

Goscor - growing from streng

Goscor Lift Truck Company (GLTC) has become a leading supplier to the logistics and warehousing industry in South Africa, boasting many blue-chip companies amongst its loyal customers including icons like Makro, Pick n Pay, Spar and South African Breweries.

MD Darryl Shafto says that his company's service ethic has made the difference. "We have outstanding products, which we support with world class service. Our service targets are set at the highest levels with no detail being too small. This has helped us build excellent partnerships with our customers whose business we value deeply."

Shafto adds that the integration of the company's sales and service functions has been instrumental in GLTC's success. "They are two sides of the same coin and making them work as one has made a palpable difference to our business."

"In any organisation there is always a degree of tension between the sales and service divisions with the sales people generally getting the 'red carpet' treatment and the technical staff left to cope with any customer backlash.

REWARDED

"In addition, while sales staff is usually well rewarded for its efforts, service and support personnel seldom receive the appropriate remuneration," Shafto says.

He adds that the first step in reversing this trend at GLTC was to bring sales and service closer together encouraging mutual respect and a greater appreciation of each other's crucial contribution.

"We introduced monthly meetings that included both sales and service personnel and we made sure everyone was aware of our results.

"We also started recognising and rewarding effort and worked hard to bridge the salary gap to ensure fair remuneration," Shafto says.

Slowly attitudes shifted and GLTC people started to recognise the importance of every individual's contribution. "This change was a key element in the turnaround of the company," says Shafto.

MAJOR PLAYERS

And turnaround is no exaggeration. Within a short space of time GLTC became one of the major players in the industry winning a bevy of blue-chip customers and adding 35%-45% growth each year.



Crown has equipment to suit every conceivable warehouse application.

"But most importantly," says Shafto, "we started growing our market share - from 9% to 24% - taking significant business from some of our oldest and best known competitors and mainly because of the fundamental understanding that while the sales team gets the first sale, it is the service and support personnel that ensure subsequent sales to a customer.

Also, the rising awareness of the value of each element of the business raised consciousness in terms of the importance of brand building and the necessity of marketing the Goscor brand. While this process involved

changing entrenched mindsets, which is always difficult, once it gained traction, it made a significant difference to our results," Shafto says.

PRODUCT RANGE

Underpinning GLTC's success is a product range that is world famous for its quality. This includes Crown, Doosan and Bendi, all household names in the industry.

With manufacturing facilities globally, Crown is the world leader in the manufacture of electric materials handling equipment. Catering to the ever-changing demands of

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warehousing, Crown has equipment to suit every conceivable warehouse application.

Doosan is one of the world-class manufacturer's of the finest selections of lift trucks. The company's "brakes for life" system – an oil-cooled disc brake system, which eliminates all outside contamination by any humid, abrasive or corrosive dust particles, significantly reduces operating costs and GLTC offers a 60-month, unlimited hours guarantee on it.

ARTICULATING

Bendi, a revolutionary counterbalanced, articulating forklift, can work in very narrow spaces. Even in widths of just 1.8m, the Bendi articulated forklift helps the operator work faster, safer and more accurately.

Turning to the future, Shafto says that GLTC will continue to provide the best product and service to its customers in order

to retain existing customers and attract new ones.

"With respect to the market in general, in spite of some uncertainty, we are very optimistic. It's true that while some companies are loath, for example, to sign 60 month contracts as they do not know where their businesses will be in five years, we are always ready to offer an alternative of shorter contracts. We have what it takes to offer our customers a range of creative financial solutions," Shafto says.

There is little doubt that GLTC is doing something right. In 2009, while the rest of its industry was languishing in the midst of one of the biggest recessions in history, GLTC had its best year ever. "It's all about the partnerships- our customers, our suppliers and our team. We will continue to nurture these relationships on the understanding that our business is these people," Shafto concluded.



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Goscor Lift Truck Company's MD, Darryl Shafto.