



M&W Toyota Handling is one of the largest Toyota fork-lift truck dealers in the UK. The company owns, sells, maintains and leases new and used trucks to customers in an area from Stoke-on-Trent in the Midlands to Devon in the South-west. Toyota Handling uses asset management systems from Assetware Technology for control, tracking and active management of its entire asset base, worth about £10million.

Toyota Handling's assets are grouped into 12 different categories, and AssetWare's system has been set up to reflect this categorisation. The system holds information about items such as IT equipment, office equipment and furniture and fittings, used by the company in the day to day running of its business. In addition, AssetWare's system holds detailed information about Toyota Handling's inventory of fork-lift trucks, enabling the company to manage this inventory for maximum profitability.

Trucks are categorised according to criteria such as age, depreciation rate and utilisation. Toyota Handling buys new trucks direct from Toyota and acquires used trucks either as a straight purchase, or in a part-exchange deal. Trucks may be leased out on a long term, short term or casual basis, and varying depreciation rates are applied depending on the age of the truck.

AssetWare's system holds financial and descriptive information about all trucks owned by the company, as well as full details of location and availability. Trucks that are leased out on a long term contract are not available for sale, whereas trucks held in stock, or leased out on a short term or casual contract may be recalled. This information is used by Toyota Handling's fleet manager and sales team during the sales process, or when negotiating a part exchange deal.

When a sales enquiry is received, AssetWare's system is queried to show all available trucks meeting the buyer's requirements. The financial data on AssetWare's system – cost price, depreciation amount, net book value – is used by Toyota Handling's Fleet Manager to help determine the asking price. When a truck is sold, the asset register is updated and a sales invoice is generated by Toyota Handling's financial accounting system TIBS (Toyota Integrated Business Systems), a bespoke in-house system.

When a truck is bought, either through outright purchase or a trade-in deal, the Fleet Manager determines the value and most appropriate utilisation for the truck, thus determining the asset category to which it is assigned. This information is sent to Toyota Handling's Finance department in Gloucester. Where it is used to update AssetWare's system.

“AssetWare’s system is really the hub of our fleet management,” says assistant accountant David Downey. “If someone wants to buy a truck we can use the system to list out all the trucks which are available, or alternatively we can look for trucks meeting specific requirements. That helps us to take charge of a sale, rather than just being reactive. The system also gives us very tight financial control of our asset base. There is a comprehensive range of standard reports, but we’ve found it pretty straightforward to write custom reports. For instance we wanted to see monthly depreciation on new assets only, so we simply modified the system’s standard Additions report. We also wanted to use the system for auditing and tracking, without having to barcode and use a laser scanner. We solved that one by creating a custom field in each record where we store the unique fleet number and location of each truck. We get any support we need over the telephone from AssetWare’s Client Services division – they really are very knowledgeable and helpful.”

Toyota Handling operates a monthly accounting and reporting cycle. During the course of the month the Finance department receives notification of all changes – acquisitions, movements, disposals and changes – to the asset base. During the course of the month, both the asset management and the financial accounting systems are updated in parallel.

At month end the two systems each produce summary files which are input to a spreadsheet for comparison and reconciliation. AssetWare’s system calculates depreciation, used to update the nominal ledger, and produces statutory and management reports for use by Toyota Handling UK. It also produces the monthly management reports required by Head Office, which are sent to Toyota in Japan.

Toyota Handling is looking forward to consolidating its leading position in the marketplace. AssetWare Technology will continue to play a key role in the company’s continued growth and success.