



“ANIMAL GAINS 33% MORE PALLET POSITIONS WITH BENDI”

“We are now more efficient and picking an average of 249 pieces per person per hour”

Action sports brand Animal® has gained up to 1,500 pallet positions in its global distribution warehouse by using revolutionary three-wheel articulated forklifts from Translift Bendi™ in racking no wider than 1.8m. Productivity has also trebled.



Conceived by two surfers making watch straps in a bedroom in 1987, Animal is now a global sports brand, with a turnover of more than £50m.

“Animal’s growth has been tremendous, creating interesting challenges for the efficient storage and distribution of goods.” explains James Runciman, Operations Manager at Animal’s global distribution centre in Poole. “Today, we are handling more products than ever, but it is by far the easiest and most efficient it has ever been, thanks to our warehouse management systems and the capabilities offered by Bendi articulated forklifts.”

Animal made steps to significantly expand its operation three years ago, consolidating all stock from six locations into a 100,000sqft building. However, the roof supports meant that the racking aisle widths had to be approximately 1.8m wide, otherwise Animal would immediately lose up to 1,500 pallet positions, 33% of the capacity.

“1.8m is a problem for conventional forklifts and VNA doesn’t offer the flexibility we needed. However, with Translift Bendi’s three-wheel articulated trucks able to operate in aisles of 1.6m, we knew that it was possible.” James explains.

Animal now operates with 4,636 total bulk pallet positions up to 7m high, with 12,755 pick faces and 1,203 full pallet pick faces. The operation typically runs in two shifts from 7.30am till midnight, with most stock arriving every morning in containers from all over the world.

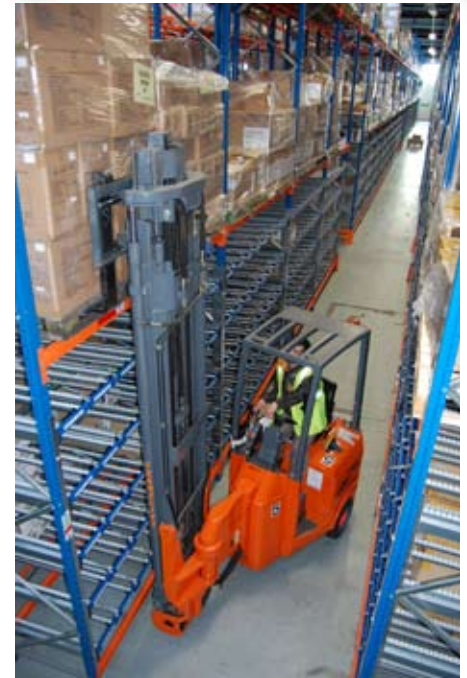
A fleet of Bendi B313 articulated trucks are used to remove pallets from the goods-in marshalling areas and place stock in pre-determined pallet positions. The three wheel trucks maintain excellent stability in the narrow aisles with up to 1.35tonne lift capacity at heights of 7.2m with no special floor requirements. The trucks, supplied by AFL Trucks in Poole, are also used for bulk and sequential picking, and for transport of pallets to the despatch marshalling area.

The powerful Bendis provide excellent visibility of the fork tips when the mast articulates, with 110° over-rotating power steering and side shift, to make it easy to position pallets accurately at height. According to the drivers, the Bendis are easy to manoeuvre and they now prefer them to standard trucks.

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"Even in widths of just 1.8m, the Bendi trucks help the drivers work faster, safer and more accurately. We have seen racking damage fall to a minimum compared to our old warehouses where the aisles were much wider, with regular damage caused by reach trucks".

"We are now more efficient and picking an average of 249 pieces per person per hour. Five years ago we were lucky to achieve 69. This has had an impressive impact on cost reduction and overall company productivity." states James, also explaining that he gets 10-11 hours operating time before battery charging, which means they never see any downtime between shifts.

Almost all products are boxed and palletised and picked for despatch to their own Animal stores, export partners or wholesalers. The company designs and markets action sports products ranging from clothing and footwear to sunglasses, watches and luggage, and is strongly associated with windsurfing, kitesurfing, snowboarding and mountain biking.

AFL Trucks, whose head office is in Poole, supplied all the Bendi trucks at the site and provides service support ensuring that the equipment is maintained correctly, with full back-up in the event of a breakdown. The company carries all spares and works with Bendi to ensure that the site receives maximum uptime and productivity.

"Translift Bendi products have helped us maximise the use of warehouse space including reduced lighting, heating and building maintenance"

AFL has also helped to optimise the usage of trucks throughout the year by supplementing the core fleet with Bendi equipment on short term rental. February and March sees an increase in activity for Spring/Summer goods where one or two extra trucks are delivered to help increase capacity, followed in August and September for autumn and winter peak.

"Translift Bendi products have helped us maximise the use of warehouse space including reduced lighting, heating and building maintenance and have helped overcome a difficult building structure to achieve maximum storage and distribution efficiency." James adds.

To learn more about how Translift Bendi can help improve warehouse operations contact 01527 527411 or visit www.bendi.co.uk.