



STRONG PARTNERS. TOUGH TRUCKS.™

BRING IT.



Challenge: Nothing is more important than efficiency and productivity in a fast-paced environment like the loading dock. Unfortunately for the lift trucks of Estes Express Lines, the rapid forward and reverse motions necessary to load tractor trailers was dramatically reducing tire life and causing operators to overheat the engines, all resulting in more trips to the repair shop.

Solution: Estes Express Lines decided to replace their lift truck fleet with Hyster lift trucks equipped with Duramatch™ technology. The new, programmable technology stopped the tires from spinning, extended brake life, and automatically shut down the engine to prevent overheating.

Results: Not only did uptime increase, but Estes Express Lines saved money in maintenance and repair costs because fewer lift trucks were in the shop with worn out tires or engine/transmission problems.

BACKGROUND Estes Express Lines has provided transportation solutions to and from all 50 states for more than 80 years. Headquartered in Richmond, Va., their wide range of services include domestic and international truckload transportation, specialized delivery services and B2B and B2C shipping solutions. The company has a reputation for delivering high-quality service and superior logistical expertise through their diverse spectrum of shipping and supply chain management that stretches to almost anywhere on the map.

In 2002, Estes' management team decided to standardize their lift trucks in order to streamline serviceability and decrease maintenance downtime. The company chose Hyster for their forklift needs and today, Hyster makes up approximately 80 percent of their 2,000 lift trucks.

CHALLENGE In order to meet demanding deadlines, loading time at the Estes Express Line dock is a whirlwind of forward and

reverse motion. Operators driving the lift trucks to and from the dock found that wheel spin during their shuttling duties wore through the forklift tires at an alarming rate.



On top of that, the lift trucks were overheated and pushed past the normal operating range of the powertrain and transmission.

Maintenance costs were high and uptime decreased with each truck in the shop for these problems.

"We do reports that measure utilization," said Mike Palmer, vice president of fleet services. "If a forklift wasn't working properly, we would tell the terminal manager not to use it that day. There are certain times of day, however, that we need every one of them."

SOLUTION After meeting with Hyster Company to discuss the issues, the team recommended their patented DuraMatch™ transmission technology. DuraMatch slows down truck speed when the accelerator pedal is released, reducing mechanical braking and stopping tire spin. The technology also increases efficiency and reduces operator fatigue with simplified movements.

To correct the overexertion problem, DuraMatch is programmed to alert the operator when the transmission is overheated and actually shuts the engine off after 30 seconds of continued overheated operation. Not only does the process cool off the powertrain, but it prevents further damage from overexertion, keeping repair visits to a minimum.

Thanks to the seatbelt safety features, the Hyster trucks also will not start unless the operator is securely fastened. The

trucks also meet Estes Express Lines' standards for sustainability, as the newer lifts meet EPA emission requirements.

RESULTS With fewer trips to the shop, Estes gets the most out of their Hyster investment, working their lift trucks in excess of 30,000 hours in these extreme environments when the normal life is approximately 10,000. With Hyster lift trucks, uptime has increased dramatically, enhancing productivity at the loading docks, which helps Estes maintain their reputation of being the solution for quick and efficient delivery services.

“We have always been buying tractors and trailers, but the forklift has been constant over the past couple of years,” said Palmer. “We haven’t had any real issues with it like we have with some other types of equipment. That’s a good thing.”



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