

Experience in



Warehouse Automation

THE LOGISTICS BUSINESS has many years experience of automation systems, particularly automated materials handling and storage. Our consultants and project managers have designed, planned and managed the installation of numerous multi-million pound systems covering many market sectors from engineering, through retail distribution to financial services. The following are examples of some of the more recent projects.

Boots the Chemist

Although Boots has its own in-house project team, this was already heavily committed so it called on THE LOGISTICS BUSINESS to help refurbish one of its main warehouses with an automated system. THE LOGISTICS BUSINESS provided all the resources to analyse requirements, prepare specifications and write invitation to tender documents. A major factor affecting the refurbishment was minimisation of disruption to the existing warehouse operations. Designing an implementation method whereby operations could continue whilst installation was carried out was a major challenge where the experience of THE LOGISTICS BUSINESS brought some particular benefits. The contract for the refurbishment, worth some £7million, went ahead smoothly and on time.

A leading consumer goods supplier

This Company, which is part of the Unilever Group, needed help with a project to develop automated handling and storage in the middle of the production process in several of its European factories. Before consultants from THE LOGISTICS BUSINESS joined the project team a number of options had been considered and there were several opinions regarding the best way forward. Experience from THE LOGISTICS BUSINESS was able to help focus thinking and home in on a common solution for the factories that was acceptable to all.

Royal Bank of Scotland

When it considered a new automated store for handling documents, the Royal Bank of Scotland turned to THE LOGISTICS BUSINESS whose consultants had experience of financial services through work for organisations such as Nationwide Building Society, Barclays Bank and Scottish Equitable. Initially a feasibility study was carried out, including statistical based counts of documents in the Bank's branches throughout the Country, in order to understand the overall capacity and throughput requirements. This was followed by a more detailed analysis and specification of requirements.

SFS Stadler

This Swiss owned company manufactures high quality specialist fastenings. It was planning to extend one of its UK factories and at the same time build a new warehouse facility. THE LOGISTICS BUSINESS was asked to consider requirements for mechanical handling and storage and make recommendations. After detailed analysis and financial appraisals, an automated mini-load system was proposed. Invitations to tender were prepared and responses evaluated. The contract was awarded and THE LOGISTICS BUSINESS provided the resources to project manage the installation, including testing and acceptance. IT experts from THE LOGISTICS BUSINESS specified requirements for the computer systems interfaces and helped co-ordinate the software development.

When is automation appropriate?

The choice of an automated system depends on far more than just simple financial appraisal. Often it will depend on the culture of the organisation and the perceived as well as measurable competitive advantage. From an objective point of view warehouse automation will often show benefits where there is a high number of products and a high level of throughput.