

WORKING AT HEIGHT – HAVE YOU FULLY ASSESSED THE RISK?

A common misconception of safety professionals in the warehousing industry is that once a risk has been identified and assessed, maybe some new equipment purchased and the minimum of training provided; all will be well.

It is not until something goes wrong that the risk assessment is really put to a test, and of course this could be too little to late.

What if a member of the warehouse staff carrying out a high level stock check on a MEWP fell, was rendered unconscious, how would he be rescued? Is anyone trained to carry out a rescue? Do you have the necessary equipment to carry out a rescue? A person suspended in an upright position for any longer than 15 minutes could die from Suspension Trauma also known as Harness-induced death. Suspension trauma occurs when a person is suspended in an upright position which is what most harnesses are designed for. Gravity pulls blood into the lower legs; the heart can only pump the blood that is available. So the hearts output begins to fall, they then faint or become unconscious, death can occur within fifteen minutes.

There are four phases of fall protection: Whatever training workers have received will determine how they respond to different phases.

Before the fall

Have you supplied the right harness and lanyard? If not, and the harness is too uncomfortable, too inconvenient, or interferes too much with task completion, workers may not use the equipment or may modify it (illegally) to make it more tolerable. The length of the lanyard will determine the length of the

fall. The longer the fall, the greater the stress on the body will be when the fall is arrested. The shorter the lanyard, the more often it will have to be repositioned when workers are mobile.

Fall arrest

The whole concept of fall protection is that workers who fall will be stopped by the tethering system. Unfortunately, the posture of the falling worker is unpredictable. Depending on the harness attachment point and the position of the worker's body at arrest, different harness attachments offer different advantages.

Suspension

Many safety professionals naturally assume that, once a fall has been arrested, the fall protection system has successfully completed its job. Unfortunately, this is not the case and suspension trauma is a risk. Fall victims can slow the onset of suspension trauma by pushing down vigorously with the legs, by positioning their body in a horizontal or slight leg-high position, or by standing up. Harness design and fall injuries may prevent these actions however.

Rescue

Rescue must come rapidly to minimize the dangers of suspension trauma. The circumstances together with the lanyard attachment point will determine the possibilities of self-rescue. In situations where self-rescue is not likely to be possible, workers must be supervised at all times. Regardless of whether a worker can self-rescue or must rely upon others, time is of the essence because a worker may lose

consciousness in only a few minutes.

If a worker is suspended long enough to lose consciousness, rescue personnel must be careful in handling such a person or the rescued worker may die anyway.

Recommendations

Safety harnesses save many lives and injuries. However, continual vigilance is needed to train and supervise workers to ensure harnesses are used safely. Workers and emergency response personnel must be trained to recognize the risks of suspension trauma.

Some key control measures to consider are that:

- Workers should never be permitted to work alone in a harness.
- Harnesses should be selected for specific applications and must consider compliance (convenience), potential arrest injury, and suspension trauma.
- Workers should be trained to try to move their legs in the harness and try to push against any footholds.
- All personnel should know (be trained) that suspension in an upright condition for longer than 5 minutes can be fatal.
- Rescuers should be trained that victims who are suspended vertically before rescue are in a potentially fatal situation.
- Rescuers must be aware that post-rescue death may occur if victims are moved to a horizontal position too rapidly.
- Front (stomach or chest) rather than rear (back) harness lanyard attachment points will aid

injured workers in self-rescue. This is crucial if workers are not closely supervised.

- Any time a worker must spend time hanging in a harness, a harness with a seat rather than straps alone should be used to help position the upper legs horizontally.

The key to any safety activity is the level of training and supervision given to the staff, this training should be task specific in many cases. However it is imperative that supervisors and managers are trained to a sufficient level of competence in Health and Safety.

The IOSH Managing Safely for supervisors and NEBOSH Certificate for warehouse managers should be a minimum standard. These courses will provide a suitable level of understanding of risk management and ensure risks are fully assessed. For more information on these or tailored in company health & safety courses, please visit www.mesh4safety.co.uk Written by Colin Snape, Head of HR, Langdon Industries Edited by Martin Moy, Director/co-Founder, Mesh-4-Safety Ltd.



