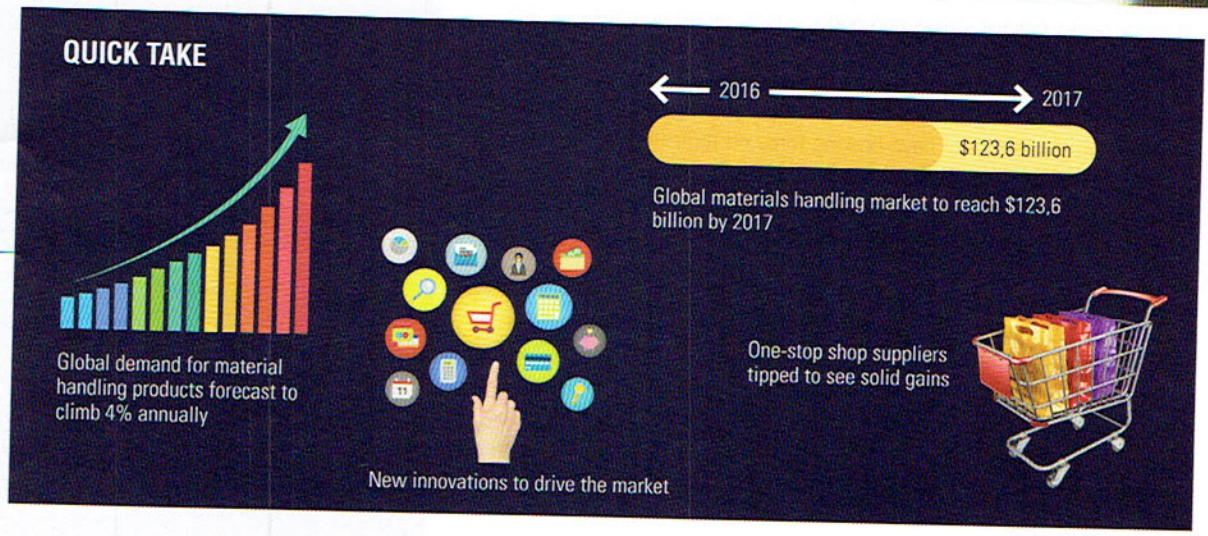
MORE THAN JUST EQUIPMENT



In today's materials handling market, innovation and being a supplier that can address any problem statement optimally and service end users' needs across board from product, financing options, through to aftermarket support, are more critical than ever. With their lines of materials handling gear and a range of in-house processes, local suppliers are ticking these boxes, writes *Munesu Shoko*.



Global demand for material handling products is forecast to climb 4% annually through 2017 to $123,6 billion, according to a recent report. Provision of innovative products is one thing, but the ability to provide a one-stop shop solution to include financing options, unparalleled aftermarket support and flexible buying options, is quite another, and will set companies with such aptitude on a sustainable success curve. One-stop shop suppliers are tipped to see solid gains as end users seek for solutions to their business headaches rather than just equipment.

According to Desmond van Heerden of ELB Equipment, a number of key criteria should form the basis of establishing or replenishing capital equipment fleets based on performance and reliability rather than simply making decisions based on a single-brand mentality, or purely a price consideration.

"Rather than putting all eggs in one basket, fleet owners should practice best-of-breed procurement where the offerings of specialist manufacturers are purposefully weighed into the option," says Van Heerden, adding that fleet owners who want to simplify their purchasing through a single supplier can do so by procuring from an established best-of-breed distributor.

Responding to the call

Several local materials handling equipment suppliers are responding to this call through their one-stop shop approach. For example, Goscor Lift Truck, part of the Goscor Group, is the sole distributor for several forklift brands including Crown, Doosan, Bendi, Hubtex and BHS Battery Handling Solutions, allowing the company to offer diverse forklift and warehousing product ranges to its customers. This is complemented by its nationwide forklift sales, service, rentals and equipment spares through a comprehensive dealer network.

