

Always plenty of work

"We always have a lot of work on", was Mike Southwards response when asked how business has been lately.

"Even during the GFC we had plenty of work come our way."

The Cambridge-based company specialises in designing and constructing custom-made storage solutions for a wide range of industries and businesses.

Using Stow industrial racking and shelving systems manufactured in China and Europe, Mike develops, installs and maintains tailor-made storage systems designed to make maximum use of available space inside a building.

Southward Shelving and Racking recently designed and installed a sophisticated storage management system for Waikato chilled and frozen storage company IcePak based in Waharoa.

"They were looking for a storage system that would allow maximum volumes to be stored using minimal staff and this is where the Stow shuttle system using a forklift wire-guided on tracks comes into its own."

Mike says within the next five years the guided driver-less system will become more and more mainstreamed.

When first asked to design a storage system, Mike sits down with the client and talks through exactly what their specific needs are. Factors such as the nature and frequency stock is moved, the volumes put through all impact on the ultimate best design.

"Once we have agreed and if it is a complete new build, then the building is designed around the storage system,

not the reverse. In this way the very best outcome can be achieved. The racking is designed around the product and the building around the racking."

Mike says one of the key strength of the Stow products he is registered to use is that the European-based company has kept the same managers and Directors since it began.

"I went to China to look at what they had available, manufactured at their factory that was run by Europeans to the same spec as the European factories. I found a state of the art manufacturing plant that produces a great quality product, both in terms of the system options and the manufacturing process."

Mike says with the cost of warehousing everybody is looking at maximising floor space. By designing a bespoke system up to 30% floor space efficiency can be achieved.

"That, essentially means the floor area can be 30% smaller and still store the same amount of product."

The key to efficient storage outcomes Mike says is in getting involved in a project from inception. He describes Southward Shelving and Racking as a 'boutique' company, specialising in one-off projects for a client based made up of a large percentage of long-term clients.

"This works really well because they know what our capabilities are and want us involved right from the start of a project, be it a new build or a refurbishment. In this way we can design and deliver the best possible solution which is future-proofed for that business."



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The integrated deep lane storage and retrieval pallet shuttle system

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