MESH-4-SAFETY



BELGRAVIUM

Belgravium launches Tokyo 3200 tablet PC

Belgravium is proud to introduce its latest generation ruggedised web tablet, the Tokyo 3200 Series. Designed to provide mobile professionals with a dependable real-time wireless solution, the Tokyo combines data capture and communication technology within a portable wireless Windows® based appliance. Facilitating quick access to information from remote databases via the Internet or an Intranet, the Tokyo is exceptionally user friendly and can be easily integrated into other systems.

Weighing a mere 930g, the 3200 series is extremely thin, light and durable. Mobile workers will also benefit from the large 10.4" responsive touch screen, on screen keyboard and outdoor viewing options. In addition, magnetic stripe readers, barcode scanner and camera options enable these tablets to offer seamless information capture for instant transmission.

With a choice of operating systems including Windows CE, Windows XP Embedded and Windows XP Tablet Edition, the Tokyo incorporates wireless LAN and WAN support and Citrix ICA, Microsoft RDP client/server computing protocols for instant network and information access. The hot swappable battery enables up to 8 hours of operation. The unit has the ability to adapt to almost any environment for placement in vehicles, on moveable arms, walls or mobile carts. In short, this feature rich tablet offers the full power of mobile computing ideal for an extensive number of mobile applications including:

- Retail
- Healthcare
- Warehousing
- Home Networking
- Manufacturing Process Monitoring
- Hospitality
- Logistics Support
- Onsite Service

Some of the many other key features and benefits of the Tokyo 3200 Series include:

Wireless

For optimum mobility, the latest 802.11 based wireless technology has been built into the Tokyo. It also maintains flexibility by allowing other WAN / WLAN and PCMCIA card adapters as optional items.

Fully-integrated I/O

To maximize its connectivity with peripherals like barcode scanners, printers, digital cameras, keyboard/mouse, projectors and monitors, the

Tokyo is fully equipped with IR, USB, PS/2 VGA interface ports and RS-485/422/232 protocol COM ports.

High Brightness Display

The high brightness 10.4" TFT LCD provides excellent visibility. It is especially ideal for displaying graphical content in web-based applications. This advanced LCD technology enables the Tokyo to function without sacrificing power consumption. The battery can last for up to 8 working hours on a one-time charge.



Shock & Vibration Resistant

The Tokyo 3200 is rugged and constructed for professionals working in harsh environments. The incorporation of external protective rubber bumpers enables it to withstand drops of up to four feet internally, its shock-absorbing design and magnesium housing design ensures that it meets strict industrial durability standards.

Spill & Dust Resistant

The I/O ports, LCD panel and internal circuits of the Tokyo have been designed to resist spills and water damage. Furthermore the unit is dust-resistant with a protected LCD, sealed ports and card slots for extra protection.

For further information please visit the Belgravium website: www.belgravium.com

WAREHOUSE INDUSTRY NEWS

Sponsored by Proteus Software Ltd



HOW GREEN IS YOUR UNDERWEAR?

my article, 'How green is your underwear?' That of course does not refer to its colour, but to its carbon footprint, and can apply to your shoes, shirts, coats, hats, and indeed, every other item that you purchase.

A requirement to specify this type of information for every item could have huge implications for the logistics sector, because the carbon footprint or carbon 'cost' of an item can vary depending upon, not only the nature of the production process, but where it was made, where you buy it from and how you buy it. Not to mention, of course, how it got there, by road, by rail, by sea, by plane, or by pack horse. How many times, and where was it stored on the way, and for how long, even down to how many times the item was moved in the warehouse? All the factors will have an impact on the carbon footprint of an item when it arrives on your doorstep.

Will parcel carriers compete on the basis of which one runs the vehicles with the lowest emissions? Will retailers compete on the basis of the relative energy efficiency of their stores? Will farmers compete on the basis of the type of agricultural vehicles they are using?

Internet ordering may become more attractive because you do not need a retail store, but of course those items are often delivered by courier. Will the good old Royal Mail have a competitive edge – particularly if Postman Pat sells his van and uses a bike?

Are you a sceptic? If so perhaps consider what some of the major companies are doing already to promote themselves as being green. It is hard to believe that they are doing this simply from altruistic motives, but rather because they think they can gain competitive advantage by doing so.

