

The Fleetman does fleet management

By Bob Trebilcock, Executive Editor
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I'm packing my bags for Park City, Utah, where I'll report from the HK Systems logistics conference. In the meantime, I wanted to share a conversation I had last week with Scott McLeod, the president of [Fleetman Consulting Inc.](#) Based in Surrey, British Columbia, McLeod appears to be taking a different approach to fleet management, or what McLeod refers to as asset management focused on lift trucks.

Fleet management generally focuses on a number of areas. It might be working with an end user to right size their fleet – that is figure out if they have the right types and right number of vehicles for the tasks they need to accomplish. It might be working on a maintenance program to insure that an end user is getting the maximum amount of uptime out of the fleet and minimize downtime. It might mean monitoring how that asset is being utilized to identify inefficiencies in operations or areas that might be improved through operator training. Last, it might also involve purchase, lease and financing options.

McLeod does all of those for his customers, including providing a maintenance cost tracking software solution. The difference is that fleet management is typically offered by lift truck manufacturers or their dealers. McLeod is taking a different approach, and while there may be other folks out there doing what he's doing, I'm unfamiliar with him.

While he used to work for a large lift truck dealer and has about 20 years experience in the industry, today he works outside of that network as a representative for the end user. He established his consulting firm in 2008, and says his clients include small businesses that are going to purchase just one lift truck as well as large distribution centers with more than 100 trucks.

"For whatever reason," he says, "the forklift industry seems to fly under the radar for a lot of companies, senior managers and the like and therefore costs, that can be crippling at times, will often fly under the radar and remain unnoticed, all at the expense of the bottom line."

His company analyzes a companies lift truck needs, the way it's using its fleet and its management program, and then creates strategies to optimize whatever it is they're doing, regardless of the brand truck they are using. "In a nutshell," he says, "we help clients reduce their forklift acquisition and operating costs by developing effective dealership negotiation strategies and identifying and reducing operational using proven fleet management techniques."

Think of him as akin to a personal trainer, who works with clients to determine what lift trucks will work best in an operation, how many are needed, and then develops a strategy to get the best deal on the purchase, lease or rental and maintenance program from a dealer.

It's an interesting idea, and one that I'll continue to watch.