



CASE STUDY

Ref: PR102

PRODUCTIVE TIMES CALL FOR INNOVATIVE MEASURES

Working a demanding haulage operation, transporting a variety of goods throughout the UK and Europe, Northamptonshire-based Knights of Old has seen its turnover triple in the past seven years. In 2009, facing 16 per cent year on year growth, it needed a materials handling partner that could offer an innovative solution to meet the demands of such growth challenges.

As one of the UK's leading haulage companies, Knights of Old integrates storage and transport solutions, which has developed into a pick/pack and cross docking operation serving all major cities in the UK and Ireland. Working a next-day delivery service to tight deadlines, it needed a provider to maximise productivity, increase fleet utilisation and reduce costs whilst maintaining high-end levels of safety and ergonomics. Knights of Old looked to its existing materials handling supplier, Briggs Equipment, for a solution.

"It is crucial that our trucks run efficiently and they perform only to high safety standards," says Ian Beattie, managing director at Knights of Old. "Our trucks are running 24 hours a day across three shifts, seven days a week, and handling up to 3,000 pallets per day. Whenever we endure a breakdown, productivity could be reduced to as much as 20 to 30 per cent," continues Ian.

Briggs supplied Knights of Old's Kettering depot with 14 Cat® Lift Trucks including 2.5 and 4 tonne LPG trucks specifically tailored to assist with the loading of approximately 450 dispatch lorries that come into the site daily. For productivity optimisation, each machine is fitted with a windscreen, wipers, roof and LED lights enabling them to work at full efficiency in all weather conditions.

LED lights have been fitted on both the trucks and forks to enhance the visibility of the masts when fully laden. "Night time operations are our most busiest and the trucks are needing to load

approximately 50 double deck lorries throughout the night. The LED lights have made operations a lot safer for our drivers and have helped to reduce damage costs.

“Safety is number one and as well as giving all of our operators a thorough health and safety induction, we also have our own full-time quality and health and safety officer’s on-site. We needed a supplier who understands the importance of our safety needs and Briggs exceeded all our expectations,” comments Ian Beattie.

When Briggs looked at improving the safety of the operators, speed controllers we put into place. Each machine is set to exceed no more than five miles per hour and can only be changed by a Briggs engineer. The forklifts also adopt an auto shut down facility, which powers a machine down after 30 seconds of idle time. This has reduced Knights of Old’s gas bill by 40 per cent and limits the amount of unaccountable hours tracked by a data logging system.

Jason Rudkin, Briggs’ national account manager explains: “A data logging system has been installed on each forklift that records the performance of each truck. Knights of Old has approximately 20 operators driving Briggs’ machines and each person has their own key that tracks and monitors their own individual performance. The system measures productivity rates and records any damage as well as breakdowns.”

“The data logging system is an essential asset to our business. The data is downloaded onto a key fob and reviewed once a week. We have noticed a significant difference in the accuracy of our KPI’s and it has enabled us to manage costs more effectively,” says Ian Beattie.

As part of the contract, Briggs’ engineers are on call 24 hours a day and provide full service and preventative maintenance that includes tyre changes, blades and engine repairs. An engineer also performs standard checks of each machine every week.

Over the past five years, Briggs and Knights of Old have developed an excellent working relationship. “Briggs’ reliability and responsiveness is first-rate and its people offer an efficient service. They are a provider who we can trust,” concludes Ian Beattie.

Knights of Old has offices based in Belfast and Dublin and employs over 270 people. The 11 acre Kettering site is currently going through a process of rebranding and expanding its site and people. With a total fleet consisting of seven 2.5 tonne gas trucks, one 4 tonne gas truck, two 1.6 3wheel

electric machines and four short-term hire forklifts, Briggs will be working closely alongside Knights of Old to assist in the company's growth and development.

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Editor's Notes

Briggs Equipment UK

Briggs Equipment UK Ltd is a leading materials handling service provider and sole UK distributor of Cat Lift Trucks®. Providing a wide range of equipment for a broad customer base, Briggs provides innovative, tailored and cost effective solutions on a nationwide basis. With its headquarters and national support centre in Cannock, Briggs people assist and advise in the delivery of long term solutions that enable customers to develop more efficient and results driven businesses.

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