

IMPERIAL Retail Logistics and Goscor – The best of stable-mates

BOTH leaders in their fields, both part of the iconic IMPERIAL Group, both with a no-nonsense, efficient management style and both driven and professional, IMPERIAL Retail Logistics and Goscor Lift Truck Company (GLTC) have become the best of stable-mates.

IMPERIAL Retail Logistics is a leading South African Lead Logistics Provider (LLP) delivering solutions through partnerships that involve the management, optimisation and execution of inbound and outbound logistics, debtor's administration and pricing.

"Partnership is fundamental to our philosophy for both our customers and suppliers and Goscor has become an important partner for IMPERIAL Retail Logistics. They give us excellent service and their products are world class," says IMPERIAL Retail Logistics Operations Director, Albé van der Merwe. "If this were not the case we would be working with someone else, and outside the group, if necessary."

He adds that because warehouse materials handling equipment is so essential to the efficient running of IMPERIAL Retail Logistics, only the best service is acceptable. "The product and service we get from GLTC is not in any way peripheral to the core of our business, it is essential to the efficient operation of our business and only the most professional service from them, across the board, would suffice," van der Merwe says.

GLTC MD Darryl Shafto says that he is constantly aware of the importance of GLTC's service to IMPERIAL Retail Logistics and is pleased that his team has been able to give them a service that meets their exacting standards. "They are a thoroughly professional organisation and it's a feather in our cap to have built such a successful partnership with them," Shafto says.

The quantities certainly back up the words! GLTC has supplied IMPERIAL Retail Logistics just short of 100 units in the last financial year prompting GLTC sales and market-

ing director, Patrick Barber, to say that working with IMPERIAL Retail Logistics has been one of the highlights of his career. "Not only have they been a pleasure to work with but to have seen our team, from the administrators and salespeople to the service department, pull together to give IMPERIAL Retail Logistics the service they deserve – 100 trucks in a year is demanding to say the least – has been an unforgettable experience," Barber says.

About 40% of the units acquired in this period are Crown WT 3040 platform pallet trucks, which were recently awarded with the prestigious British Industrial Truck Association (BITA)-organised Design for Safety Award in the Industrial Vehicles category at the IMHX 2013 trade show.

Judged by an expert panel, the BITA Design for Safety Awards recognise companies or products who have made a measurable contribution to the level of safety awareness or injury reduction in materials

handling operations.

Another popular item at IMPERIAL Retail Logistics is the Crown ESR 5000 reach truck series, itself a winner of multiple international awards for design and performance. Its popularity both here and globally is due to a combination of first-class design with superior operator comfort and exceptionally practical features.

Barber explains that a successful design represents an elegant marriage of form and function. "The ESR 5000 reach truck is an excellent example of this

basic principle, which is key to Crown's philosophy. When designing a truck, Crown prioritises ergonomics, functionality and operator efficiency," he says.

With the ESR 5000 series, the ergonomic design in particular helps create an optimised working environment for the lift-truck operator. The laterally offset clear-view mast and patented overhead guard, for example, provide operators with an almost unobstructed field of vision. A low step keeps operators safe while they climb into and out of the

truck, while the infinitely adjustable steering column makes it easy for them to find a comfortable driving position. These features combat driver fatigue and improve productivity.

Barber explains that when developing a lift-truck, Crown's first priority is to ensure that every feature is tailored to the specific needs of operators and the logistical workflow. "It is a time-intensive approach – but it pays off handsomely for our customers," he says.

Van der Merwe says that both Crown and Doosan have performed

exceptionally well at IMPERIAL Retail Logistics and downtime has been reduced to an absolute minimum. "This is a critical factor in our business as the old adage of "time is money" is absolutely applicable in a logistics business like ours."

He adds that of course there are times when things go wrong and that that's when the service of one's supplier is tested to the maximum. "Goscor have excelled in this regard and go the extra mile to ensure the smooth running of our operation," he concludes.