Werner Stegmann, regional sales manager at Goscor Lift Truck, agrees that in a tough economy customers tend to look for more than just equipment suppliers, but rather solutions providers. "Goscor Lift Truck is part of the larger Goscor Group of Companies, which comprises a variety of other solutions for the end user, ranging from forklifts, cleaning equipment



Shamrock Handling Concepts is another local materials handling equipment supplier that has a one-stop shop approach through the supply of its several forklift brands.



Goscor Lift Truck, part of the Goscor Group, is the sole distributor for several forklift brands including Doosan.

to earthmoving equipment and power products, to name a few," he says. "This makes it easier for a large part of the business sector to use Goscor as a one-stop solution. Within this business, we also have our own finance division in place to offer tailor-made financial solutions to our end users," adds Stegmann.

The one-stop shop solution recently won the company a big order to supply 38 machines to Weir Minerals in South Africa. The machines included 4 x Crown turret trucks; 3 x Bendi forklifts and 31 Doosan forklifts, ranging in capacity from 2,5 to 9 t.

Billy Dooling, warehouse and logistics manager, explains the reasons behind the big forklift orders. "We receive more than 8 000 parts per day and ship out more than 10 000. We also handle very heavy plant and machinery and safety is a major priority. The bottom line is that absolute professionalism and attention to detail are a prerequisite," he says.

Given this business ethic, the company opted for Goscor Lift Truck as its preferred supplier. "We decided to do things a little differently about a year ago, and put the materials handling contract out to tender. Goscor won this on the basis of its outstanding product, a competitive pricing structure, superior service and support ability and, very importantly, because of its ability to supply a range of machines for various applications. In this sense, Goscor is a one-stop shop for us, enabling us to increase efficiencies by dealing with one supplier across a range of machines," says Dooling.

He adds that part of the deal is that Goscor supplies a permanent on-site technician, which is a major advantage as downtime is kept to a minimum. "We had high expectations of Goscor and we have not been disappointed. Everyone in the Goscor team goes the extra mile – they even organised a golf cart for us so we can easily get around our very large site," says Dooling.

In addition, Goscor has provided a fully equipped battery bay with a spare battery for every machine. "This facility is a significant boost to our efficiency as it, in conjunction with the system we follow, also helps to minimise downtime," says Dooling.

Dooling also explains the advantages of having a single supplier covering all the company's forklift needs. "At a glance the range of applications that the Goscor fleet can handle is clear," says Dooling. "With the turret trucks we can work at heights of up to 12 m in narrow aisles, with the Bendis we can operate in extremely narrow aisles both inside and outside with the same machine and, with the Doosans, we can lift a wide range of items from the smallest pallet of stationery for our stores to the heaviest crusher or pump," he says.

Value adding services

Shamrock Handling Concepts is another local materials handling equipment supplier that has a one-stop shop approach to its business through the supply of its several equipment brands that meet the demands for different materials handling applications.

Its Combilift C-Series is a three-in-one multidirectional and multipurpose machine range that can be used as a side-loader, aisle truck and counterbalance forklift. The CB-Series is a compact multidirectional machine ideal for hardware shops and tile houses, while the Aisle Mater is an articulated forklift range ideal for warehouses with palletised products. The Straddle Carrier is an ideal solution for container and long load handling.

Marius Schutte, MD of Shamrock Handling Concepts, agrees that in today's materials handling market, end users are looking for value-adding services such as financing and flexible buying options. "We work alongside the financial institutions to provide attractive rent-to-own options on our products. We consult with the customer to determine the best course of action to keep their machine in the best possible condition and ensuring longevity of their investment," says Schutte.

Schutte also understands that a product is one thing, and being able to support it once it is operational in the field, is quite another. In this regard, he reiterates the importance of a strong aftermarket support structure, especially considering that in some critical materials handling applications, downtime is out of question. "Shamrock Handling Concepts offers a nationwide footprint with support workshops throughout South Africa and neighbouring countries. We also have a



Bobcat has launched a new range of rigid frame telehandlers for the construction and rental industries.

dedicated Customer Services Manager to assist with all technical queries. He has access to our national support network and is able to dispatch a technician whenever required," says Schutte.

