



Pallet racking has also been installed into the temperature controlled storage area which consists of both a chill store and a cold store.

Smaller products are stowed on the four levels of the multi-tier mezzanine. Versatile Linspace shelving provides 3,000 locations and P&O staff hand pick from the shelves and the shelf trays. Access to the upper tiers is available via stairs or one of the two man and goods lifts.

The Result

With the new warehouse fully stocked and distribution handled in-house P&O Ferries has achieved its objectives. "With all of our products under one roof we have much better control of our stockholding and distribution," explained Griffiths. "Apex's racking and shelving has proved to be very versatile, we can move it around and add to it as necessary. Working with Apex has made our life easier – they became a seamless part of our team, meeting all of

the practical completion dates and providing us with a quality storage solution."



Above: Pallet racking in the freezing temperature of the cold store

Left: Linspace shelving on the multi-tier mezzanine



Shipshape Storage Solution



The Customer

P&O Ferries boasts the largest fleet of ships and the most comprehensive route network across the Channel. It is a name that has become synonymous with fast, efficient transport on comfortable ships for tourist passengers and freight services alike.

The Challenge

One of the great benefits of sailing is that passengers are free to eat and drink in a choice of restaurants or go shopping for a wide range of good value products in the on-board retail outlets. In order to keep the shops and restaurants of the P&O Ferries fleet well stocked the company has, in the past, operated two warehouses – one for gifts and one for perishables. In addition, a number of third party suppliers delivered to the fleet.

Last year a decision was made to consolidate the company's warehousing and take over the distribution of all supplies to their ships. The objective was to provide a better service to their on-board customers. A new 80,000 sq ft warehouse was proposed that could hold all the stock under one roof, thus making the company more efficient and allowing them to buy larger quantities of products at keener prices.

The Solution

A survey of the P&O ships was undertaken to decide the size and capacity of the warehouse building and a project manager was appointed, Mr Des Griffiths of Reality Project Management. He gave the operational specification of the building to Mr Bill McBlain of Millennium Storage & Interiors Ltd. He was put in charge of developing the warehouse building, appointing a storage provider and working with them to oversee the entire project.

As P&O stocks a product range in excess of 10,000 lines – varying in size from a lipstick to a pallet containing dozens of bottles of wine – the solution had to provide a wide diversity of storage. The finalised design included both pallet racking and drive-in racking for bulk storage, together with a multi-tier mezzanine which contains Longspan shelving for bulkier items and short-span shelving with bins for smaller items.

The Installation

“Getting the full range of storage systems from one UK supplier meant that the installation went very smoothly,” explained Griffiths. “When dealing with such a diverse solution the timing of deliveries is critical and Apex ensured that every element was delivered at exactly the right time in the installation schedule.”



The drive-in racking consists of two blocks of 12 bays, both five levels high and six deep. A very intense sprinkler system has been specified throughout the entire warehouse due to the stringent insurance requirements. As a consequence, some bespoke features were designed into the drive-in racking to maximise storage whilst protecting the sprinkler heads from the pallets as they are driven in and out.

There are over 4,000 pallet positions of adjustable pallet racking in the warehouse. This racking rises to a height of 10 metres in the main body of the warehouse to provide six levels of bulk storage.

“When we awarded the contract there were a number of decisive factors,” said Griffiths. The most important were speed of response, quality and range of products, and the ability to work to a tight timescale. Apex Linvar won through on all counts and went on to more than fulfil their initial promise.”



Above: Drive-in racking incorporates bespoke modifications with sprinkler protection

Left: Looking through the pallet racking to the drive-in racking

Left: Bulk storage on six levels of adjustable pallet racking

