

May 2009 / A0092

Keeping it fresh at Brakes

Brakes is the UK's leading foodservice supplier of choice for thousands of caterers wanting great food and fresh ideas. Keeping the food fresh and catering suppliers delivered on time every day requires expert planning and efficient distribution. To help support this logistics effort, Yale is managing a fleet of 650 lift trucks and warehouse trucks operated by Brakes across 43 UK sites.

With increasing focus on warehouse safety, efficiency and operating costs, Brakes reviewed its lift truck and warehouse fleet and appointed Yale as its preferred supplier in 2006. During this period, the majority of the lift truck fleet has been replaced with the latest Yale models, with Brakes operators now experienced users of the Yale reach trucks, order picking trucks and counterbalance models.

Regional Distribution

Brakes distribute food and catering products throughout the UK from regional centres with ambient, chilled and coldstore operations.

With 3600 product lines stored in 2718 pallet locations, the Bristol depot receives catering supplies and food items from around the country, cross-docking the chilled and fresh items into flexi-containers for immediate distribution and storing the ambient items on 7 levels of narrow aisle pallet racking.

Orders received up to 1600 hours are picked over night into roll cages, marshaled into loads in delivery sequence and despatched early the next morning using Brake's fleet of 31 vehicles, for delivery direct to schools, hospitals, pubs and restaurants. Each vehicle will make 28-30 calls per day.

Voice Directed Picking

Brakes use a 'Voitech' voice directed hands-free warehouse management system for all paper-free picking operations. The system uses speech recognition and speech synthesis to allow Brakes staff to receive instructions and confirm picking details via a RF network to individual operator head-sets.

Order Picking Productivity

At the heart of the order picking operation at Bristol is the fleet of 16 MO20 and MO20S Low Level Order Pickers. Ideal for picking into roll cages or onto pallets, the Yale AC Technology with its MOSFET Combi Electronic controller and choice of 4 pre-set performance levels, has proved popular with the operators.

The Yale MO20 with up to 500 Ah batteries will complete a full shift on a single charge and lateral battery extraction makes battery changes easy. The MO20 can carry two roll cages at a time, with the operator picking from the platform or off the truck at either side.

Reach Truck Versatility

For higher level order placing and picking operations, Brakes use a fleet of 7 Yale MR16 Reach Trucks. Having the latest AC motor technology, CANbus systems connectivity and electronic steering, Brakes operators benefit from increased productivity from the combination of high performance and improved ergonomics.

Brakes operators use the same voice directed warehouse management systems as the low level order pickers and will pick and place complete pallets, or replenish fast moving lines at the lower pallet beam levels.

Veracitor VX Productivity

The final task in the Brakes dispatch routine at Bristol is vehicle loading. Being on one level, loaded roll cages are collected from the marshalling lanes in delivery sequence and loaded into the delivery vehicles using Yale Veracitor VX 1.6 tonnes capacity lift trucks with full weather protection, soft roll-back side protection and extra lights for night time working.

The Ability to Deliver

The Brakes operation at Bristol demonstrates how a clear distribution strategy and effective management can make even a complex supply operation handling over 20,000 individual packs per day look easy. The integration of the voice activated warehouse management system with the right truck for each operation combined with an acute sense of safe warehouse practice demonstrated throughout the operation is impressive. Multiply this by the 30 other Brakes locations across the UK and it is no wonder that Brakes enjoys its pre-eminent position in the market for delivering caterers supplies.

Bob Good, Key Account Manager responsible for managing the Brakes contract for Yale sums it up: “Brakes with its reputation for fresh ideas and good food, sets the highest standards for delivery and customer service. Yale understands the pressure to maintain efficient distribution and is part of an exacting delivery process. It’s all about the ability to deliver – consistently.”

Find more about Yale Europe, its People, Products and Productivity by visiting www.yale-europe.com.

Email: info@yale.com | Website: www.yale-europe.com

- ENDS -

Photographs

Caption: Yale MO20 Low level Order Pickers give flexibility to pick to two roll cages at a time.

Caption: Yale MR16 Reach Trucks are used by Brakes to store and pick full pallets.

Company Contact:

Richard Czepukojc
Marketing Communications Executive
Tel: + 44 (0)1252 770786
Mobile: + 44 (0)7990 562 435
Email: richard.czepukojc@yale.com