

Stellenbosch-based British American Tobacco is the leading tobacco manufacturer in South Africa with a market share of more than 85% of the legal cigarette industry. Employing more than 2,500 people throughout South Africa, BATSA markets more than 20 brands, including Dunhill, Kent, Peter Stuyvesant and Rothmans, each one fulfilling a particular need for its consumers.

the various companies in the Imperial group are strong. In the final analysis we work as a team which enables us to give a better service to our customers. And, of course, if one is giving the best possible service to the customer, using other group companies is obviously of benefit to the group."

He adds that the forklift replacement plan has already resulted in operating cost savings for BATSA and expects even more savings in the medium to long term

Core strength

GLTC MD, Darryl Shafto, says that he is pleased that ICS and BATSA are satisfied with both his company's product and service. "This is not the first time that we have been called on by a company to replace fleets of very well-known brands. I think this highlights the core strength of GLTC, which is the understanding that what we sell is a total package. Not just good machines or good parts service or good maintenance service but an overall excellence that makes dealing with us not only a pleasant experience, but also an efficient one – one that ultimately improves our customers' productivity and their bottom line," says Darryl.

Some of the machines that have been delivered include Doosan 1.8 ton gas forklifts with tobacco clamps and 2.5 ton gas forklifts with container entry masts. One of the unique advantages of the Doosan trucks is their 'brakes for life' promise. The 'brakes for life' system which made world headlines when it was introduced some years ago, is an oil-cooled disc brake system which, being totally enclosed, eliminates all outside

contamination of any humid, abrasive or corrosive dust particles. The system significantly reduces operating costs and GLTC offers on it a 60-month, unlimited hours guarantee.

Significant contributor

"It's all about managing the life-time costs of operation," says Frans, "and the 'Brakes for Life' system is a significant contributor to managing costs over time."

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He adds that another feature which contributes to managing life-time costs is Goscor's FMX fleet management system, which is fitted to BATSA's fleet. "This is a complete forklift fleet management product. Operating via the GPRS network, data is sent via a corporate APN (Access Point Name), the place where a mobile device can enter an IP network."

Typically the capital cost of installing the FMX equipment onto a single machine is between 2 to 3 percent of the value of the machine and Frans says that while many customers are initially reluctant because the cost seems high across the fleet, experience has shown that the investment is insignificant compared with the savings the system helps make.

Stress-free

"There are three fundamental goals of the FMX system: optimisation of fleet productivity, creating professional driver behaviour and monitoring equipment performance. The cost savings from even tiny improvements in efficiency rapidly pay for the equipment. And since the advent of GPRS, the running costs of the system are negligible," Frans comments.

"Our promise to ICS is to ensure a safe, cost-effective and stress free forklift operation at BATSA with a guaranteed 95% operational uptime. With our 'total service' philosophy we have no doubt we will fulfil this commitment," he concludes.

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