

IKEA United Kingdom Pallet Handling System (Modular Belt)

PROBLEM

When furniture retailer IKEA decided to expand its distribution in the UK, it looked to Ashton in the North West to alleviate some pressure off its Warrington and Leeds stores. This site, although perfect in location, presented the retailer with some very different logistics challenges in comparison to other IKEA sites across Europe. In terms of size, square footage and number of floors, the Ashton warehouse was unique and required the assistance of a logistics partner to meet the challenges head on.

SOLUTIONS

With every operation under increasing pressure to achieve maximum efficiency. Diamond Phoenix, a market leader in materials handling success, were brought on board to deliver a custom built pallet handling system that would work within the construction of the Ashton building and help achieve maximum productivity for the new IKEA store.

BENEFITS

From the successful installation, the benefits and efficiencies in operation have been realised immediately upon rollout. With faster turnaround times and increased productivity, the Ashton store can deliver up to 100-250 pallets in a six hour shift rather than the normal nine hours, which has resulted in good labour saving benefits for the Ashton store.



The IKEA Group, one of the largest IKEA franchises, has grown into a major retail experience. With over 118,000 co-workers in 40 countries, the IKEA Group has annual sales worth more than 19 billion Euro.

There are 231 IKEA stores in 24 countries stocking everything for home furnishing under one roof. In 2007, 522 million customers visited an IKEA store...

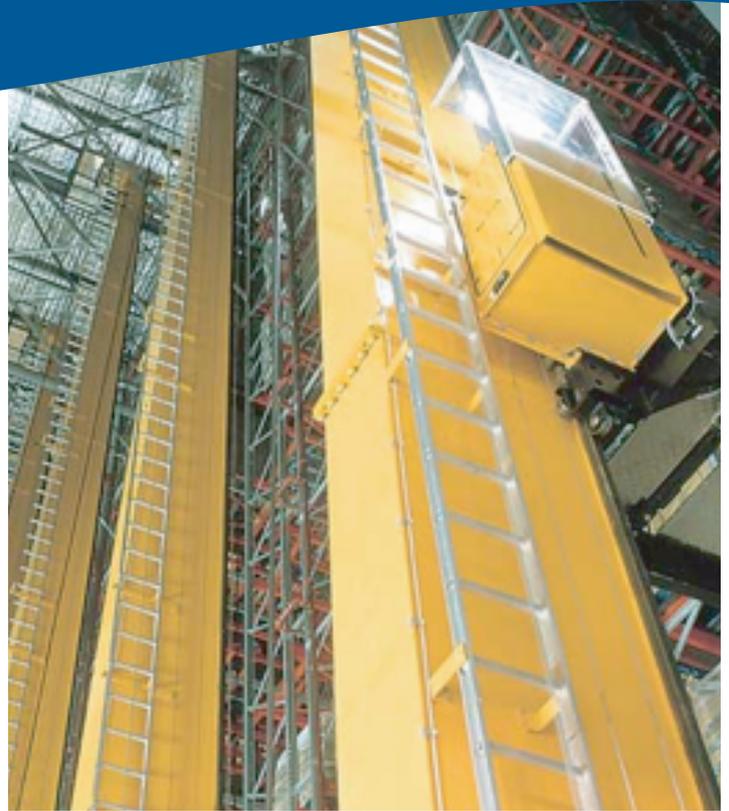
Diamond Phoenix, a market leader in materials handling success, were brought on board to deliver a custom built pallet handling system that would work within the constrictions of the Ashton building and help achieve maximum productivity for the new IKEA store.

Diamond Phoenix commented "The key challenge was to develop a pallet handling system that could work effectively across 3 floors, rather than just one or two. With Ashton's three storey warehouse facility, a continuous flow of product was required from the ground floor loading area, transporting product up to and across 2 different store levels, returning empty pallets to the ground level." The system was required to handle a wide range of product sizes which were either pallet or load ledge mounted, the latter of which meant a traditional pallet roller conveyor was not suitable.

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With this in mind, Diamond Phoenix developed a custom built pallet handling system that fitted around the constraints of the Ashton building. This included two vertical lifts and a conveyor system based on a robust modular belt design, software and controls to help secure the benefits of economy and simplicity of installation.

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The Ashton store has now reopened and IKEA continue to enjoy the flexibility of the modular system that allows different sizes and pallet types in the same run. The system is also completely flexible, allowing reconfiguration of the modular belt for future applications.

Ian Foss, UK Logistics Expansion Coordinator at IKEA comments, "From design to installation the process took less than a year, with 32 weeks build time, which was a first for any IKEA store. The quickest build time ever achieved for IKEA, around the world."

"Diamond Phoenix were proactive and extremely helpful with their suggestions. The initial training and continued support has exceeded our expectations and we continue to enjoy a good working relationship."

Diamond Phoenix Automation is a leader in the design, manufacture, integration and installation of material handling solutions.

For more information on our complete range of solutions, please visit our website www.diamondphoenix.co.uk or contact us directly on 01908 255 930