



Driving Productivity & Safety

An Essential Guide for Warehouse Management



Introduction

Good warehouse operations are essential in all warehouses and large DIY stores to ensure tasks are carried out in a safe manner. The fast and efficient movement of warehouse contents is vital in order to keep productivity high and business thriving.

Basic warehouse processes, which have an important influence on productivity, have become indispensable to warehouse management; such as the use of machinery like forklifts, electric order pickers and work assistant devices. Although these machines are indispensable, they

still create challenges relating to safety, productivity and efficiency.

On the opposite end of the scale, a lot of warehouses and DIY stores are still using old models of work, like the use of ladders or manual lifting, to carry-out daily tasks. Companies that adopt new models of work, such as the latest technologies or strategies, will likely see an increase in safety, productivity and efficiency.



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Workplace Accidents

Work-related injury and illness were estimated to cost \$60.6 billion in the 2008-09 financial year [1] and, although these injuries and illness are sometimes unavoidable, a lot can be done in the way of prevention. One way to prevent workplace accidents is to move away from old models of work processes and adopt a new and improved system. For example, many warehouses and large stores still use ladders to work at a height. Falls from ladders caused 3,486 incidents which resulted in admission to hospital, in the year to June 2005 [2].

Another task, which is the frequent cause of workplace injuries, is manual lifting. The European Agency for Safety and Health at Work considers a weight of 20-25kg too heavy for most people to lift [3], yet many workers still insist on carrying loads that are too heavy for them.

Manual lifting of loads can cause musculoskeletal disorders due to gradual and cumulative deterioration of the system through continuous lifting; it can also cause acute trauma such as cuts or fractures due to accidents. 9,016 manual lifting injuries occurred in 2006-07, with 11% of these being back injuries which resulted in a permanent disability [4].

The introduction of machinery into the workplace has significantly increased productivity but, in turn, can pose severe risks when not managed responsibly; these risks result in serious accidents and, in some cases, fatalities. In 1999, a mother was killed in front of her daughter, while shopping at a Home Depot, when an employee operating a forklift knocked a heavy box from an upper shelf [5].

Workplace Problems

Accidents in the workplace seriously disrupt the smooth running of a business; as well as the loss of staff due to injury, companies can also face workers' compensation claims, resulting in hefty payouts.

In 2008-09, there were 133,485 workers' compensation claims for serious work-related injuries. This equates to an incidence rate of 13.5

serious claims per 1000 employees [6]. A recent example of a significant claim occurred in May 2013, when a worker received a compensation payout of approximately \$1.5 million for injuries suffered when the bulldozer he was driving hit an obscured metal post [7].

Companies also have to contend with extended periods of sick leave when workers have been involved in serious

accidents; a typical serious workers' compensation claim involves four weeks absence from work [8]. Losing a member of staff for such a long period of time can significantly reduce productivity and put strain on other members of the team. Between 2011-2012, South Australian businesses lost \$208 million in productivity, as a result of 560,000 lost days due to lost-time injury [9].



“Lencrow’s new work assist device can withstand 500kg, allowing workers to maximise the possible load of a single use.”



Solution

Lencrow’s work assist device is a safe and easy-to-use solution which aids productivity in warehouses. Work assist devices eliminate the use of a ladder, by allowing workers to reach much higher levels; they also allow one person to do the job of two - effectively doubling productivity. Unlike previous models that can only withstand a maximum weight of 130kg (including worker), Lencrow’s work assist device can withstand 500kg, allowing workers to maximise the possible load of a single use.

Lencrow’s uniquely designed model is a lot more user-friendly than previous work assist devices; with wheel steering, instead of lever steering, it drives like a car, which makes for a safer and more comfortable drive. Featuring a larger working platform and a weighted centre, Lencrow’s

work assist device instils user confidence, providing greater manoeuvrability and eliminating any risk of swaying at a high levels. A confident user will work more efficiently and will get more use out of the device - which makes the extra-long battery life extremely useful. While older models required recharging throughout the day, Lencrow’s new model will last a full shift.

This work assist device is an essential asset to any warehouse; not only will it significantly increase productivity, it will enable employees to complete tasks in a more safe and efficient manner.



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