

# Sun Garden, Poland

**A German firm that manufactures high-quality garden furniture in Poland, Sun Garden relies on a diverse fleet of warehouse and counterbalanced trucks from Toyota Material Handling, including the BT Pro Lifter M motorised hand pallet truck.**

Managing director Witold Jarecki tells the story: “The Sun Garden company was established in 1982 in Germany. Here in Poland we are their manufacturing plant, *Sun Garden Neuenkirchen*. We produce garden furniture, cushions, parasols, and chairs here in Malanów for the German and European markets. We have also been manufacturing mattresses for two years now. We manufacture one million a year, most of which are sold in Germany.

“This year we have been modernising our factory and adding additional warehouse space to make a total of about 10,000 m<sup>2</sup>, increasing the number of products we will ship by 27%. That’s 8000 lorry-loads.

“Since 2006 we have been manufacturing polyurethane foam. There are only eight such plants in Poland. For our own use we produce 7500 tons of foam per year, used to make mattresses and garden cushions. With such diversity of products a complete in-plant logistics system is necessary. We use all kinds of forklift trucks, from hand pallet trucks to counterbalance trucks.

“As this plant has been developing at a very quickly, we have invested in logistics year-on-year. It was done in an uncontrolled way to a certain extent, which is why we still have forklifts from various manufacturers. Six months ago we decided to use forklift trucks from only one manufacturer, to reduce costs. We announced a tender process to acquire a varied fleet of about 30 counterbalance and warehouse trucks with a full service agreement.

The best offer was presented by Toyota Material Handling Poland. They offered the best long-term rental option, together with a resident technician, responsible for repair, maintenance and periodic inspection of the fleet. At present we have 22 forklift trucks, including narrow aisle trucks, and

BT Lifter LHT100 – or Pro Lifter M – motorised hand pallet trucks.

“As our production takes place in various buildings, the logistics processes we use must be adapted. Counterbalanced trucks are used for transport between buildings, while the Pro Lifter M is used inside. They make the work a lot easier as it does not take so much effort to transport heavy loads. This solution was introduced recently and our employees are very satisfied with them.

“Two months ago we also decided to change our system of storing finished products in the warehouse to better use the available space. As a result, instead of standard racking with aisle widths of 3.6 m, we use BT narrow aisle trucks with a standard aisle width of 1.8 m. We rent three such trucks and narrow aisles have been implemented in approximately 4000 m<sup>2</sup> of the warehouse.

“We produce polyurethane foam in 2 x 2.2 m blocks so we need specialised equipment to handle it. Toyota has provided us with electric counterbalanced trucks with clamps, which make it possible to transport the foam blocks over a distance of 200 m – 300 m, inside and outside.

“To increase the utilisation and improve our oversight of each truck and operator we are implementing Toyota I\_Site. Each employee has received his or her own PIN code to start the trucks. This means we know who is operating any truck at a given time. The new trucks are also fitted with shock sensors. This system shuts the truck down in the event of a collision, so it is possible to assess and control damage due to improper use.

“Toyota I\_Site makes it possible to control the extent of authorisation given to each operator. For example, if we

employ a new person, it is possible to give him minimum authorisation, limiting the use of the truck only to its basic functions. As he gains experience, additional authorisation is granted, eg, the range of speeds he can use or the types of trucks and racking he can work on.

“After the introduction of Toyota I\_Site we have been extending the functions available within the system. Several additional functions have been added upon our request and they allow us even better supervision over our employees and also over batteries. We have gel batteries, which have to be managed appropriately.

“After six months’ cooperation with Toyota Material Handling Poland I must acknowledge the cooperation and the involvement of their representatives. The availability of repair and maintenance services is very important for us. After detailed arrangements and with such a fleet, finally, the response time of the repair and maintenance services is within four hours, if a failure occurs during the day, or up to 12 hours if a failure occurs at night.

“It is important for our plant because we work a three-shift system, and even seven days a week in some departments, so service availability is very important. Toyota Material Handling employees generally visit us every second or third day to ask about any problems.”

