



Oxford Cold Storage
Melbourne, Australia

Paul Fleiszig,
Oxford Cold Storage

Initiative and innovation fast tracked at Oxford Cold Storage

Oxford Cold Storage is a family owned and operated business providing cold storage services to Australian food manufacturers, and distributors since 1975. It began specialising in Fast Moving Consumers Goods (FMCG) 15 years ago and since then experienced rapid growth. It is now the third largest provider of cold storage services and facilities in Australia with over 90 customers including Nestle, Fonterra and McCain. Its Melbourne base, in Laverton North, is the largest temperature controlled storage site in Australia and the National Distribution Centre for some of its largest customers.

The Challenge

When Oxford Cold Storage (OCS) commissioned a new 15,000 pallet cold store for George Weston Foods, it presented considerable challenges. The main issues revolved around the merger and acquisition of two smallgoods companies and the integration of their additional products.

“Without really knowing the number of SKU’s, we had to somehow configure the space in the most efficient way, optimising it for current storage and distribution needs, but building in provision for potential changes” said Paul Fleiszig, Director of OCS.

Adding to the challenge, OCS needed to fast track construction to meet a tight deadline. To manage the risks involved, OCS produced detailed specifications and invited a select group of prospective tenderers to a roundtable briefing. The aim was to focus on any unresolved issues and give all parties an opportunity to respond with solutions.

Dematic was well aware of OCS’s history of growth and innovation in the cold storage industry. It is an

experienced and savvy company which knows what it wants. To win the tender, Dematic would need to think ‘out of the box’.

“Dematic came back to us with some really innovative solutions. We worked through Dematic’s ideas and came up with something we think is really good.”

Paul Fleiszig, Director, Oxford Cold Storage

The George Weston Foods distribution centre comprises a freezer and chiller. The freezer is used primarily for reserve storage and is fitted out with double deep rack to provide an ideal combination of space utilisation and access to stock.

The chiller operation required a high level of picking, so a configuration involving two deep, two high pallet live storage was implemented. This enabled the separation of picking and replenishment aisles and provided a safer working space for both pickers and forklift operators.





Dematic's Joe Carmody with Oxford Cold Storage's Paul Fleiszig

Dematic recognised that there were several areas where smarter thinking could give OCS a better solution, including adapting its standard product to meet customer needs. Space optimisation and better OH&S were key target areas for improvement.

The first key innovation, which increased space utilisation and reduced storage costs, involved the precise positioning of beam levels to optimise both pallet clearance and use of headroom. The second involved mounting Palletflo tracks flush to the front and rear beams of the pallet live storage system, eliminating pallet overhang and catch points, creating a safer and more productive working environment.

Innovation delivers success

Because the tender was so tightly specified, Dematic and its competitors were all able to meet all the requirements for safety, durability, and maintenance, within a similar price range.

But it was Dematic's interaction in the tender process, during which it demonstrated initiative and innovation, that convinced OCS to award the project to Dematic.

"The project was not a standard build, there were going to be changes and there was the pressure of a tight deadline. We felt Dematic

was more professional, particularly in the implementation stage, and would do a better job," said Mr. Fleiszig.

When it came time for Dematic to begin erecting the rack, it continued to impress OCS with its initiative by efficiently dealing with onsite issues such as integrating the rack with the building columns by customising beams, ensuring valuable space was not wasted.

Because of its proactive, partnership approach with OCS, Dematic was able to anticipate problems and develop solutions to a range of issues before they delayed the project, enabling the George Weston Foods distribution centre to be finished on time.

Quality result creates more opportunities

By placing a high value on innovation, initiative and accountability, Dematic won the trust of a significant client and helped establish an ongoing partnership that has already led to further projects.

On completion of the George Weston Foods distribution centre, Dematic was asked by OCS to begin working on a new project - another large scale storage installation designed to increase capacity at the Laverton site.

The new project was based on the cold storage specialist's standard rack configuration with low level picking and double deep racking designed to provide a flexible balance between space utilisation and order picking functionality.

"Oxford Cold Storage is a service-focussed company, we are innovative, proactive and growing. It's natural for us to seek companies to demonstrate similar values."

Paul Fleiszig, Director, Oxford Cold Storage

Customer benefits

→ Safer, more productive work environment

→ Increased storage capacity and better access to stock

→ More efficient use of space with consequent reductions in product storage costs
