

Frequently Asked Questions

Material Handling Volume 1



Introduction

When it comes to acquiring and maintaining material handling equipment, the options may seem endless. With so many unknowns, where do you start? As you embark on this journey, we'd like to share some answers from our industry experts to some of the most common questions from your peers.

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Q1 Should I Purchase or Lease my Material Handling Equipment?

When acquiring equipment, organizations are faced with a financial choice – do I purchase outright, or do I finance? For most organizations, budget constraints rule out purchasing. And while for some, purchasing comes with the freedom of ownership, it can also come with a debilitating financial burden – but this can be easily avoided.

Leasing is such a viable option that we'd even ask – “Why would someone choose to purchase if leasing is on the table?” Some of the benefits of leasing are:

Predictability

Leasing provides access to the same equipment you would otherwise purchase, but without the expensive upfront capital expenditure and with predictable monthly payments.

Preserving Cash Flow

Without the initial investment costs of purchasing, you can preserve and reinvest the preserved cashflow. Leasing gains you access to cash reserves, ensuring that you are prepared for any hiccups as you create your annual budget.

Keeping Up with Technology

Keeping up with latest equipment can get expensive quickly. At the end of your lease, you have the option to return the equipment and renew your agreement with a newer model. Or, if your needs haven't changed, you can simply extend your lease with the current equipment – potentially saving even more money.

Q2 What Type of Forklift is Right for Me?

While we can't simply say a certain model is the best for everyone, we can certainly guide you along your forklift purchasing process. To help you narrow down your decision, here's a little more information about the 3 categories of forklift.

Propane

Liquid Propane (LP) forklifts can be used both indoors and outdoors. Performance-wise, LP gives you consistent power throughout the shift when compared to lead-acid battery powered forklifts and faster refueling times. Compared to diesel forklifts, LP burns much cleaner therefor making it an ideal choice for more applications.

Diesel

Diesel forklifts are typically used for the most demanding jobs – reserved for mostly outdoor use. Their lift capacity and acceleration abilities outperform than their electric counterparts, but their size and toxic exhaust fumes can leave them somewhat limited in use. That said, if your project requires your machines to be exposed to extreme weather or rough terrain, a diesel forklift should be at the top of your list.

Electric

Many companies are looking towards the future, including the goal of being Carbon Neutral and with manufactures increasing their capacity offerings, Electric forklifts make a great option. Further, electric forklifts have fewer moving parts which means you'll see significantly less maintenance costs when compared to LP or diesel forklifts. However, charge times vary and need to be factored into your daily project timelines, and initial investments tend to be much higher with this emerging technology.

Q3

How Do I Choose the Right Battery for My Electric Forklift?

Electric forklifts are becoming increasingly popular. They require less maintenance than an Internal combustion engine and can potentially save you from the headaches of a traditional LP or diesel forklift. However, you need to make sure you purchase the right battery for your needs. Here are a few things you should consider:

A **lithium-ion battery** charges quickly and can handle extreme weather conditions. They are also typically more energy efficient. On the other hand, **lead-acid batteries** are more widely available and usually have a lower initial investment cost. If you require your forklifts to operate in more extreme climates, require longer run times and faster charging capabilities, then lithium-ion is likely the way to go. However, if your organization is looking to spend less at the time of purchase, and you have ample storage space, lead-acid batteries might be the right choice for you.

Whether you choose a lithium-ion or a lead-acid battery, regular maintenance is required to ensure proper battery health. If you do not properly maintain your battery, you will end up replacing it more often than you might have budgeted for.

Regardless of which battery you choose, you can expect the same benefits from your electric forklift – but choosing the right one will extend the life of your forklift and keep you in budget.

Q4 How Can Proper Maintenance Save me Money?

All equipment needs regular attention and preventative maintenance. While it may vary from piece to piece, one thing is certain – if you ignore your equipment and signs of wear and tear, you will experience downtime. There are a few types of maintenance that should be done every single day.

General Outward Inspection

A quick look on the outside of your equipment can resolve issues before it's too late. Whether its rust building up or a dent on a propane tank – a glance around your equipment can be very revealing.

Fluids Check

Checking the levels and health of critical components that require fluids will set you up for success. Not only in terms of efficiency – but maximizing the health and performance of your equipment.

Brakes and Tires

Checking your tires and brakes can save you from unexpected repairs and can save lives. The safety of your team depends on knowing that your equipment is working as expected. Flat tires or worn-out brakes can lead to workplace accidents – a costly mistake in terms of production uptime and more importantly - the lives of your employees.

Skipping these steps can leave you with a hefty repair bill when you least expect it. With a machine out of commission, you will likely have to adjust your output or increase the load you put on other pieces of equipment. Adding time to make these checks can mean saving thousands on repairs and replacements throughout the life of your equipment.

“The trusted partner relationship I have with my Meridian rep is that they know... they know if it's a fit, they know our environment, they know our business.”

Jared Hotop

Vice President, IT and Retail
Buchheit



In Closing

Customers have relied on Meridian's industry expertise for over 40 years. Whether you're looking to acquire your first piece of material handling equipment, or you're expanding your fleet – the experts at Meridian are ready to help.

When you're ready to take the next step for your organization, contact our material handling equipment specialists at **+1 (888) 684-3644** or send an email to **sales@themeridian.com** for more details.

