

## Straddle Carrier saves time and space

The 30t lift Straddle Carrier, originally developed to lift shipping containers, is proving its worth lifting heavy section beams, not only in terms of speed and safety, but also by enabling increased stacking density in the yard by requiring only 1m wide aisles rather than the 3m needed by sideloaders.

STRUCTURAL steelwork contractors and fabricator Caunton Engineering has taken delivery of one of Combilift's newest products, a Combilift Straddle Carrier, which is being put to very effective and space saving use in the storage yard of the company's premises in Nottingham. Caunton offers a one stop solution to most steel construction needs and has been involved in prestigious award winning projects in the commercial, leisure, transport and public sectors and others. Due to the volume of materials handled – over 25 000t of steel a year – a streamlined logistical process is a crucial element of the company's operation.

Safer operation, better use of space and much quicker procedures were the main factors behind the decision to go with the Straddle Carrier according to Production Director Mark White. "We asked our handling consultants Windsor Materials Handling for some advice on heavier capacity machines capable of coping with 16t loads, and together with Combilift's Stephen Wells they recommended we look at the Straddle Carrier, which had just been introduced into Combilift's range."

The Combilift Straddle Carrier was developed as a cost effective solution for handling containers and similarly oversized loads, and is therefore ideally suited for Caunton's bespoke loads such as girders and prefabricated items that range from 12m to 23m in length.

**The 30t Combilift Straddle Carrier can unload a truck in just 10 minutes**



Since taking delivery of the machine, which has a 30t lift capacity, Caunton has seen considerable benefits and has much better control of its logistics. For example, a delivery truck can be unloaded in just 10 minutes.

As the name of the machine implies, the frame and wheels of the Straddle Carrier are positioned either side of the load. This has enabled aisle widths between stacked product to be set at just 1m, compared to the 3.5m previously needed (for manoeuvring forklifts).

The space this has created in the yard will make it much easier for Caunton to deal with any delays in customers' projects without impacting on their own production schedules.

Previously, its ability to store finished products was limited if customers had to put back delivery, but the extra capacity now avoids on-site congestion, and also allows Caunton to buy in quantity when the price is advantageous.

The low level transportation of very heavy and potentially dangerous loads has also con-

tributed to better health and safety procedures as risky lifting at height is no longer necessary. In spite of its size the Straddle Carrier's ability to turn on its axis makes for impressive manoeuvrability, and the low set, easy to access operator cab affords excellent 360° visibility. In addition, a three wheel patented design is available and ensures maximum stability with all three wheels permanently in ground contact even when travelling across rougher surfaces.

Substantial investment in R & D (9% of its annual turnover) keeps the company at the forefront of innovation in the materials handling industry. ■

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## Energy Chains replace cable festoons in gantry crane

WHEN a manufacturer of gantry cranes found its expensive festoon systems were failing as a result of corrosion, the company turned to plastics component specialist igus for an alternative solution. The global manufacturer of various types of industrial lifting equipment now uses igus Energy Chains cable carriers on its gantry cranes.

An igus Energy Chain System is mounted horizontally on each machine where it guides and protects over 75m of power cables. The cable carriers deliver a longer service life than the festoons in the dusty, humid environment. As well as accommodating high ambient temperatures, which can peak at 50°C, these may be accompanied by up to 100% humidity levels.

igus Energy Chains feature openable cross-bars to facilitate quick and easy access to the cables, which can be opened using a screwdriver or by hand. In contrast to a festoon system, which allows the dangling cables to move around in an uncontrolled way, the igus Energy Chain offers better protection and stops the cables from moving around and catching on

other equipment or structures – this results in a significant reduction in downtime and also eliminates corrosion problems associated with festoon rollers and trolleys.

igus delivered the cable carriers as ReadyChains: a pre-assembled, out-of-the-box system complete with the Energy Chain cable carrier, igus Chainflex continuous-flex cables, connectors, and other accessories. ReadyChain saved the customer time and eliminated storage costs significantly.

igus has been developing, producing and testing plastic Energy Chain cable carriers for forty years. They are capable of long and short travel distances at high speeds in all orientations. igus Energy Chains can be used in a variety of applications from machine tools and construction equipment, to packaging machines, medical devices and cleanroom applications. ■

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**Robust plastic energy chains prevent snagging of crane power cables**

