



Think outside the box

SAFE AND EFFICIENT CONTAINER HANDLING IS THE LINCHPIN OF TODAY'S GLOBALISED SUPPLY CHAIN. TO IMPROVE JUST-IN-TIME DELIVERY OF CONTAINERISED FREIGHT AND MAKE THE TOTAL ORIGIN-TO-DESTINATION MOVEMENT MORE SEAMLESS, THE SIDE-LOADER IS GAINING GROUND AS THE TRANSPORT TOOL OF CHOICE, AS O'PHEE CAN ATTEST.

To Mick and Sharon O'Phee, Managing Directors of the eponymous trailer building business based in Queensland's transport hub of Rocklea, the future of modern container handling is already written. "The side-loader is the ideal solution to handle containerised freight in today's just-in-time supply chain," he says – revealing that demand for innovative side-loading technology is increasing by the day. "The purpose is not just to reduce origin-to-destination transport and handling or transfer costs, but to make the whole supply chain, including all involved transactions, more efficient and more responsive to our ever-changing market place," Mick says. "It's a just a great tool to have at your disposal if you're in the container business." As a response to the on-going demand

for container handling equipment, O'Phee has ventured into the field in 2011 and is now regarded an authority in what's still somewhat of a niche market. First presented at the Brisbane Truck Show in May 2011, O'Phee's BoXLoader model now has a fair share of that market – especially in transshipment hubs like Brisbane, Melbourne and Sydney. Available in Single, B-double and Road Train configuration, the O'Phee BoXLoader is the result of an international collaboration between O'Phee and French company BXL, which has gained a solid reputation for quality equipment in the European transport market. "BXL is a key player in the global side loader market, offering new technology and an acknowledged savoir faire," says Chairman and CEO of BXL, Vincent Sastre.

"The liaison of BXL and O'Phee is the perfect marriage between two privately owned companies, each with a different field of expertise." Based on O'Phee's tried and true light tare, high quality trailer frame technology, the new O'Phee BoXLoader is equipped with BXL's 35-tonne side loading cranes. "A double extension stabiliser gives it excellent stability, enabling it to handle containers of 20' and 40'," Vincent explains. "In a way, the O'Phee BoXLoader has revolutionised our industry by adding a new, affordable alternative to the mix," Mick adds. "It is based on the latest and most powerful software and computer system to ensure a high technological level and a maximum optimisation of both crane and stabiliser performance. Therefore, the cranes

are also equipped with CanBus technology and oil pressure sensors measuring the position of both cranes and stabilisers, together with the weight of the container, in order to prevent dangerous operations." In the field, the new technology has already proven itself. "It's more stable than other products on the market, and stability and safety is paramount," says Mick. "The stabiliser legs on the trailer reach further, making the whole system more stable – even when working in difficult environment."

But according to Mick, strong and reliable equipment like the O'Phee BoXLoader can even add value to the logistic chain performance as a whole. "A modern container vessel may require hundreds of trucks to pick up and deliver the shipload, so you don't want to waste time and money with inferior equipment. "In addition to that, the O'Phee BoXLoader is the perfect complementary tool allowing transport companies to drop/pick up containers in dedicated areas without being restricted by the availability of traditional

container handling equipment like gantry cranes, reachstackers or straddle carriers. "Plus, forklifts and specialised container lifters have a limited capability on unformed surfaces, and a very limited operational range when a container needs to be transported for even a modest distance. The O'Phee BoXLoader, however, can travel long distances and is capable of operating directly on uneven ground which hasn't been concreted." According to Mick, the market is now embracing that advantage more and more, as the 2013 Brisbane Truck Show has shown. After the successful launch of the original O'Phee BoXLoader model at the 2011 event, O'Phee again showcased the French-inspired trailer in Queensland last month. "The reaction was very positive," he says. "People now realise that the O'Phee BoXLoader has held its ground in Australia, which is an important milestone as I believe that real-life performance is key to success, not the spec sheet alone. "Of course payload is important too, but the most important thing is how the machine takes the strain of working fully loaded day in day out," he adds. "The final element is after sale value, and that's another strength of the O'Phee business. We know the Australian transport market inside out which is important to guarantee the long-term support of the product."

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