

Hyster Forklift

As a worldwide leader in forklift trucks, Hyster constantly strives for excellence in product quality and safety. However, it began as a producer of lifting machines as well as winches. Most of its production was focused in the Pacific Northwest and dealt mostly with the lumber and logging industry. A couple years after the first forklift trucks were invented Hyster became synonymous with quality manufacturing. Over the previous eighty years Hyster has continued to get bigger and grow its product line. The growth of its products coupled with its desire to stay service oriented has allowed Hyster to mature into the global player it is at the moment.

Some of the main inflection points in Hyster's past occurred between the 1940's and the 1960's. In 1946, Hyster opened a plant in Illinois that was fully dedicated to bulk manufacturing trucks. This allowed Hyster to force its costs down and, at the same time, offer a better quality product at industry aggressive prices. In 1952, Hyster began its first foray into the international production market through opening its first plant in the Netherlands. The Netherlands plant was originally designed to produce two products: Hyster 40" and the Karry Kranes.

Between the late 1950's through the 1960's, Hyster continued to expand into new markets. They began building container handlers in the US in 1959 to meet with the ever growing demand for transportation goods. In 1966, Hyster developed a process for enabling a lift truck to go both ahead and backwards using the same pedal. This pedal was labeled the Monotrol pedal, which revolutionized the industry. Later in the decade Hyster opened a R&D centre in Oregon that was focused on enhancing the design and functionality of lift trucks. The centre is still one of the world's best testing facilities in the materials handling industry.

As demand for materials handling equipment continued to expand swiftly throughout the 1960's, Hyster considered it necessary to reorient its concentration towards these new mass markets. Consequently, in 1970, the XL design philosophy was born. The XL design philosophy allowed Hyster to supply superior quality at a more reasonable cost. A further expansion in production capabilities was necessitated by the demand in Europe for Internal Combustion Engine Trucks. To plug this gap, a plant in Craigavon, Ireland was opened in 1980. Through the 1980's Hyster continued to concentrate on developing industry leading forklifts. The Hyster company name was known throughout the globe for its dedication towards excellence. This attention to excellence brought several suitors for the company. In 1989, a large international company based in Ohio called NACCO Industries purchased Hyster and began an aggressive expansion plan. NACCO rapidly changed the XL philosophy with a more driver oriented forklift that concentrated on operator comfort, which is known as the XM generation of forklifts.

The shift in supply chain management to a much more just-in-time focused approach has meant that Hyster has had to constantly make investments in new technologies. Acquisitions and investments were made in the US, Italy, Netherlands, and countless other places all over the world. All of these investments have made Hyster a world leader in the forklift market. In 2009, Hyster celebrated its eightieth anniversary as an industry leader of materials handling equipment, which consists of more than 300 different styles of forklift trucks.