

Phoenix Foods



Phoenix Foods is a Corby-based developer and manufacturer of a wide range of dry food products which it supplies to retailers and supermarkets. Product lines include instant desserts, custards, corn flours, hot chocolate drinks and teas.

The business is headquartered at a 55,000 square foot site which incorporates a 25,000 warehouse facility in Corby, Northamptonshire. From here, Phoenix distributes to supermarket chains and other retailers across the UK.

The Business Problem

In 2008/09, following a change in the ownership structure of Phoenix Foods, the company embarked on a strategy for the rapid expansion of its product portfolio, manufacturing infrastructure, packaging lines and warehouse facilities to serve its growing base of retail clients.

To support this growth programme, Phoenix's Operations Director, Gary Rutter, was tasked with overseeing a complete overhaul of the warehousing and logistics functions of the business.

The Requirement

One of the first tasks was to undertake a review of the existing warehouse and logistics facilities and operations. The first requirement identified by the review was a modernisation of the existing warehouse facilities, starting with a doubling of warehouse capacity for raw materials, packaging and finished goods.

The first phase of the planned expansion would entail moving from a single production shift to a double shift and then subsequently to a triple shift – all of which would create an enormous requirement for storage capacity.

The immediate need therefore was for the installation of a total of 300 racking locations quickly in order to make use of existing warehouse space. The subsequent expansion plans would each require a further 200 – 300 racking locations to be created, using wherever possible the existing warehouse footprint.

The Solution

Due to their status as an incumbent supplier to Phoenix Foods (of annual racking inspections), Acorn was invited to submit a proposal through a formal tender process. The tender resulted in three companies, including Acorn, being shortlisted. Acorn emerged as the winner out of this process, offering a cost-effective racking solution, immediate availability to commence the project planning and scoping work, and a flexible implementation schedule that would allow Phoenix to continue its operations throughout the installation, with only minimal downtime.

Key benefits

Following successful completion of Stage 1 of the warehouse modernisation project, Acorn was appointed to supply a series of 4 further phases of warehouse expansion and refitting. The main benefits for Phoenix Foods in working with Acorn Warehouse Solutions during the subsequent 3 year period have been:

- Cost-effective racking solutions making best use of existing space
- 'Live' installations which allowed business operations to continue with little downtime
- A hygienically safe approach reflecting the nature of the goods stored in the warehouse
- Flexibility of approach, evidenced by project teams working weekends and nights to get the job done

“ Everyone at Acorn Warehouse Solutions from the MD to the implementation teams is willing and able to work to our exacting health and safety requirements, timescales and budgets. They always provide us with a range of implementation options and are very flexible and accommodating every step of the way.”

Gary Rutter

Operations Director, Phoenix Foods

Acorn Warehouse Solutions has over 30 years' experience of designing and delivering bespoke warehouse solutions for clients across the UK and Europe. Based in Cambridge, the company designs and supplies all types of warehouse solutions from large high bay racking systems, to single bays of shelving, mezzanine floors and complete, turnkey solutions including warehouse management systems. Acorn's highly experienced consultants also perform racking inspections, safety audits and complete warehouse health and safety assessments.