

Mezzanine helps ATAP brake delivery records

When Australian Truck and Auto Parts (ATAP) out grew its facility in Footscray Road it purchased a block of land in Derrimut and built a brand new Distribution Centre that commenced operation in April 2002. It contracted Dexion to provide a dynamic storage solution capable of handling the company's planned growth for the long term.

ATAP is a privately owned company that imports, manufactures and distributes a range of brake parts for the passenger and commercial vehicle market. The company has operations in five states with the ability to deliver to every capital and regional centre. The DC supplies 2 or 3 delivery runs a day and orders are turned around in 24 hours with fill rates of 96%. ATAP also owns the Auto Brake Service franchise network which has grown from 1 to 47 franchises in less than 20 years. The storage solution had to be designed to cater for this level of growth for years to come.

According to ATAP Director Alan Jolly, Dexion wanted to understand the ATAP business before any recommendations were made.



"They worked closely with me to ensure they understood the aims and expectations of the company, the product range and how it sells and the best way to get them to market" he said "Dexion are the storage experts so we leave these issues to them, we want to get on with what we're good at and that's selling brake parts" he said.

Dexion went away and worked on plans which included a 623 square meter mezzanine floor that's serviced by a conveyor system as well as a bulk storage area. Pick areas were 'zoned' which helped create shorter pick 'runs' for warehouse staff creating greater efficiencies in the picking process and increased productivity throughout the entire operation.

The upper level of the mezzanine incorporates 4300 lineal meters in small parts shelving with the ground floor featuring 2000 lineal meters in long span shelving. The design also incorporates mesh barriers, pallet gates and barriers to assist in pedestrian safety.

"The mezzanine manages our smaller, light items. Most orders are picked to a tote bin and then consolidated and ready for despatch. The bulk racking area is only racked at this stage with 2800 pallet positions" he said "we use this for out for our slower moving lines and also for bulk stacking our faster moving product lines. With some lines we are picking direct from the pallet or shipping complete pallets to our regional facilities" he said.

The project had to allow for planned growth and in April 2005 a 4,000 square meter extension was added to the existing 6,000 square meter facility "due to the natural growth of the company and the fact that we're looking to expand our product offering, we needed more capacity with the mezzanine" said Jolly "again

Dexion prepared plans that we were happy with, they were excellent throughout the construction process and the crew were very mindful of the Occupational Health and Safety guidelines we have in place here and caused minimal disruption to the work place" he said.

ATAP have Dexion product in most of it's regional warehouses "it makes sense for us to standardise our storage systems" said Jolly "that way if we need to move racking or storage products from one facility to another we know they will fit together with no problems, even if they are older generation products. Sure, there are cheaper brands and suppliers on the market, but we value the expertise the Dexion brand brings and we're happy to pay a bit more for it".