A practical example is Flybe. In an industry-first move, Flybe started producing an eco-label for its aircraft in June 2007, and is promoting this as a competitive benefit of using that airline. The label, modelled on those used in the sale of white goods like fridges, microwaves and washing machines, shows a full range of environmental indicators per aircraft.

RFID - BARCODE OF THE 21ST CENTURY?

David Drinnan MD of inotec UK looks at the technology

You can hardly pick up a logistics or 'Techie' magazine without reading an article mentioning RFID. Either extolling the virtues or warning about the invasion of privacy which the writer of the article believes RFID presents. The articles are usually peppered with blue chip companies and thinly veiled warnings about non-compliance for current suppliers. Combined with a number of articles and, unfortunately sales literature promising results which technically are not currently possible is it any wonder that potential users are confused concerning this emerging technology?

So what is RFID?

RFID or Radio Frequency Identification is literally an electronic barcode. Information (As much as 10KBits on some tags) can be remotely written to and read from the tags multiple times, hence its other name – 'Smart Labels'.

There are 2 main types of RFID tag, Active which contain a small battery to power the device and Passive which is powered by the reading devices transmitted power. Generally Active devices will have a better read range than Passive tags but are far more expensive.

The 2 main components of any tag are; the memory chip and the receiving/transmitting aerial. Aerials are one area where size is important. The larger the aerial the greater the read range and radio 'visibility'.

There are three main frequencies which are used for RFID tags, Low Frequency, High frequency (HF) and Ultra High (UHF).The general rule of thumb is

- The higher the frequency...
- ... the smaller the tag
- ... the faster the data transfer speed
- ... the more limited the data
- ... but the greater the susceptibility to interference from conductive material ie metal liquids etc.

Cost is an important issue to most customers. Many expect to spend just a few pence on an RFID tag - the elusive 5 Cent tag! In reality a basic tag (HF & UHF) with read & write capability is

High street retailer Marks and Spencer has announced plans to become carbon neutral within 5 years. The 100-point eco-plan will impact every aspect of the company's operations from manufacturing to product labelling, and from waste management to in store heating. Recently maligned carbon offsetting will only be used as the last resort.

In 2007 Tesco, the UK's biggest retailer, which produces 2m tonnes of carbon a year in the UK, said it would put new labels on every one of the 70,000 products it sells so that shoppers can compare carbon 'costs', in the same way that they can compare salt content and calorie counts. Meanwhile all food products air-freighted into the UK will carry an aeroplane symbol. According to the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs food transported by air - mainly fresh fruit and vegetables - accounts for 0.1% of total food miles, but generates 13% of total food transport CO2 emissions.

Many companies are already carrying out a "carbon audit" of their supply chains to build the lifetime carbon footprint of their products. By undertaking a carbon investigation of their supply chains, all businesses can minimise the carbon emitted at every stage of a product's lifecycle from source to shelf, consumption and disposal.

As the demand increases for more data on the relative carbon footprint of everyday items that we purchase and services that we use, there will be massive implications for the way in which we do business.

The recent significant hike in the oil price has also brought an economic dimension to this subject, which helps focus attention. How many of your vehicles travel back to base empty? If you have missed a pallet off a load will you now think twice about sending another vehicle 100 miles with one pallet? If you have shipped the items incorrectly what is the cost to collect and redeliver? Eliminating non conformance is set to become an even higher priority than in the past.

It is a question of 'watch this space'; to wait and see, or do



Indeed the trial was so successful that RFID is now being used for inventory control at store level and is already proving to offer higher control levels with sales and logistics costs justifying the investment at an early stage.

New products are also entering the RFID market offering added value to the RFID tag, such as the Vario Sense. This HF tag can not only be written to and read from but also can record the temperature or humidity which it has been exposed to.

Property	Tradition al barcode readers	Barcode & 2D Vision Read	Passive RFID	Active RFID
Proven 99% Accuracy in production environments	✓	✓	✓	✓
Less than 5p. per image/tag	✓	✓	x	x
Multiple asset scanning	zimited	✓	✓	✓
Long distance scanning	@p to cE	@p to cE	@p to cE	XXES
Reads when obscured	x	x	zimitedR	✓
Reads with liquid or metal interference	✓	✓	zimitedR	✓
Image bank for visual proof	x	✓	x	x
Pipoint ID of non-read items	x	✓	x	x
Can be read and written to	x	x	✓	✓
Industry standards apply	✓	✓	✓	✓

Reavailable with special tagsV

The chart below balances the technologies including the newer vision system reading devices for 2D codes and barcode.

