

## Powering the future of forklifts

24 July 2025

**The industrial landscape is shifting, and the forklift sector is changing with it. While the demand for efficient material handling remains strong, manufacturers are facing growing pressures from increased competition, shifting global trade policies, and evolving customer expectations.**

With little sign of any of these factors fading over the coming years, the challenge manufacturers now face is how to adapt to them without compromising on quality or performance. After all, the vital role played by forklifts—and the consequences of any failures—means that components must not only be cost-effective but also reliable, adaptable, and well-supported.

This is where Regal Rexnord's expertise in power transmission solutions plays a crucial role, helping OEMs navigate these pressures with engineered solutions designed for efficiency, durability, and long-term value. Additionally, as the industry moves toward electrification, many of Regal Rexnord's products are designed to support OEMs in transitioning their machines to electric power, improving efficiency and sustainability.

### **Countering cost pressures with smart engineering**

Cost remains a defining factor in the forklift sector, particularly as competition from new markets grows. Asian manufacturers now hold around 30% of the European market, shifting the balance in the industry, particularly for smaller trucks. To remain competitive, manufacturers must find ways to reduce costs without sacrificing performance.

One key approach is the development of more compact, high-efficiency components. Regal Rexnord has invested in engineering solutions that allow for downsized systems, helping forklift OEMs reduce materials, weight, and production costs while maintaining—or even improving—performance. This is particularly critical as manufacturers look to create more energy-efficient and streamlined forklift designs. Many of these innovations also align with the ongoing shift toward electric forklifts, where lightweight, efficient components are essential for maximizing battery life and operational performance.

At the same time, localized manufacturing is helping to counteract the rising impact of tariffs. By producing in multiple locations across three continents, Regal Rexnord ensures that customers can source high-quality, tariff-optimized components without disruption.

### **Key technologies driving forklift evolution**

As forklift designs evolve, manufacturers are looking for more than just individual components—they need integrated solutions that enhance performance across the entire vehicle system.

For example, one of the key areas of focus is the integration of electronics into mechanical components. By incorporating features such as built-in speed sensors within brakes, forklift manufacturers can simplify system architecture, reduce the part count, and lower overall assembly costs. This level of engineering integration is helping streamline forklift production while enhancing vehicle performance and reliability. These advancements are especially important as the industry embraces electrification, where precise control and efficiency are key to optimizing electric drivetrains.

Customization is another growing trend in forklift design. OEMs are increasingly looking for tailored braking solutions, rather than generic, one-size-fits-all products.

Regal Rexnord has responded by offering flexible configurations for its braking systems, ensuring that forklift manufacturers can fine-tune performance to meet their exact specifications.

### **Lifting expectations**

Beyond braking, lift chain technology is also seeing significant advances. While chains may seem like a simple component, their performance has a direct impact on forklift reliability and service life. Regal Rexnord's latest precision-engineered lift chains allow manufacturers to reduce component size while extending maintenance intervals, ensuring long-term operational efficiency.

At the same time, the forklift sector is shifting toward a more holistic approach to powertrain design. Rather than treating components as standalone elements, manufacturers are looking for bundled solutions that work seamlessly together.

Regal Rexnord's strength lies in its ability to provide a comprehensive offering, integrating components such as brakes, chains, and bearings into a cohesive power transmission system. This approach simplifies procurement, reduces supply chain complexity, and ensures compatibility across the entire forklift drivetrain.

Moreover, the company's global manufacturing footprint ensures consistent product quality across all regions, making it easier for OEMs to source standardized components regardless of production location.

### **Looking to the future**

As forklifts become more advanced, efficient, and cost-sensitive, the need for high-performance, engineered components is greater than ever. By combining innovative materials, system integration, and localized production, Regal Rexnord is helping manufacturers navigate a changing market while staying competitive.

**Image captions:**



**Image 1:** As forklifts become more advanced, efficient, and cost-sensitive, the need for high-performance, engineered components is greater than ever.

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## About Regal Rexnord

Regal Rexnord Corporation is a global leader in the engineering and manufacturing of automation sub-systems, industrial powertrain solutions, automation and power transmission components, electric motors and electronic controls, air moving products, and specialty electrical components and systems, serving customers around the world. Through longstanding technology leadership and an intentional focus on producing more energy-efficient products and systems, Regal Rexnord helps create a better tomorrow – for its customers and for the planet.

Following the acquisition of Altra, and commencing with its 1Q 2023 earnings release, Regal Rexnord will report under four operating segments: Industrial Powertrain Solutions, Power Efficiency Solutions, Automation & Motion Control and Industrial Systems. Regal Rexnord is headquartered in Beloit, Wisconsin and has manufacturing, sales, and service facilities worldwide.

For more information, visit [RegalRexnord.com](https://www.RegalRexnord.com)

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