



BITA figures show continued growth in UK industrial truck sales

BITA, the UK's sole provider of industrial truck sales statistics, has announced overall sales figures for the final quarter of 2007.

The latest figures contributed by BITA members show continuing growth in the UK's fork lift truck market, with an overall increase in sales of 3.5% and just over 31,000 units sold in the year to the end of December 2007. The market remains robust, with 2007 being the fourth consecutive year in which more than 30,000 forklift trucks were ordered from UK suppliers.

Over the year, orders for low level order pickers saw the most impressive increase, with just under 2,200 orders placed – an increase of 25% over the year.

The number of engine counterbalance trucks ordered in the UK also fared well, with a 2.3% rise in 2007, while the warehouse truck market grew by 4.9% over the same period.

However the market volume increases have been in specific product areas rather than across all truck types generally, with 2007 showing some very different patterns and some areas have seen a slight downturn.

Orders for reach trucks fell by 7%, while orders for powered pallet trucks fell to 5,800, a drop of 8.7% from 2006 figures – although 2006 was a record year which means comparisons may not be indicative of the overall market.

Commenting on the latest statistics, BITA Secretary General James Clark said: "Looking ahead to 2008's final figures, it is difficult to predict the likely strength of the UK forklift truck market at a time when business confidence in some sectors is not as strong as it has been.

"However, the market has shown a good degree of resilience over recent years. Although BITA expects 2008 to be a challenging year for its members, we expect it to be another rewarding year."

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Knowledge of market trends is crucial for any business, but in the UK, BITA is the sole provider of industrial truck sales statistics, contributed by – and only made available to – BITA members. BITA thus holds a unique repository of information on the current state and historical trends of the UK fork-lift market.

Details of UK orders and deliveries are reported every month by members of BITA's Truck Suppliers' Group (TSG), using exclusive secure PC software. Aggregated monthly and year-to-date figures are made available on a confidential basis to all contributing TSG members. Members of BITA's Components & Services Group also receive a monthly statistical overview, with the option to purchase more detailed information as required.

BITA members are thus equipped with vital knowledge of how the market is moving – a real asset when planning production levels for the year ahead.

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Issued on behalf of BITA.

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Notes for Editors

- The British Industrial Truck Association, BITA, is a substantial and dynamic trade association representing a membership of 82 fork-lift truck manufacturers, suppliers, service providers and media operating in the UK.
- BITA is the voice of the industry in matters technical and legislative at the highest levels in Europe and internationally. It enjoys a close working relationship with bodies such as the UK Health and Safety Executive, the European Committee for Standardization (CEN) and the International Standards Organisation (ISO).
- As a member of the British Materials Handling Foundation (BMHF) BITA is allied with the Fédération Européenne de la Manutention (FEM), the European manufacturers' association of materials handling, lifting and storage equipment.
- BITA produces a wide range of specialist publications, encompassing best practice and health and safety assurance, as well as technical guidance notes and unique market insight. Its specialist committees include the Truck Suppliers Group (TSG), Technical Policy Committee (TPC), and the Component & Services Group (CSG) among many others.
- BITA members, including many international brands, manufacture and distribute over 90% of all new forklifts procured each year in the UK. They employ 7,000 people directly, and enjoy a combined annual turnover of £1.3bn. BITA members play an increasingly important role in the UK's overall economic health, supply chain effectiveness and environmental performance.