



Buying second-hand equipment can save you time and money – and there is even the useful side-effect that you are saving environmental resources, too.

Felicity Landon reports

With delivery times for new kit getting out of control – not to mention prices – demand for second-hand port handling products is growing, says Teichmann Cranes, which specialises in sourcing, refurbishing and selling such equipment.

“If you are running a busy port, often it is unacceptable to replace a piece of equipment with a new system, because 16 to 24 months’ delivery for a new crane is standard and you can’t wait that long,” says Frank Müller, Teichmann’s sales manager for port & harbour equipment. “A professionally refurbished crane is the perfect solution for smaller ports and terminals, especially when they need equipment short-term or now.”

Mr Müller says the market for high-quality second-hand grab and container cranes is very busy at present, as customers look to opportunities that offer cost savings and fast delivery, particularly in comparison with the long lead times for current newbuilds.

“People who know about cranes are very happy if they have good structures, of conventional steel construction, equipped with newest technology – the perfect combination of robust design and new brains,” he says.

Triple hit

Jim Fields, sales director at UK-based Fields International, which supplies new and used plant and equipment, says the market for second-hand kit is buoyant. “It is very busy at the moment and there is high demand for all aspects of equipment, from container handling to ro-ro to general cargo,” he says.

For many ports, second-hand is a good solution when entering a new business sector, he adds. “We have done quite a bit for ports which don’t want to risk a major investment in new kit when they are just going into a new area of business.”

Teichmann offers cranes and lifting appliances ranging from 1 to 200 tonnes and is able to dismantle, rebuild, transport and reassemble. The company has nearly 120 different cranes in stock, says Mr Müller.

“Sometimes the owners of cranes do offer equipment which they do not require anymore, but part of our operation is that we keep constant contact with everybody who potentially sells interesting cranes, and we know what we can do to modify equipment to meet a new customer’s specification – basically that is crucial to finding a new place for the equipment.”

Because Teichmann has the knowledge – and in-house expertise – to modify and refurbish these cranes, customers can benefit from an “as new” piece of equipment that has effectively been adapted to their needs.

However, it isn’t for everyone, concedes Mr Müller: “The major global port companies operate on a different basis and usually buy new. But there are private entrepreneurs who are definitely doing the exercise and are always looking for possibilities to save money – and their first priority isn’t uniformity, it is that they need it now.”

Teichmann employs about 100 people at its Essen base, where it has a yard of 10,000 m² and also stores components for sale.

“The customer can take a crane as it is or we modify to their specification – changing the dimensions, capacity, electrical equipment, control system, etc.,” says Mr Müller. “We have people across all of the skills, from electrical engineering and welding engineering through to construction and steel work. We also do installation and commissioning, and have our own 24/7 service team.”

He says that depending on the availability of components – another issue, particularly in today’s skill-starved Europe – a piece of kit can be delivered in four to six months, fully rebuilt.

And the green aspect? It is, he says, a “reasonable and intelligent way of saving valuable environmental resources and we are proud of this. But we don’t think this is the major factor in customer choice. It is a positive side-effect.”

PS

Second-hand, not second class

The northeast England port of Blyth found second-hand to be the best option when it required an additional reachstacker for its container operations; it has recently bought a second-hand Terex TFC45 R.

“When looking for back-up, our view was that a second-hand crane made perfect sense, particularly as it is identical, including in age and hours, to one of our other reachstackers –

simplifying maintenance, etc.,” says Port of Blyth chief executive Martin Lawlor.

“As a niche container port focusing on value-added services – devanning, strategic stockholding, repalletising, JIT, etc – rather than high intensity throughput, it made perfect business sense acquiring a five-year-old machine with low hours for less than half the new price.”

Used goods: Blyth sees sense in second-hand purchases

