



FORKLIFT ATTACHMENTS

How Lift Truck Attachments Can Save Time & Money

By Scott McLeod



If you're in the building supply business, it's highly likely that your forklift fleet isn't realizing its' full potential.

For example, if your business operates eight hours each day, you might be surprised to find out that each forklift is averaging less than four hours of use, or 50% utilization.

Is that acceptable? *The answer is maybe.*

Depending on the nature of your business, and the routine workflow patterns that exist, along with other possible constraints, it's possible that there is nothing you can do to improve these numbers. It may be that your business

model thrives on having too many forklifts that are used only 50% of the time, because at peak times during the day, your sales and related profit are so great that it more than makes up for an under-utilized fleet. Another possible scenario is that you just don't know how many lift trucks you have, how well utilized they are and so on to be able to make an assessment at all.

Regardless of which scenario properly describes your business, it would be worth taking a little time to evaluate the usefulness of your forklift fleet to see if you can "squeeze a little more juice out of that lemon".

Let's assume for a moment that you need four forklifts to properly satisfy the needs of your business and that their utilization statistics are less than ideal.

Can anything be done to improve the picture so you can achieve a better return on these assets? *The answer is yes.*

There are many ways to improve the utilization of any forklift fleet but one area to investigate should be the use of forklift attachments. The selection of forklift attachments is endless. If you can dream it, there is a very good chance it already exists. From the common and typical to the uncommon and unconventional, the sky's the limit in the forklift attachment world.

The purpose of any forklift attachment is to increase the effectiveness of the lift truck by increasing its' usefulness and by also increasing its' productivity output. In addition, the forklift attachment will usually reduce manual labour costs and sometimes it will improve safety. Reducing labour costs can apply to both the forklift operator and / or floor staff that might have previously needed to man handle your

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The Five Most Common Forklift Attachments Used In The Building Supply Industry

- 1 Side shift
- 2 Fork positioner
- 3 Side shifting fork positioner
- 4 Single double pallet handler (handle one pallet or two pallets at a time)
- 5 Clamp

The Five Most Common Benefits Associated With Using Forklift Attachments

- 1 Increased equipment utility
- 2 Increased productivity
- 3 Reduced employee labour costs
- 4 Less product damage
- 5 Increased employee safety

The Five Most Common Considerations Associated With Using Forklift Attachments

- 1 Payload lifting capacity is usually reduced.
- 2 Operator visibility can be less.
- 3 Depending on the attachment, it may need to be removed before normal forks can be used.
- 4 Additional lift truck hydraulic functions may be required.
- 5 The lift truck capacity plate will need to reflect the installed attachment.



OTTAWA NEWS

by Brian Linklater
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SLOWER GROWTH PREDICTED

Every autumn, the federal Finance Minister is expected to release an update on the economic and fiscal projections contained in the Budget for that year. In effect, the update is a mid-term report card. In early November, Finance Minister Flaherty respected that tradition by updating elements of his March 2011 Budget.

The March Budget had to be re-introduced in June following the General Election. The economic projections in June were unchanged from the March version. The November update, however, contained some important changes that BSIA members should bear in mind as they develop their business plans for the coming year.

In March, it was predicted that the Canadian economy would grow by 2.9 per cent this year; slowing slightly to 2.8 per

cent in 2012; and 2.7 per cent in 2013. As of early November, that forecast had been downgraded significantly. The economy is now expected to grow by 2.2 per cent this year; by 2.1 per cent in 2012; and by 2.5 per cent in 2013.

Prospects for growth in the American economy have also been downgraded. In March, it was predicted that the U.S. economy would grow by 3.1 per cent this year and stay above three per cent annually for the following two years. In November, it was expected that growth this year would be just 1.6 per cent and would lag just behind the revised outlooks for Canadian economic growth in both 2012 and 2013.

MODERATE INTEREST RATES GROWTH

BSIA members and their counterparts across Canada have almost unanimously agreed that low interest rates are impera-

tive for a healthy housing market. In the pre-budget survey this year, that was the position of 94.4 per cent of respondents.

The March Budget forecast that the Three Month Treasury Bill Rate would be 1.3 per cent this year; almost doubling to 2.5 per cent in 2012; and to 3.4 per cent the following year. In the November update, the prediction for these short-term rates was revised downward to 0.9 per cent this year; 1.2 per cent in 2012; and 2.0% in 2013.

The outlook for long-term rates, as measured by the Ten-Year Government Bond Rate was also revised downward in the November update. In March, it was forecast that the long-term rate would be 3.5 per cent this year; 4.0 per cent in 2012; and 4.6 per cent in 2013. That has now been adjusted downward to 2.8 per cent this year; 2.7 the year following; and 3.2 per cent in 2013. ♦

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products because they had no other option.

If you have employee's involved in a lot of manual labour type work then take this as a sign that you should consider looking at forklift attachments to pick up the slack.

Every different type of forklift attachment and manufacturer has its' own list of unique benefits and considerations that you need to take into account before you can properly decide whether the lift truck attachment will provide enough tangible and intangible benefit to justify the cost.

As well, there are hundreds of different types of forklift attachments available so if you have a specific need, it would be wise to contact an experienced forklift fleet management specialist so they can help you properly match your application to the right attachment and the right lift truck.

Need help? Feel free to contact Scott McLeod, President of Fleetman Consulting Inc., by calling (604)614-3530 or via his website at www.fleetmanconsulting.com. The company is based in Surrey, BC. Fleetman is an independent forklift consulting company that specializes in forklift fleet management and procurement for the end user. ♦

