

Forklift wins prestigious award

Leading warehouse equipment manufacturer, Doosan, represented in South Africa by Goscor Lift Truck Company, has been awarded the prestigious Red Dot Design Award for its futuristic Concept Forklift (CFL).

Efficient, environmentally friendly and with the highest level of safety, the futuristic model of the 'Intelligent Concept Forklift' impressed the judges with its ingenious approach to the challenges facing modern forklift manufacturing.

Darryl Shafto, Goscor Lift Truck Company MD says that the award is an important one, saying, "Warehousing requirements are changing fast and technologies have to keep up the pace."

Doosan has always been way ahead in terms of innovative forklift technology – the 'brakes for life' system, introduced several years back, being an excellent example – and this truly amazing futuristic forklift concept is, once again, proof of this.

The 'brakes for life' system – which made world headlines when it was introduced and still a very prevalent feature on Doosan forklifts – is an oil-cooled disc brake system, which, being totally enclosed, eliminates all outside contamination of any humid, abrasive or corrosive dust particles. The system significantly reduces operating costs and GLTC offers on it a 60-month, unlimited hours guarantee.

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In terms of the award-winning CFL, Doosan tasked its Institute of Technology Industrial Design Team with the creation of a vision of the future that incorporates new materials and production techniques, whilst sticking to the Doosan belief of 'simple, powerful products with great performance'.

The key theme for the concept was 'innovation that embodies efficiency and intelligence' and, as a result, the CFL features many innovations that enhance productivity and usability.

There are several examples of how they do this: To provide a better view of the work area, the cabin elevation and tilting function uses a hydraulic device in line with a high-torque linear motor system; the uncluttered cab interior sees all steering and handling operations carried out via a multifunctional control joystick, helping to provide an intuitive, simplified user environment; and through using augmented reality technology, the intelligent work-guide system enables safer and more efficient operation.

Doosan is already a world leader in organic light-emitting diode (OLED) technology, and the CFL shows how the company may eventually incorporate augmented

reality systems into a heads up display. A unique 'work guide system' enables operators to see information about their cargo and interpret the best optimized work process they should apply to it, helping to maximize productivity and targets. An extendable counterweight also improves stability and increases loading capacity, but maintaining the minimum turning radius.

Electrically powered, the CFL is able to reduce emissions, excess noise and fuel costs, meeting all future international environmental standards. The highly efficient rechargeable battery enables faster recharging, providing increased work time and productivity.

With tilting seats, hub drive motors and solar reacting glass, the technology is destined to find a way into the forklifts of the future.

Rapid prototyping, or 3D printing, may also prove an important element to the forklift supplier of the future. With the technology already available to reproduce complex structures by effectively printing it, the need to carry expensive parts holdings or even rarely used parts, may become less important.

Darryl concludes, "With technology constantly moving forward, it is important to look to the future and develop new products and concepts while still incorporating the company's core values and Doosan do this consistently."

Since first being established in 1955, the Red Dot Design Award has received more than 15 000 submissions from 61 countries. This year alone, over 3500 entries were received from 49 countries, all assessed by an expert panel of judges in Singapore. The award ceremony will be held on 25th November 2011 in Singapore. ♦

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