

BITA MARKET INDEX

FACTSHEET

Forklift truck sales in the first half of 2017 have risen 6%, recovering from a dip in 2016.

Despite the uncertain economic environment, forklift sales have begun to recover from the downturn seen during H2 of 2016. So far, 2017 has seen two quarters of growth with annualised sales in June of 32,189 units.

Although downward trends in consumer spending have contributed to the continued fall in sales for forklifts for wholesale distribution (down 9.7%), sales into the retail distribution sector have seen a large spike in demand (up 35.7% over the last 12 months) exceeding the year-on-year growth in online shopping.

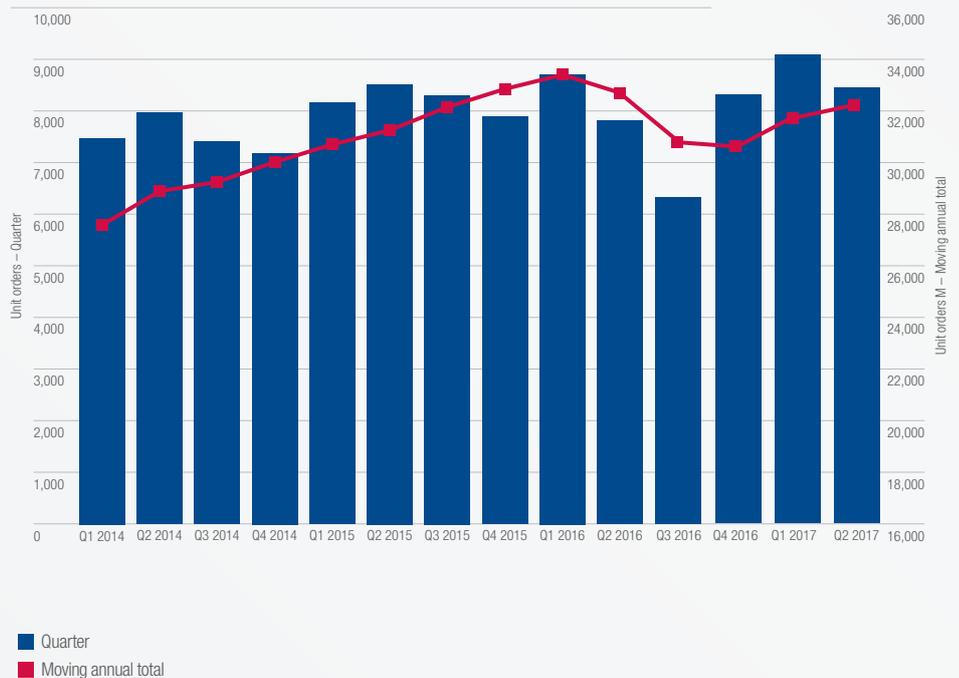
Industry demand for forklifts has increased 3.3% in the last 12 months, mostly supported by growth in UK manufacturing output identified towards the end of 2016.

Sales of pedestrian warehouse trucks have surged 17.7% overall most notably in retail distribution as they facilitate the growth in online shopping.

“So far, 2017 has seen two quarters of growth with annualised sales in June of 32,189 units.”

UK FORKLIFT TRUCK MARKET

Unit orders



SECTOR FOCUS

Manufacturing remains the largest single sector user of industrial trucks and has seen a slight increase in market share with industry now making up over a third (34.9%) of sales. Forklifts in this sector cater for businesses using large quantities of raw materials such as wood, metals and concrete as well as components for consumer goods like electronics, vehicles and furniture.

The industrial side of the economy has seen better than expected performance in the wake of the Brexit vote and 2016 ended with a growth in manufacturing output of 0.7%. The continued low value of sterling and its relationship to the dollar helped maintain exports in 2016 resulting in a particularly strong fourth quarter for manufacturing output and may have contributed to the pickup in forklift sales in the first two quarters of 2017.

