-of-the-art production facilities worldwide.

"Clark prides itself in providing total support and back-up for its product at a local level. This is achieved by using independent dealers who know and understand the local market in any country across the world, with the direct support of the manufacturer on a global scale."

And Clark will also be bucking the manufacturing trend by opening a new production facility in Mulheim, Germany.

"In a decade when most companies are taking manufacturing away from Europe to the Far East and China, Clark will actually be bringing it back to here," says Simon. "This will ensure a quality build with locally manufactured quality components."

"So Clark has much more than just history to offer its business partners throughout the UK, Europe and the rest of the world."



vision from tradition



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OFFICE2OFFICE, TRUCKS FROM ATLET

office2office has simplified and streamlined its warehouse truck operations by appointing Atlet to meet all its lift truck supply and maintenance requirements. A contract for trucks at office2office's Oldham site is the latest stage in the standardisation programme.

"We wanted a single source agreement to avoid dealing with multiple suppliers," says Mike Weston, Group Operations Director at office2office. "Atlet has the range of trucks to meet our handling requirements and the expertise to offer a complete package of services that support the flexibility we need as a business."

Originally formed when part of HMSO was privatised, office2office supplies a range of office services and products through three full-range businesses - Banner Business Supplies, first2office and esp2office - and a number of



value-added services. The initial requirement was to replace five VNA man-rising order pickers. The site had a mixed fleet at the time and each truck supplier provided its own maintenance engineers. The company recognised that consolidating maintenance into a single agreement would simplify the whole process and make it easier to resolve any issues quickly and efficiently. Mike Weston approached Atlet and other potential suppliers for their recommendations.

"Having used Atlet trucks in previous roles at other companies since the early 1990s I was familiar with their products and service capabilities but I had to sell the

company to our directors," says Mike Weston. "We tested the market, of course, but wanted a single source agreement to avoid dealing with multiple suppliers. Atlet came up with a complete package that included the new trucks and allowed us to consolidate maintenance for the whole site within a manageable timeframe."

Upgrading the Belfast site presented some different challenges. The warehouse was relatively small but office2office needed to ensure maximum storage density. Part of the solution proposed by Atlet involved reconfiguring the racking for double-deep storage. This offers an excellent compromise between

load selectivity and maximum utilisation of available space and is often suitable for bulk items that do not require first in, first out stock rotation. In addition to managing the installation of the new racking, Atlet supplied extending fork versions of its reach trucks to operate in the double deep aisles as well as order pickers and counterbalance trucks.

The truck replacement programme that started in 2001 has now come full circle as office2office has recently ordered replacement Atlet trucks for the equipment first installed at the Oldham warehouse. The company is also planning to move to a larger building in Basingstoke and has extended the contract for the trucks at the existing facility so that the scheduled replacement will take place at the same time as the relocation.

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