

VELOCITY VIDEO CASE HISTORY

A DC VELOCITY SPEED CHALLENGE

From potato chips to electric generators

Being a 3PL requires Pacific Mountain Logistics to adapt to any product mix required for clients. Its Toyota forklifts have the versatility to lighten the load.

THE DIFFICULT THING ABOUT BEING A THIRD-party logistics distribution company is that you never really know what kind of products you are handling until they show up at your door. Such is the case with California-based Pacific Mountain Logistics, a company that specializes in grocery and retail compliance fulfillment. Pacific Mountain operates two contract warehouses in Ontario, Calif.,

for a variety of clients, including Kroger, Nature's Best, and Ziggy Shoes.

As is typical with a 3PL, the company is experienced in handling a very wide product mix. In one building, for example, bicycles, snack chips, garments, shoes, cans of beverages, and patio chairs can be found. In addition, parked along one of the building's side walls are large electrical lighting systems and generators – the kind used to illuminate nighttime highway construction projects.

Handling that kind of variety of goods requires forklifts that are versatile and maneuverable in moving these products throughout its buildings. And that is just what Pacific Mountain found when it moved to Toyota forklifts to do the handling inside its facilities.

"We like the Toyota service, and our guys like the lifts, so it was a natural fit," explains B.J. Patterson, CEO and president. "We really like the drive-ability. They are bullet proof – we have had no issues with them."

Patterson also likes the uptime he gets with Toyota forklifts. "In my career I have run just about every brand. Nothing has ever compared with Toyota. I just look at the total cost of ownership. With Toyotas, if you change the oil and do the preventative maintenance, they just keep running."

THE PACIFIC MOUNTAIN FLEET

Pacific Mountain has 26 Toyota forklifts in its warehousing fleet. Twenty-four of them are counterbalance Toyota forklifts that do most of the heavy lifting. These are propane-powered, with 5,000-pound

capacities. The sit-down trucks can easily move in and out of trailers and containers as well as perform putaway and retrieval duties into and out of racks and floor storage areas.

Additionally, two electric trucks are used in the facility. A reach truck works in the rack areas, placing loads high into the multiple levels of pallet racking. An order picker truck also works in the racks, allowing workers to pick from any rack position with ease. The order picker platform raises the worker to the proper rack level to safely select needed cases onto the order pallet that rides up and down with him.



CLAMP IT

More than half of the counterbalance forklifts are equipped with clamp attachments. This allows for quick unloading and stacking of floor-loaded products, which make up a sizable portion of the 3PL's freight. The clamps eliminate the need to palletize

certain goods. Forklift operators use the clamps to gently squeeze and pick up cartons for movement from the trailers to floor storage areas located throughout the building. When needed, loads are retrieved using the clamps and brought to outbound dock areas, where they can again be floor-loaded into trailers or placed onto pallets, depending on the customers' requirements.

Pacific Mountain Logistics leases its fleet from Southwest Material Handling, a Toyota forklift dealer servicing parts of Southern California and Nevada. The dealer also provides maintenance services to assure that the trucks continue operating well. "The chief thing for us in selecting Toyota is the reliability," says Patterson. "When you are a small company like us, you can't afford downtime or to carry extra equipment."

He adds that working with Southwest Material Handling has been key to that reliability. "They are top-notch and always step up to the plate. If we have an issue, they take care of it first, then resolve what caused the issue. They do the right thing."

To see a video of the Toyota forklifts in action at Pacific Mountain Logistics, go to dctv.com and look for the Velocity Video on Channel 2.