Smart Sites

NEW BALANCE MOVES MOUNTAINS OF SHOES

Engineering the Perfect Fit



For weekend warriors and serious athletes alike, **New Balance Athletic Shoe, Inc.** designs and develops innovative, highly functional and reliable shoes. Based in Boston, MA, New Balance has three North American warehouses (Ontario, CA; Compton, CA; and Lawrence, MA) that process 26 million pairs of shoes per year. When looking for lift trucks to outfit its 860,000 sq.ft. of warehouse space, New Balance chose Raymond because of its similar philosophy.

Since 1906, New Balance has been making footwear to fit their customers through a wide range of activities and full range of sizes. And, like New Balance shoes, *Raymond*[®] lift trucks are ergonomically designed with comfort, performance and operator productivity in mind. This is why from his initial truck purchase in 1993, Rick Thorn, distribution engineering manager at New Balance, felt that *Raymond* lift trucks were the perfect fit. "Raymond's price, service and operator acceptance made the decision very easy," Thorn said.

Needing to maximize productivity in order to move the millions of athletic shoes sold annually, Thorn looked to Abel Integrated Handling Systems, the Raymond Dealership in Lawrence, and to its Director of Sales, Mike Petinge. Step by step, Thorn said the Raymond Dealer assisted New Balance in selecting just the right equipment for each of its various warehouse applications.

Mike Petinge and the New Balance team chose eight counterbalanced trucks for receiving; six wire-guided *Swing-Reach*[®] trucks and 11 pallet trucks for pick and put away in narrow aisles; and 26 wire-guided orderpickers for case picking. To increase efficiency, Petinge suggested Raymond's exclusive *intelliguide*[™] wire guidance system to free operators from steering responsibilities in very narrow aisles.

New Balance relies on Raymond lift trucks to help maximize productivity and move the millions of athletic shoes they sell annually.





"We couldn't do it without Raymond trucks."

Combined, New Balance's three North American warehouses process 26 million pairs of shoes per year. That means their trucks are making 3,000 picks daily, between 45 and 50 picks per hour.



The system quickly and reliably engages guide signals, providing excellent tracking and stability; a particular challenge for the Lawrence warehouse. New Balance's Ontario facility had concerns with its extensive traffic and aisles that are open at both ends. Petinge solved the problem by equipping the trucks with magnets for end of aisle slowdown to aid operators in stopping or slowing prior to exiting the aisle.

Since 1995, New Balance has doubled its output while maintaining staff levels. One reason for the output increase is less truck downtime for battery changes. With *Raymond* orderpickers, operators can go a full shift before a battery change. At the Lawrence facility each of its two shifts reaps the benefit of the increased output.

At New Balance, decreased downtime due to reduced repair time is another important benefit. *"Raymond* trucks hold up very well and we save money on repair," Thorn noted. The Raymond Dealer Network also offers assured guaranteed service with the Raymond Comprehensive Fixed Price Maintenance (CFPM) program. CFPM guarantees the operating costs of *Raymond* trucks with prompt, professional service through factory-trained technicians, coupled with a wide array of financing, fleet management and training.

As valuable as the increased output and decreased downtime, is the solid and trusting relationship that has developed over the years as Petinge calls on Thorn regularly. Because New Balance needs service and sales delivered on two coasts, Petinge works with Raymond Handling Solutions, the Raymond Dealer in Ontario, CA. "New Balance knows it will get the best service whether it's here on the East Coast or in California," Petinge said.

Assurance of quality service is important to Thorn. *"Raymond* trucks are reliable and backed by a strong dealer network," he said. *"Once we have a good relationship* with a company, we maintain it. When comparing costs of operation, we are certain that Raymond is the right lift truck company for us."

Be it shoes or trucks, meeting the specific needs of its customers is something that New Balance and Raymond share in common. And, together they fit perfectly.



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Six wire-guided Swing-Reach trucks increase the efficiency of the New Balance warehouse. Raymond's exclusive intelliguide wire guidance system, frees operators from steering responsibilities in very narrow aisles.

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