Palletways ID launch Q&A

What is it called?

Palletways ID is the name given to the system of cameras, scanners and dimensioning tools fitted to the forklift truck.

Key USP – in a nutshell

Palletways ID combines four important processes – Imaging, barcode scanning, weight measurement, cubing/dimensions – into one. This makes moving pallets safer and more efficient with greater than ever date harvesting to create market-leading visibility down the entire supply chain.

What will it do?

Essentially Palletways ID simultaneously carries out four tasks at once which previously had to be done separately, all while the FLT is in motion and during normal operation:

1 – takes photos of pallet for records

2 – scans the barcode wherever it is on the face of the pallet

3 – accurately records the weight of the pallet as soon as it is lifted on the FLT (no need to place on scales)

4 – at the same time records the pallet's dimensions (no need to put it on a cubing machine).

How did the innovation come about and why?

We recognised that from an operational point of view there was an opportunity to improve efficiency and also data quality. We knew that we couldn't "buy" time, we had to find a way to make it by improving how we do and analyse things operationally. Our vision was to take the four key data measurements on every single pallet that travels through the Palletways network.

Why is it so important that this tech 'does it all' – why is it necessary/of benefit to customers?

Health and safety – Palletways ID gathers accurate weight and size on every single pallet sent through the network. By doing so it can flag safety issues at source before they arise and act on them to prevent such incidents happening. This minimises the risk of oversized and overweight pallets and provides drivers with all the information they need to safely deliver on a tail lift.

Operational and efficiency – by automatically gathering pallet data not only are operations streamlined, but there is a significant improvement in accuracy of weight and cube data.

Routing foresight/visibility, cube and weight – members can route far more effectively than they could before. The data gathered by Palletways ID provides an accurate picture on what they are receiving for easier allocation and resourcing operations.

What is the rollout timescale?

Palletways ID is being rolled out in UK and across all European hubs over the next eight months.

How does this new innovation compare with archway scanning?

Archway scanning only collects two pieces of data: it scans and photographs pallets and is fixed at a static point. The Palletways ID technology takes four key measurements – image, barcode scan, weight and cubic measurements – all while the FLT is in motion and moving the pallet.

Is this truly innovative? What do competitors use/have, and how does this differ?

To be clear: no other technology in the market has the capability to take the four key measurements in one single movement without disrupting operations. It will also be rolled out to every operational hub in the Palletways network (not just the central hubs).

How many hubs and FLTs in PW network will use it?

Palletways ID will also be rolled out to every operational hub in the Palletways network (not just the central hubs). The tech will be fitted to 300 FLTs across the Group, equating to 21 Hubs.

Have there been trials?

Palletways ID is the result of two years' research and development including extensive testing within a warehouse environment.

What do your trials tell you so far?

They have given us all the data we need to know this innovation is within the parameters we need them to be to approve a mass production model ready to use.

When will it be rolled out to members?

We are focusing on Hub production right now as every pallet in the network will be touched by this technology. In future there may be scope for member installs.