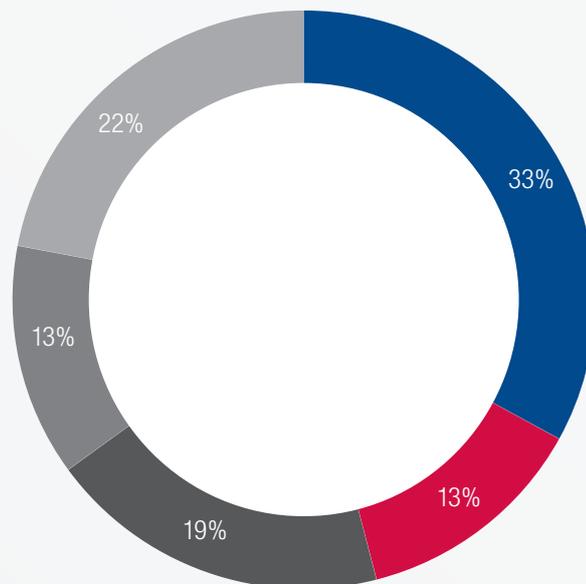
Retail distribution has seen a resurgence, increasing its proportion of sales back to 2011 levels of 19.5%. Sales into the sector fell in 2016 but in the first two quarters of 2017 have increased and by June had seen a 35.7% increase over the previous 12 months. This year began with the first quarterly decline in UK retail sales since 2013 and has come at a time of a continuing downward trend in consumer spending. Despite this, demand for forklifts within the retail distribution sector has been high, buoyed by the continued growth in online shopping.

Sales into wholesale distribution sectors have continued to decline and over the 12 months to June had fallen 9.7% representing a 12.6% fall from 2016 levels. These forklifts now make up just a 12.7% share of sales, the lowest of the major sectors. With these trucks serving distributors of materials for consumers and SMEs, high street retailers and supermarkets; the decline in consumer spending has likely been felt more significantly in this sector.

“Demand for forklifts within the retail distribution sector has been high, buoyed by the continued growth in online shopping.”

SHARE OF THE MARKET BY SECTOR

%



- Manufacturing industries
- Wholesale distribution
- Retail distribution
- Logistics/Freight
- Other (including: Post and telecommunications, primary industries, public services and rental)

TRUCK TYPE FOCUS

Counterbalance trucks remain the forklift of choice for industry, making up over half (54.9%) of sales in the manufacturing sector. The same is true in other sectors too with the diesel and electric counterbalance trucks making up 47.3% of transactions over the last 12 months.

There is more variation within in the electric truck types where there has been a shift in demand. Over the 12 months to June, counterbalance truck sales fell 6.2% and rider warehouse truck sales fell 9.7%.

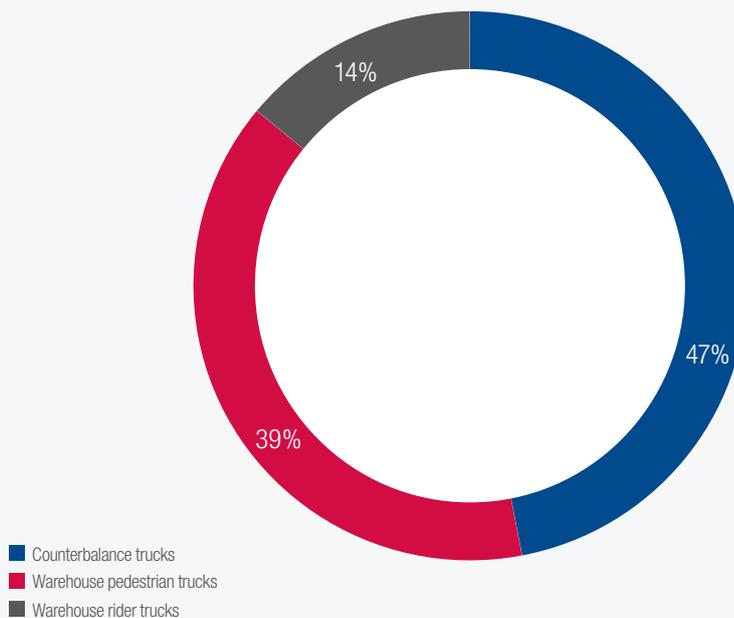
Diesel engines have held their market share relatively steady over the last 12 months only falling slightly to 30.5% in June. An initial slight increase in sales was seen towards the end of 2015 and, with the exception of the general slump seen during Q3 2016, this growth has continued.

The pedestrian warehouse type, however, saw an increase in sales of 17.7% over this period. This truck type, often used within online fulfilment centres, has seen a particular surge within the retail distribution sector, increasing sales 44.7% over the last 12 months.

“The pedestrian warehouse truck type has seen a particular surge within the retail distribution sector”

SHARE OF THE MARKET BY CLASS

%



Notes for Editors

- The British Industrial Truck Association, BITA, is a substantial and dynamic trade association representing a membership of 78 forklift 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.

MEDIA CONTACTS

Floyd Jebson

+44 (0)1869 353 813
floyd.jebson@instinctif.com

Tim Field

+44 (0)1869 353 805
tim.field@instinctif.com

BITA CONTACT

James Clark

Secretary General
+44 (0)1344 623 800
james.clark@bita.org.uk