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TIM HOLLAND – PROJECT MANAGER, LADDAW



Access aisle through bays of racking.

The Result

The warehouse is now fully operational with over a quarter of a million pieces of glass stored in the new racking. “LINPAC has delivered the right solution at the right price,” concluded Holland. “Their account management skills proved to be a real asset as they liaised with our other suppliers to ensure that the project was completed on time and in budget. They have proved to be an excellent team to work with and should we require another storage solution we’d be happy to work with them again – in fact they’d be our first port of call.”



Right: *Special picking rack developed by sister company, LINPAC Materials Handling.*



LINPAC Storage Systems

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Crystal Clear Storage Solution

The Customer

Established in 1975, Laddaw is the UK's largest Automotive Glass Wholesaler and distributor. The company has grown to be market leader by being innovative, creative and providing exceptional customer service, making products available to their customers as and when they need them. Laddaw is part of the Belron Group which is the biggest Automotive Glass Replacement organisation in the world.

The Challenge

As part of UK expansion plans, a decision was taken in the middle of 2003 to amalgamate four sites (two distribution centres, one specialist plant glass centre and a sales office) into a purpose built site in Bardon, Leicestershire. As part of the project a 12,000m² warehouse and distribution centre was built to house windscreens, bodyglass and trims for cars, commercial vehicles and plant.

The main challenge was to provide suitable storage for the comprehensive ranges of windscreens; those for modern cars that have a fast stock turn and the wide diversity of screens held for older cars which are much

slower movers. It was these screens that were to prove the biggest storage challenge – to design a method to store so many different screens in a compact environment yet allow easy identification and accessibility. To compound the difficulties, most screens arrive from suppliers in wooden crates which are all different sizes and shapes to suit the contents.

Project Manager for Laddaw, Tim Holland, was in charge of selecting a partner to design, manufacture and install a storage solution for the new warehouse. At the outset he sent specifications of base layout and functionality to ten possible suppliers for budget quotations.

“LINPAC came up with the best design, their pricing was competitive and we were at ease with their installation plans.”

**TIM HOLLAND
– PROJECT MANAGER, LADDAW**



Above: Bulk pick locations



The Solution

Three companies were short listed to provide detailed design solutions and prototype racking bays for testing in an existing Laddaw warehouse. Final selection was based on a number of criteria including how well these prototypes were received. Tim Holland explains, “We took up references and assessed the short listed companies on design ingenuity, price, flexibility of solution, ability to keep to timelines and budgetary control – there was one company that won through on all counts, LINPAC Storage Systems.”

He continued, “LINPAC came up with the best design, their pricing was competitive and we were at ease with their installation plans. As they are local to us it was easy to drop in and evaluate their Milton Keynes production facility, which gave us additional confidence in the quality of their products.”

The winning solution provides 8,000 bulk locations for crates of windscreens and over 20,000 pick locations which are both flexible and expandable. In total there are 55 runs of racking, the majority being 57m long. Each run has seven beam levels with the top beam located at 10.5m.

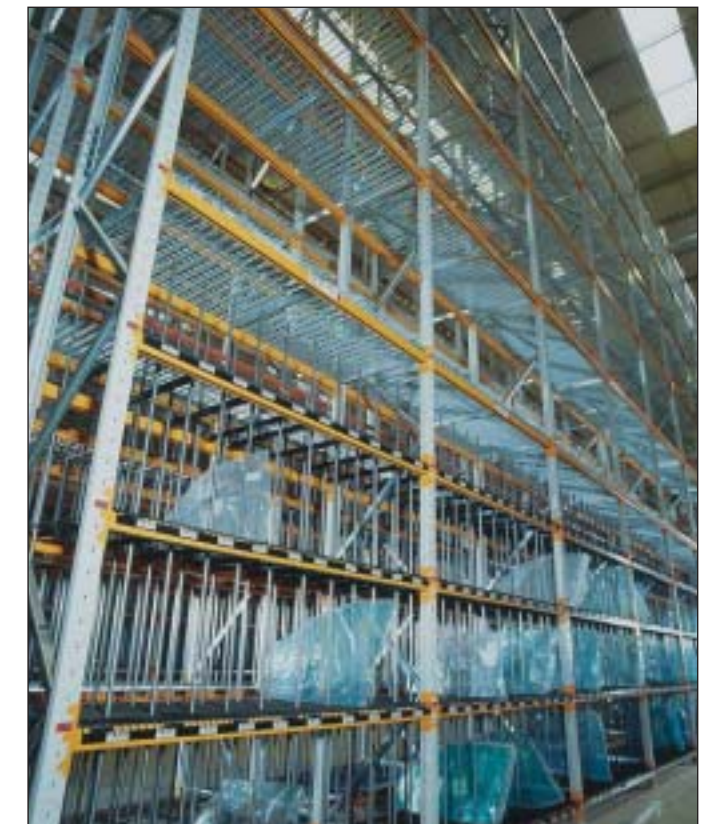
Left: In total there are 55 runs of racking, each with 7 beam levels.

The Installation

At ground level the fastest selling screens are stored within their wooden delivery crates – the front of the crate is opened up so that the pick is made direct from the crate. Back up stock of these screens is placed in racking above on open steel mesh decking, which is designed to meet the stringent fire regulations.

The slower moving screens are stored in multi-racks above the crates at first beam level. These innovative racks are support structures of metal hoops (see picture below) that were designed by LINPAC to incorporate adjustable locations on a 50mm pitch. The adjustability allows Laddaw to concentrate the pick area of the diversity of slower moving screens to free up storage for bulk stock. Inside the multi-racks the windscreens sit on a protective cushion of plastic.

Bodyglass is held in a separate area with special beams which house metal dividing rods that support the glass in an upright position for easy picking. Small mesh compartments house the screen trims, whilst the fixings are located in plastic boxes.



Above: Bodyglass area with special beams and metal dividing rods.