

VELOCITY VIDEO CASE HISTORY

A DC VELOCITY SPEED CHALLENGE

Crunch time

A fleet of 33 Toyota forklifts keeps snacks and soft drinks on the move in Southern California.

YOU NEVER KNOW WHEN A SNACK ATTACK could occur. That is why States Logistics is ready at all times to distribute mass quantities of snack foods and soft drinks to hungry customers.

States Logistics is a third-party logistics service provider based in Buena Park, Calif. The company operates 11 buildings in Southern California and Arizona, all equipped with Toyota forklifts. The facility in San Bernardino, Calif., handles distribution for a leading soft drink and snack food company. It reaches the entire southern part of the Golden State as well as parts of Washington and Arizona.

States Logistics has worked with the soft drink company (which chose to remain anonymous for this article) for the past 15 years and has occupied the San Bernardino building since 2013. The company had previously used several other buildings throughout the region, but that year chose to consolidate distribution under one 480,000-square-foot roof.

Products consist of bottled and canned soft drinks, as well as beverage syrups for restaurant and commercial use. In addition, the facility distributes juices, athletic drinks, water, snack foods, breakfast bars, cereals, and other well-known snack and food products.

Such a varied product mix means there's a lot of variability in the density of the loads the Toyota forklifts handle – which range from cartons of relatively light potato chips and cereals to very heavy cases of bottled water and soft drinks. The 33 vehicles in the Toyota fleet are all 5,000-pound-capacity sit-down counterbalance trucks powered with propane. The operation employs 60 forklift operators to man the vehicles.

"Eventually, these trucks will be used 24 hours a day," says Ryan Donovan, vice president of operations and business development at States Logistics. "We put a lot of hours on our forklifts, and we don't

want them sitting around. We want them working."

FLOWING FREELY

Some 40 truckloads of products enter or leave the building daily, with nearly all of them loaded and unloaded with the Toyota forklifts. Many of these products arrive floor-loaded in the trucks. To handle them easily, many of the forklifts are equipped with Cascade Mark 55 slipsheet attachments. These allow the forklifts to easily pick up and move the products without a pallet, though some heavier products are handled using pallets.

The forklifts transport the loads to storage areas spread throughout the building. A monitored cool room houses temperature-sensitive products, such as juices and breakfast bars. Most of the soft drinks, cereals, and snack foods are floor-stacked four or five loads high, while many of the heavier items go into pallet racks. The three-stage masts of the Toyota forklifts enable them to easily reach the height needed for efficient and safe stacking and rack putaway.

The Toyota vehicles are also used to gather loads for orders. Full loads are transported to staging areas near the docks. About 75 percent of items needed for orders are full-pallet quantities, while the remaining 25 percent consist of mixed-SKU pallets selected as individual cases.

Throughout the years, States Logistics has learned to depend on Toyota for forklifts that are more than ready for the work at hand.

"We've worked with Toyota for 20 years. I think they build one of the best-quality lift trucks. They are not going to break down, and they require little maintenance," says Donovan. "And our dealer is great to work with, too. That is why we have worked with Toyota for 20 years."

For more information on Toyota's full-service product line of forklifts and warehouse equipment, visit www.ToyotaForklift.com/Forklifts.



To see a video of the States Logistics facility in San Bernardino, Calif., that distributes beverages and snack foods, go to dcvtv.com and click on the Velocity Video on Channel 2.