

SA giant maintains faith in Goscor

Goscor Lift Truck Company (GLTC) is SA's fastest-growing materials handling equipment (MHE) business.

Unilever engineering manager, Doug de Bruyn, says: "We're in the process of building a state-of-the-art new factory. We assessed our MHE requirements from scratch, including the product offering, capital cost, maintenance support, additional value-adds and the total lifecycle cost, and could not justify moving away from our current long-time supplier (Goscor) for the new facility."

De Bruyn adds that materials handling is a critical function in Unilever's business and that the partnership which has developed over the years with Goscor has been extremely valuable. "We move a vast amount of goods 24/7 and Goscor has always been there when we have needed them, whatever the time of day. This has helped us considerably to reduce our downtime to minimal levels, which is key in our business," he says. "Although important, price was not the only consideration and we have resisted the temptation to specify lower quality equipment in search of better capital prices. We take a holistic view of the investment over the lifecycle of the product and, taking everything into account, our return on investment in terms of Goscor products has been excellent."

Michael Keats, regional manager of GLTC KwaZulu-Natal, says that it was especially encouraging that, after a thorough re-assessment of its MHE needs, Unilever chose to continue working with his company. "We have certainly developed a mutually-beneficial partnership over the years by each doing the basic things correctly. One of those things is to never take anything for granted and to continue servicing the business as passionately after the



▲ Goscor Unilever handover.

delivery of the 70th machine as one did after delivering the first, 12 years ago," he says.

GLTC's most recent delivery to Unilever comprised 19 machines, bringing to 70 the total number of Goscor machines at Unilever. GLTC KZN sales manager, Warren Newell, says that one of the most challenging things about Unilever is the range of vehicles in its fleet. "From very narrow aisle machines that lift up to more than 12 metres and are installed with Sick Sensors which detect any movement in an aisle and automatically cut the engine for safety, to 'Zone 22' flame-proof protected powered pallet trucks that work in

soup powder areas, there is a Goscor machine for almost every conceivable materials handling application at Unilever," he says. Keats adds that supporting this kind of range 24 hours a day is certainly a challenging task, but one that has motivated the entire Goscor team. "We have technicians on-site all the time, back-up machines and battery maintenance facilities to ensure that we have a minimum of 99% uptime at Unilever, which we have guaranteed. It's easy to understand the pride we feel in getting Unilever's nod for the new facility," he concluded.

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