As you will see both current and future technologies offer advantages in differing areas. In the well publicised Marks and Spencer installation key advantages of their RFID logistics installation were listed as;

- Improved accuracy over manual system
- Replaceable label costs were reduced due to re-use of a tag.
- Speed of scanning multiple units was improved, by a factor of 5.
- Delivery equipment asset base was better controlled.
- Provided a working platform for open standards.

we all have to be proactive in driving this process forward. If we are laggards, we might find that our competitors gain an advantage over us.

These developments will have a major impact for system providers. There has to be a mechanism for collecting, collating and disseminating this information. The 'Catch 22' of course is that collecting the data itself has a 'carbon footprint'.

Systems will need to change to support this process. The gestation period from the conceptualisation of a business need, to the release of a software solution for that requirement can be quite lengthy, so software solution providers need to keep right up to date with changing business trends. At Proteus Software we are already considering new functionality for our software solutions to help our customers collect, collate and disseminate the necessary data, and thereby support their ongoing business needs.

Howard Turvey is Managing Director of Proteus Software Limited, a software author specialising in supply chain solutions



AirTube Group

Improve Your Plant efficiency – Make use of Air...?

AirTube Conveyors is a leading supplier specialising in Air Tube Pneumatic Conveyance Systems for a wide range of applications. Since 1982 we have tailored customer required pneumatic tube systems for the transportation of documents/paperwork, specimens, medicine, laboratory samples and of course money...

What are AirTube systems and the Area of Application...?

Air Tube offer a range of pneumatic tube systems designed and manufactured to suit your every need. Typical systems comprise of send and receive stations, tubing, a blower, a control panel and system carriers. Operation of the system is designed to be as simple as possible and requires the operator to only insert the carrier into the station.



By pressing the push button of the destination the carrier can be transported either one or two way, between two locations or multiple locations. Whether installed in a Warehouse, new building, or added during a modernisation or streamlining project, the industrial pneumatic tube system provides customised transport.

A variety of standard modules offers the dimensions, transport weights and system capacity which will best fulfil the company's individual needs. Furthermore, any special environmental requirements are taken into consideration during construction of the system.

AirTube pneumatic tube systems can provide fast and reliable assist in meeting these needs at a practical cost...

Logistics – Document, Picking Notes or Sample Transfer

Our industrial pneumatic tube system can transport virtually anything that fits into one of the special carriers such as Documents, small parts or tools, oil and food oil samples either hot or cold for testing, powders, liquids, granulated materials or aggregates. Additionally carriers can be loaded and unloaded either manually or automatically.

The Advantages and Benefits

- Different systems are available for a variety of needs: –
- Carriers can be securely locked and leak proof...
- Reliability – Pneumatic systems have long operating lives and require very little maintenance...
- Effortless transfer of Distribution centres and warehousing outbound and internal documentation. Most importantly, the carrier is transported immediately and at a relatively high rate of speed...
- Produce/Cargo logistic drivers are able to forward delivery notes directly to the logistics provider's admin dept on arrival...
- Processing samples can be transported to the sample testing laboratory...

AirTube system leads to increased profitability through time saved and better utilisation of staff, plus a rapid Return on Investment (ROI)...

They offer numerous benefits and advantages and as for instance cost savings, pneumatic tube systems ensure that internal staff and qualified personnel will not lose valuable time running errands.....



At AirTube we understand that fast and efficient administration is vital to a company's smooth operation, which is why our systems deliver, 24 hours a day.

Contact us for further information and a free evaluation survey... www.airtubegroup.co.uk

8					2		
5	2	7	3	4	1	8	
							5
7	6	3		9			
1	5			7	4		3
			8	5	6	2	
2				3			
	7	1	4	5	2	9	8
		9					

proteus puzzle win a bottle of champagne!

Sudoku for Fun

Fill in the blank squares with the numbers 1-9 so that every row, each column, and every 3x3 box contains all the numbers from 1-9 without duplicating any.

