

VELOCITY VIDEO CASE HISTORY

A DC VELOCITY SPEED CHALLENGE

The right gear for beer

Lifting two pallets of heavy beverage cases at a time is no easy feat.
That's why KEG1 O'Neal called on Toyota.

THE ADVANTAGE OF MOVING INTO A NEW FACILITY IS that you can start with a clean slate for designing operations inside. KEG1 O'Neal, a wholesale beer distributor reaching 31 counties in northern Texas, seized that opportunity when it constructed a new distribution facility in Weatherford, Texas. The company wanted to take advantage of as much storage height as it could in the new building.

"We actually designed and built our building and then reached out to Toyota to design and build the perfect forklift for our application here in the warehouse," recalls David Cockerham, general manager. He says he had confidence that Toyota and its local dealer, Shoppa's Material Handling, were up to the task of determining the right vehicles for KEG1 O'Neal's requirements.

While finding forklifts that can reach to high rack levels is nothing out of the ordinary, KEG1 O'Neal put a twist on its demands. It wanted a truck that could lift two pallets at the same time to high rack and floor stack positions. And we're not talking about light loads here. These are pallets of heavy liquid beer weighing upwards of two thousand pounds each.

LONG-TIME RELATIONSHIP

KEG1 O'Neal has been a client of Shoppa's for well over a decade. That relationship started after KEG1 O'Neal ran into reliability issues with several other brands of lift trucks before it began using Toyota forklifts.

"We wore the other stuff out and replaced it with Toyota," says David Porter, vice president of operations.

Cockerham adds that they have now used Toyota exclusively for over 10 years. "If you aren't always looking for a better product and a more economical product, then you are not doing your job," he says. "We started with one Toyota in 2006 and we now have 110."

That equipment includes counterbalance forklifts for loading and unloading, reach trucks for working in the rack areas, and walkie rider trucks used for picking. Electric pallet jacks also ride on company trucks to make deliveries.

The desire to move two pallets of beer simultaneously has an obvious benefit, as it greatly reduces the time needed for loading and unloading – virtually cutting work in half. KEG1 O'Neal selected Cascade Corp.'s Single-Double Pallet Handler attachment, which provides two sets of side-by-side forks for lifting two pallets together. It then worked with Shoppa's and Toyota to design a truck that could lift such a load several rack levels high.

"The biggest issue was capacity retention. At KEG1, we're dealing with lifting two pallets at a time with loads getting upwards of 3,000 to 4000 pounds," says Travis Moreland, territory manager at Shoppa's Material Handling. "By using Toyota's engineers and the Toyota Special Design process, we were able to develop a forklift that met all of their needs."

The resulting forklift design features a truck with a four-stage mast that can lift one pallet 276 inches from floor level and two pallets 156 inches high. Of course, the vehicle offers exceptional stability at such heights.

"We use Toyota [trucks] because of their dependability," says Cockerham. "We need our equipment running 24 hours a day to make money. So it's important that our equipment functions properly, and Toyota and Shoppa's have been great partners in helping us achieve that."

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 double-handling Toyota forklifts in operation at KEG1 O'Neal, go to dcvtv.com and click on the Velocity Video on Channel 2.