

VELOCITY VIDEO CASE HISTORY

A DC VELOCITY SPEED CHALLENGE

Wholly scrap

Cohen finds a forklift partner to assure materials are moved efficiently and cost-effectively throughout its massive recycling yards.

IT TAKES MORE THAN QUALITY EQUIPMENT to meet all of the expectations of today's material handling users. Cohen experiences this every day. This family-owned firm has been in the scrap metal business for 90 years. Cohen operates 18 locations in four states – Ohio, Kentucky, Indiana, and Tennessee. Its yards take in 1.25 million tons of scrap metal annually that it sorts and sells to recyclers.

Moving that much material around its yards requires tall magnetic cranes, skid steers, material handlers, and a fleet of 80 forklifts that range in capacity from 3,500 to 50,000 pounds. Most of those forklifts are 5,000- and 6,000-pound-capacity diesel-powered Core IC Pneumatic forklifts designed for rugged outdoor work.

Cohen had a lot of experience with different forklift brands, as a variety of trucks came along with the operations it acquired over the years. Also, a yard would occasionally get a scrap forklift. "We often would take that forklift, put a battery in it, and do some repairs, and then we would have a forklift we could use," recalls Geoff Rosenberg, vice president of outside operations.

Some of these "recycled" trucks were Toyota forklifts. Cohen saw that even with their age, they were strong, durable machines. But many of the other lift trucks in the company's fleet were not faring as well. "We kept them all running, but the question was, 'What was it costing us to keep them running?' We were spending in two or three years what it would cost to buy another forklift. We wanted a reliable fleet."

THE PATH TO PARTNERSHIP

Cohen felt that it took more than just buying a good truck to assure the reliability it was seeking. It wanted a partnership.

"At first, we did not care about the color of the truck, so we weren't necessarily looking for an orange forklift," says Rosenberg. "Instead, we wanted a partnership – a dealer and a company that was just as interested in what we were trying to accomplish as we were. And, we were looking for a company that didn't have the word 'can't' in their vocabulary."

Cohen found that partnership with the local Toyota dealer, ProLift

Industrial Equipment. ProLift has eight offices in Ohio, Kentucky, and Indiana, so its network aligns well with Cohen's locations.

"Our customers are committed to partnering with us to solve situations within their organizations to drive down their owning and operating cost," says Mike Pospischil, sales manager at ProLift.

Besides selling Cohen its forklifts, ProLift trains Cohen's forklift operators and in-house maintenance people to assure safe operation while minimizing damage in the yards' rough environment. Some vehicles, for instance, are outfitted with stronger bottom plates to assure that any debris the forklifts kick up while in the yards will do minimal, if any, damage.



FEEDBACK ON PERFORMANCE

ProLift also provides a dedicated technician to perform maintenance, particularly planned maintenance, on the forklifts in the Cohen fleet. The technician tracks the performance and repairs conducted on each vehicle to see if there is unusual damage or wear that could be attributed to how the

vehicle is operated. Each quarter, Cohen and ProLift meet to evaluate the performance of each truck, and whether it's being used properly for the intended tasks.

"We go by truck, by serial number, and show them what they spent in that quarter for planned maintenance, for abuse, for just normal repairs, and tires. Then we give them a cost per hour for the quarter and also life-to-date," explains Randy Berryman, equipment sales specialist for ProLift.

As a result, Cohen now understands the total investment in its forklifts and how a quality piece of equipment combined with superior service can result in a very favorable total cost of ownership.

"What we found over the course of the last four years, and why we have bought 52 Toyota forklifts in succession, is they're tough, durable machines that hold up under our environment," Rosenberg says. "And quite frankly, when you combine that with the service and our partnership expectations with ProLift, it's been a great marriage."

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 Toyota fleet in operation at Cohen, go to dcvtv.com and click on the Velocity Video on Channel 2.