Productivity matters

As end users seek to reduce costs in their materials handling applications, there is greater focus on innovative products that are aimed at reducing operating costs, while improving productivity.

"Our Combilift range of multidirectional forklifts reduces operating costs and increases productivity, as it allows increased storage in the customer's existing warehouse, almost doubling the capacity," says Schutte. "We offer a free warehouse layout, specifically designed around the customer's materials handling requirements and warehouse specifications."

Shamrock's Combilift range is also engineered to reduce product damage, as the product travels closer to the ground. The Combi-SC Straddle Carrier is said to be a more economical option compared with heavy handling forklifts, reach stackers or mobile cranes and offers complete independence when moving very large fully-laden containers and other oversized loads around sites. "The Combilift Straddle Carrier range was developed as a cost effective and flexible solution for distribution, shipping and haulage companies even with relatively low throughput levels," adds Schutte.

Stegmann says Goscor Lift Truck is always looking for innovative ways to reduce costs for customers

Shamrock
www.shamrock.co.za

The Combilift is the world's most versatile forklift and it is multidirectional and operates as 3 machines in one

a Counter balance forklift, Narrow aisle truck and Side loader, making it highly manoeuvrable, very safe, very cost effective and supremely efficient Also available in diesel, LPG and electrical options

COMBiLIFT

The Combilift Advantages:

- Safer Product handling
- Long Load Handling
- Indoor & Outdoor Use
- Less Product Damage
- Space Savings
- Reliable Robust Simple Design
- Increased Productivity
- Operator and Maintenance Friendly

FREE warehouse layout service



Combilift Straddler Carrier
Customisation options available



Our commitment to customer service is important and therefore we have a dedicated support network.



Goscor Lift Truck supplies the Crown range of forklifts to the southern African market.

by exploring different avenues. "This is done through a number of initiatives such as using fleet management systems, by changing from gas-operated forklifts to electric-powered units (where possible) and by averaging out the hours to avoid higher excess hour bills, to name a few," says Stegmann, adding that through these initiatives, the end user can really see the difference.

"Doosan, our principal supplier of forklifts, has oil-cooled disc-brakes, which sets us apart from the opposition. This is virtually maintenance-free, unlike conventional shoe brakes on all other leading forklift brands," says Stegmann.

Elsewhere, the Meclift range of heavy lifting equipment, available exclusively in South Africa from materials handling specialist, BLT SA, encompasses variable reach trucks, side reach stackers and various attachments. These machines are designed for swift, efficient and safe handling of heavy loads in diverse industries.

New to the range is the upgrade of ML1612R machines to the ML1812R series, which has a lifting capacity of 18 t and operates swiftly in confined spaces, including warehouses and cargo vessels.

"Unlike conventional forklift trucks, the Meclift ML1812R, with a lift height of 6 m, is able to drive into containers or reach inside a container for easy loading and unloading of goods and equipment," says Charity Gumede, marketing director at BLT SA. "The compact reach trucks offer cost effective solutions for heavy lifting. They increase efficiency and safety during materials handling procedures and also reduce operating times."

Meanwhile, backed by a three-year warranty as standard, a new range of rigid frame telehandlers has been launched by Bobcat for the construction and rental industries. Bobcat now offers a choice of 11 new telehandler models for the construction/rental markets covering maximum lifting capacities between 2,6 and 4,1 t with lifting heights from 6 to 18 m.

The new generation telehandlers are available in versions for markets with non-regulated emissions such as the Middle East and Africa. The new generation telehandlers also incorporate several new features such as an automatic parking brake with an intuitive operation similar to those used in the automotive industry, providing greater safety and control.

As well as the automatic parking brake, the advanced features include an optional air dual suspension seat, an optional auto fan inversion, a rotating beacon/back-up alarm as standard and cushion retract on the three TL models.

The new optional fan system with automatic inversion is electronically controlled to adjust rotation speed depending on the temperature, which results in energy savings.