Once you have found all the numbers cut out the grid and send it along with your name and address details to:

Linda Rodway, Proteus Software Ltd, 1730 Solihull Parkway, Birmingham Business Park, Birmingham B37 7YD www.proteussoftware.com



Modal shifts

Although road continues to dominate UK Freight movements with 163 billion tonne kilometres moved by road in 2005, companies are reviewing alternate green methods of transporting cargo and looking at other areas where they can move freight.

Department of Transport figures show that Rail accounts for 22 billion and Water 52 billion tonne kilometres of freight moved per annum. Around three quarters of goods moved in UK waters are crude petroleum and petroleum products and the busiest UK major inland waterway is the River Thames

Sainsbury's intends to include the River Thames in its distribution network after a one week trial proved goods could be moved faster by water than on London's roads!! Daily ambient deliveries were transported by barge from the Charlton depot to 12 stores near the river.

Sainsbury's said that switching to river could cut 220,000 road miles each year and contribute to its target of reducing carbon emissions by 25% by 2012.

"The trial proved that there are alternatives to road for us to be more efficient as a business, environmentally sustainable and cause less congestion" said Roger Burnley Sainsbury's Supply Chain Director.

Tesco are now moving imported wine from the Port of Liverpool and a container terminal at Irham along the Manchester ship Canal to a Manchester bottling plant. The supermarket says that its decision will cut carbon emissions on this route by 80% and take 50 trucks off the road every week. It also states that the move will result in an estimated saving of 1.1 Million KM of HGV journeys on UK roads. The forecasts for future demand for 2014 for rail freight are 144.7 m net tonnes lifted, compared with 113.1 m net tonnes lifted in 2003. The results show an overall increase in net tonnes moving by rail from 2003 figures of 28 per cent by 2014, representing 145 million net tonnes.

The most notable increases are seen in maritime containers moving by rail (up 90 per cent to 21 million net tonnes), and domestic intermodal/wagonload traffic increasing from 900,000 net tonnes to 4.7 million net tonnes. Most sectors are forecast to grow in the coming years with the exception of ore traffic, waste

WHOLESALE CHANGES

A vegetarian foods wholesaler can expect a dramatic upturn in stock control efficiency and order picking accuracy after deciding to upgrade its paper-based system with Psion Teklogix Workabout PRO handheld computers. The new kit will be supplied and installed by Camberley-based Rugged Systems.

In addition to supplying vegetarian foods to retailers throughout the UK, the client also operates a cash and carry facility from its site - selling products directly to the public on a part time basis - and a paper-based stock management and picking system had been in operation with pick lists generated by software developed in-house and running on the company's PC.

However, the existing system had not been designed for a retail environment and, with cash and carry sales forming an increasingly significant part of the client's business, it needed rethinking.

Rugged Systems will supply fixed scanners attached to the client's PC to enable details of cash and carry goods sold over the counter to be accurately monitored. In addition, a wireless access point connected to the client's network and four Workabout PROs with laser scanners will be installed.

The goods-in aspect of the client's operation is also expected to benefit significantly from the introduction of the new system. In the past, the company had been unable to accurately check incoming deliveries because, quite simply, each item had to be counted and cross referenced manually against the order and, with an often impatient delivery driver waiting to move on to his next drop-off, this was usually impractical. The new system will allow incoming pallet loads to be scanned using the Workabout PROs and their details fed directly to the client's own stock control system.

The Workabout PRO is a flexible, programmable and expandable, portable data collection terminal, designed for a range of data collection needs. It is available with either Windows Mobile 2003 SE or Windows CE .NET configurations. The Workabout Pro delivers the performance, ruggedness and durability required for mobile data collection in an ergonomic package.

PSION TEKLOGIX

and automotive rail freight which would generally remain at 2003 levels. Retailers have also led the way on moving from road to rail. For example one freight train can do the work of 50 HGVs and an aggregates train can do the work of 120 HGVs. Three quarters of the French wine sold in Marks & Spencer stores comes to the UK by rail. Marks & Spencer have been using rail to import beer, wine and spirits from the EU for over two years. 40% of total intake into their national distribution centre arrives on rail. Marks & Spencer also make deliveries to their Scottish RDC using rail, taking 350 vehicles a year off the UK roads. The company is currently looking at ways to expand their use of rail in Scotland.

