

Specialised lift trucks used at new FMCG factory

Very narrow aisle lift trucks, that can lift goods up to 12 m, and flameproof pallet lift trucks are being used in a new factory of cleaning products giant Unilever South Africa.

The company assessed its materials handling equipment requirements for the new factory and investigated the product offerings, capital costs, maintenance support, additional value-adds and the total life-cycle costs of equipment.

Unilever decided, however, to continue to use the services of its long-time lift truck and materials handling equipment supplier Goscor Lift Truck Company (GLTC), says Unilever engineering manager **Doug de Bruyn**.

"Materials handling is a critical function in Unilever's business and the partnership that has developed over the years with Goscor has been extremely valuable.

"We move a vast amount of goods around the clock and Goscor has supported us at all times.

"This has helped us considerably to reduce our downtime to minimal levels, which is key in our business," he says.

De Bruyn also noted that the return on investment, and not the initial price of the equipment, was the most critical criterion for choosing a materials handling equipment supplier.

He adds that Unilever has achieved excel-

lent return on investment for equipment supplied through GLTC.

The supplier's most recent delivery to Unilever comprised 19 machines, bringing to 70 the total number of Goscor machines at Unilever, and GLTC KwaZulu-Natal sales manager **Warren Newell** says that one of the most challenging things about Unilever is the range of vehicles in its fleet.

GLTC KwaZulu-Natal regional manager **Michael Keats** adds that the company has technicians present on site at all times, and has backup machines and battery maintenance facilities to ensure that the company has a minimum guaranteed uptime of 99% at the factory.

"Supporting this kind of range 24 hours a day is certainly a challenging task but one that has motivated the entire Goscor team and it is easy to understand the pride we feel in getting Unilever's nod for the new facility," he enthuses.

GLTC has been providing Unilver with materials handling equipment for 12 years, and Keats mentions that maintaining the quality of service for this length of time necessitates "doing the basics correctly, never taking anything for granted and continuing to service the business as passionately after the delivery of the seventieth machine as one did after delivering the first".

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EQUIPMENT HANDOVER

Turret truck driver Joseph Mkhwanazi, Unilever project manager Geoff Sysum, Goscor Lift Truck Company sales manager Warren Newell and Unilever site engineer Douglas de Bruyn