Rosebys, the UK's largest home textile retailer, operates a rail-connected regional distribution centre in Selby through a joint partnership with The Potter Group. GB Railfreight provides a daily rail service for Medite Shipping Co (UK) Ltd from the Port of Felixstowe to supply the centre. The goods supplied by rail include towels, duvet covers, bed linen, pillowcases and ready made curtains.

ASDA use The Malcolm Group rail services for food, general merchandise and clothing between Daventry and Scotland. This rail saves ASDA 4 million lorry miles and 314,00 gallons of diesel fuel every year, equivalent to taking 6,140 lorries off the roads. This produces a net reduction 41 tonnes in the annual amount of solid carbon released into the atmosphere. ASDA have recently expanded their use of rail and now use services connecting the Port of Felixstowe and Daventry, and between Gungahmed and Aberdeen.

For further information contact Richard Ellithorpe. Tel 01536 740104

www.ciltuk.org.uk



New development for managing mobile technology
When it comes to managing mobile technology itself, Psion Teklogix is now able to provide the market with a complete solution by leveraging the synergies between it and new alliance partner B2M Solutions.

B2M Solutions specialises in the management of a mobile enterprise. Its mprodigyTM mobile management system provides the framework that pulls together an entire mobile infrastructure; maximising the productivity of the remote workforce and protecting the investment in a mobile estate.

The modular and scaleable mprodigyTM can be incorporated at any stage of a mobile project to ensure that remote mobile solutions are deployed and managed efficiently. For line-of-business remote users (in parcel delivery, logistics, field service, industrial and retail) who require access to mission-critical corporate data whilst on the move, mprodigyTM ensures the optimum performance from rugged PDA (personal digital assistant) devices such as the latest Psion Teklogix the iKön.

Commenting on the partnership, Julie Purves, Managing Director of B2M Solutions says: "We are delighted to become an alliance partner with Psion Teklogix. It means that our mprodigyTM suite will work seamlessly with technologies from Psion Teklogix, such as the excellent iKön, to deliver a best-of-breed robust solution. Companies across all sectors can now deploy highly scaleable, mission critical mobile environments with complete control over the management of their data, communications and devices."

Darrel Williams - Director Channel and Mobile Sales of Psion Teklogix comments: "This partnership with B2M Solutions offers our customers full spectrum mobility management, allowing them to recognize significant financial and operational benefits when running and deploying multiple mobile devices. Assert management, remote health checks, updates and support capabilities will not only reduce the operational overhead of maintaining an effective workforce, but will enable business managers to manage dynamically and proactively, putting the customer first at all times".

www.psionteklogix.co.uk

Difficult is worth doing

Like many new businesses Logistics Business IT endured a difficult birth due to many factors, not least of all the current economic problems we all face. However, like the Honda advert says "difficult is worth doing", and that is what we have done.

We gave birth to a new technology magazine from the same pedigree stable as Logistics Business magazine, which has long earned the crown of Europe's major English-language materials handling title. Our intention right from the start was to develop a magazine which would be strong in its own right, backed by a content-rich website, and few would argue today that our objectives have not been met. Logistics Business IT is centric to the supply chain and covers the issues that many businesses have to deal with on a daily basis, so we are constantly looking to warehouse operators for input.

From reducing energy usage to optimising the final delivery of product to the consumer, the team seeks to provide the best information to help businesses develop the best strategies and

MANUFACTURING & SUPPLY CHAIN
LOGISTICS BUSINESS IT

UKWA chairman Derrick Potter believes that business contacts made at networking events such as those organised by UKWA throughout the year will play an increasingly significant role in facilitating partnerships in the logistics sector.

The logistics industry is evolving rapidly and it is important that third party logistics service providers (3PLs) spot emerging trends and develop their service offerings accordingly if they are to make the most of the exciting opportunities ahead. That's the message from the United Kingdom Warehousing Association's (UKWA's) chairman, Derrick Potter.

Derrick, the founder and executive chairman of The Potter Group, says: "The UK supply chain is changing. For example, many container terminal operators have woken up to the potential of widening the scope of their business to include additional logistics services and, as a result, we have seen the emergence of what has been christened 'port-centric logistics'. Containers, which were once taken from a ship to an inland RDC where they were unloaded and sent back to the port - empty, are now often unloaded at the port and their contents stored at a consolidation centre - again at the port. 3PLs have the potential to benefit from this shift in supply chain thinking by developing partnerships with the port operators who - in the main - look to outsource this work."

Of course, the port isn't the final destination for the goods and palletised loads are usually forwarded from the port-based consolidation centre to the owner's RDC network. Derrick Potter believes that environmental concerns coupled to the problems created by Britain's over-congested motorway network, will invariably result in more and more goods arriving at the RDCs by rail. "The typical logistics model will become quite simple," he says. "Shippers will bring containers in to the ports where they will be unloaded and stored in consolidation centres by 3PLs. Increasingly rail companies will then take palletized loads to inland RDCs and goods will then be delivered to their final destination in much the same way as they are today. Those 3PLs that have recognized the growing use of rail in the supply chain are building warehouses close to railway junctions - as opposed to motorway junctions."

choose IT suited to their exact need. Indeed, we are grateful to Proteus Software for this opportunity to publicise our aims. We are also proud to be associated with one of the UK's leading best of breed software companies as one of our key supporters. 21st Century warehousing is undoubtedly challenging. To make it work effectively, businesses have to be nimble. The notion of 'lean' has been applied in the context of manufacturing for years as 'agile' has been used to describe effective supply chains, but in today's economy warehouse operators can as easily apply both to their own operations.

Long gone are the days of 'stack em' high and they'll all go' warehousing. Today, a lot of intelligence has to be applied in the way the warehouse works in time with the whole cycle of the supply chain. Whether the warehouse is looking after built to stock items or marshalling together built to order goods ready for despatch, there is no room for excess inventory. Everything has to operate slickly and the warehouse has to perform a critical role in being a key node in the entire chain, communicating what it has received, what it has despatched and what is left on the racking. For this to happen, good IT is essential. Modern warehouse solutions provide the full range of features and functions that modern warehouse approaches need to attain their goals. Proteus has been in the field for over 20 years and has built up a thorough understanding of every likely scenario facing today's businesses. That's possibly why you chose them as your WMS supplier in the first place. So, help us to spread the word about great IT and contact our team about your warehouse story. For further information contact Mel Bill Publication Manager Logistics Business IT 01480 455 66

www.logisticsbusinessit.com

Odds stacked in favour of safety



CeMAT 2008 exhibition in Hanover.

The problem

In a normal pallet return system forming part of a dynamic storage solution for order picking, once a pallet is empty it is lifted from the lane by the picker and carried to an empty pallet station, often located every tenth lane within a dynamic order picking system, where it is stacked manually at the pedestrian picking face of the system. Given that empty pallets weigh between 15-20 kg and may have to be lifted over the head of the picker to reach the top of a six-foot high stack, this clearly presents a difficult manual handling scenario, particularly for the growing population of female order pickers.

The health and safety issues are compounded further as the stack of empty pallets then has to be carried back on a roller conveyor in the lane to the replenishment face allowing the forklift truck to remove it. This is due to the risk of a high, freestanding stack toppling into the forklift aisle when the stack comes to a stop, particularly if the pallets have been stacked haphazardly. There is also a risk of pallets falling in the lane of the dynamic storage system.

The response

With BITO's new Empty Pallet Return System, at no point in the process does the picker have to physically pick up the pallet. Once the pallet is empty, the picker uses a grab handle, to avoid bending over excessively, to grab the far end of the empty pallet at the front of the lane. With this he, or she, pulls the pallet so that it stands upright on a roller bed at the foot of the lane. The picker then simply slides the pallet along the roller bed to the Empty Pallet Return Stacking System where it docks into a bracket mechanism. This allows the picker to swing the pallet down gently, without any strain, so that the pallet sits back horizontally on the bed of rollers in the empty pallet return lane.

The system then takes over and automatically carries the pallet back towards the stack that is being created at the forklift (replenishment) face of the Dynamic order picking system. The whole stack of pallets is clamped in a bracket and raised sufficiently to allow the pallet to roll into position beneath it before the stack is gently brought back down on top of the pallet adding to the accurate stack.

The net effect

"From health and safety surveys it was found that pickers were taking time off work due to back injuries linked to such processes so BITO decided to set up a study group to develop a solution," says Ed Hutchison, MD at BITO Storage Systems.

"With this system the picker does not have to lift the pallet at all, they simply guide the pallet to the Empty Pallet Return lane, then the system does the rest," he comments. "The stack can be much higher because it has been stacked accurately and it does not depend upon the reach of the picker. Furthermore, because the stack is created at the forklift truck face, rather than the pedestrian face there is no movement of that stack along the conveyor reducing the risk of it toppling over."

www.bitoc.co.uk



BITO STORAGE SYSTEMS

BASDA launch Special Interest Group for Logistics & Supply Chain supported by the UKWA and CILT



Jairo Rojas, Director General of BASDA

The BASDA Logistics and Supply Chain Special Interest Group (SIG) has been launched by BASDA members in response to the need for more collaborative working practices and systems across the whole supply chain industry, particularly for the SME sector. The first meeting was hosted by Proteus Software and attended by organisations including the United Kingdom Warehousing Association (UKWA), the Chartered Institute of Logistics and Transport (CILT), Sage, Infor, Inovis and Dataflow.

iForce wins UKWA Award for second consecutive year

For the second consecutive year iForce has won a UKWA Award for Excellence. After winning the 2007 Team of the Year Award, this year the United Kingdom Warehousing Association (UKWA) named John Tombs of iForce Warehouse Person of the Year for his outstanding performance and commitment over the last 12 months.

John undertook the huge task of setting up the new John Lewis Direct fulfilment centre in Redditch, prior to the Christmas peak as a satellite site. This was at very short notice, as iForce had to react quickly to give John Lewis extra capacity due to a massive sales uplift, which was simply not possible on the existing site. John was instrumental in the 5 year business plan and forecasting for the new site and demonstrated considerable project management and planning skills, working with contractors and the client. He then adapted quickly back to an operations focused role as he staffed the new 232,000 sq ft operating centre to fulfil 300,000 customer orders from mid

Inevitably, one of the hot industry topics discussed was fuel cost reduction and how this could be achieved by companies sharing resources including shared loads and warehouse space. Whilst cost is usually the key driver for any change within the industry, this is an example of how new initiatives can also have a positive impact on a company's "green" credentials and reduction in carbon emissions. The implementation of such shared services would involve more collaborative systems to make the business process as efficient as possible and would therefore impact customers and suppliers, including BASDA members.

The UKWA represents nearly 700 member companies who, between them, operate around 100 million sq ft of warehouse and distribution centre space from some 2000 locations across the UK. Roger Williams, Chairman of UKWA, was a key presenter at the event, "It is important that affiliations like UKWA, CILT and BASDA pull together and look for synergies that make us more effective for the benefit of all our members."

Government legislation has a major impact on the industry, including Duties and Taxation. BASDA has a proven track record in working with government and standards bodies, including the HMRC, to ensure that any new regulations introduced are fit for purpose and can be incorporated into business systems. Jairo Rojas, Director General of BASDA, comments, "If our members feel strongly about an issue we will lobby the government on their behalf and get involved with relevant working parties. By BASDA working closely with other Warehousing & Logistics associations including the UKWA and the CILT, we can act more effectively on behalf of the Logistics industry with one, united voice."

The Logistics and Supply Chain SIG is recruiting representatives from manufacturers, retailers and suppliers to the industry. A key aim of the group is to provide guidance on best practice through developing common standards that are clear and relevant to customers, e.g. for tracking and traceability.

Howard Turvey, Proteus Software Managing Director, was elected as Chairman for the Logistics and Supply Chain SIG. "Proteus wants to be in at the start of the BASDA Logistics SIG to work together with other sector solution providers on the key issues affecting the warehousing and logistics industry, ultimately for the benefit of our customers."

Jairo Rojas concludes, "I would like to thank Proteus Software for taking up the mantle to drive this SIG. Feedback from the first meeting suggests that the group will become increasingly important in the future direction of the logistics and supply chain industry."

Anyone interested in joining the Special Interest Group or attending any of the events should contact Dee Cox, Membership Manager of BASDA, on 01494 868030, or email dee.cox@basda.org

www.basda.org



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