



Ferguson Box

- Mezzanine System
- VRC Material Lift
- Wildeck® Welded Stairs



Ferguson Box Implements “Core” Operation Philosophy

A premiere manufacturer and distributor of packaging solutions utilizes Wildeck® products to achieve maximum space utilization and efficiency.



Maintenance Area Under Mezzanine



Wildeck® Welded Stairs



Wildeck® VRC Material Lift

“**I**nnovation beyond the box” is not just a company slogan; it is a way of doing business at Charlotte, NC based Ferguson Box. With offices and manufacturing operations appropriately located on “Quality Drive,” this progressive and service oriented manufacturer has built a solid reputation as a complete packaging solutions provider.

Ferguson Supply and Box manufactures and distributes custom and stock corrugated boxes, containers, displays, bags, packaging supplies, foam products, as well as graphic art and design services. With the company’s in-house structure and graphic design team, Ferguson has the ability to take a packaging concept from an idea to the retail shelf or safely into the customers’ hands.

Their facilities were previously divided at two locations totaling approximately 212,000 square feet. After rethinking their processes, organizational methods, and material flow they elected to

consolidate into one 185,000 sq. ft. modern facility and implement a “core” operation philosophy.

With increasing business and a 27,000 sq. ft. reduction in their total building space, achieving maximum efficiency and organization was essential.

Wildeck® material handling solutions provided the necessary components to facilitate the reduction in square footage. More importantly, by strategically locating the mezzanine, a “core” area for supplies was established close to manufacturing.

Terry Pridgen, Ferguson’s Plant Superintendent, simply states, “Wildeck products add SPACE.” With



A 6,500 sq. ft. mezzanine combined with a Vertical Reciprocating Conveyor (VRC) strategically located in Ferguson Box’s facility provides valuable space and improves material flow.

Ferguson’s focus on maximizing organization and shifting all operations to one smaller facility, the added space was integral to their material flow.

“The core location of the mezzanine maximizes our efficiency and keeps everything within easy reach,” continues Pridgen. “The easy access allows our operators to quickly switch over jobs while protecting and moving printing plates and cutting dies.”

According to Pridgen, the added space and efficiency provided by the Wildeck® mezzanine and VRC have provided numerous operational benefits.

1. Tooling storage for the converting machines, printing plates and dies.

These delicate items damage easily and are costly to replace. The mezzanine level protects and stores while the VRC easily transports material to the manufacturing level.

2. Space optimization. The goal of manufacturing is to keep overhead costs low and maximize profitability. The cost of a Wildeck® mezzanine vs. the cost of increasing building floorspace is dramatically different.



Ferguson Box uses the added space provided by the Wildeck® mezzanine to store fragile and costly printing plates and dies. Accessible storage is essential to Ferguson’s “core” operation philosophy.

For more information on Wildeck® mezzanine systems, material lifts (VRCs), and safety guarding products,

Economically, it is more advantageous to utilize existing overhead space. Mezzanines also qualify for accelerated capital equipment depreciation compared to the longer terms associated with permanent building improvements.

3. Central core location.

In keeping with the organization's philosophy, the improvements have kept necessary materials and components close to the manufacturing area, thereby maximizing production efficiency.

4. Time savings. Ferguson prides itself on organization, which greatly reduces the amount of time on each job. The new process is one that anyone could learn with only one hour of training. Now, they do not have to rely on someone's memory to locate specific materials.

“The aesthetic appeal of Wildeck's products showcases our facility in the best lime-light. They provide a huge opportunity to increase customer confidence in our quality and production efficiency.”

5. Aesthetic appeal of the plant. This is an often overlooked benefit of Wildeck's mezzanines and lifts, but to Ferguson Box, it is a huge advantage for their business. Ferguson Box frequently invites its “A-list” clientele to tour the facility, and first impressions matter. The tour showcases the facility, which creates trusting relationships and increases business. An organized and uncluttered feel to the operations and facility convinces guests to trust Ferguson with their work. A smooth running and organized operation helps to showcase Ferguson's quality and production efficiency. The tour promotes Ferguson Box's strong customer service and validates them as a perfect fit for the customer.

Terry Pridgen and Gene Massey, Plant Manager, are dedicated to organizing the plant, which is not just about operations; but presenting the full ability of the company. The Wildeck® mezzanine and material lift contribute greatly to the success of Ferguson's operation in several ways.

1. Safe storage. The mezzanine stores several key production items, including thousands of cutting dies. They tell the machines where, when, and how the boxes need to be cut and perforated. Delicate printing plates are also stored on the mezzanine. These two items are critical to their customers' production and are easily damaged and prone to accidents. With some 4,000 of these items to keep safe at any time, Terry has plans to relocate to a new



Wildeck's VRC saves time and safely transports dies to the production area.



Wildeck, Inc., headquartered in Waukesha, WI, is the largest manufacturer of mezzanines, vertical lifts and safety guarding products for safe and efficient handling, storage and movement of materials. For more than 30 years, the company has grown through a dedicated and experienced network of customer-service-oriented dealers and systems integrators, nationwide.

For more information on the complete line of Wildeck® products and services, visit www.wildeck.com or e-mail info@wildeck.com.



tool storage area to consolidate and maximize inventory space.

2. Easy access. The VRC material lift operates frequently every day. Tooling is stored up on the mezzanine and when the tooling technician pulls items for their production schedule, the items are brought down on the material lift. Some of the box cutting dies can weigh thousands of pounds, so employees use a special cart to transport them onto the lift and to the machine.

“The Wildeck® mezzanine and lift have provided our new facility with the space we need to accomplish our goals.”

3. The space below the mezzanine is also maximized to its fullest potential. There are several defined areas that contribute to the centralized “core” operation philosophy Ferguson Box embraces. By focusing on the different aspects of certain areas, it has dramatically

increased the efficiency of the following operations:

- Maintenance Shop
- Ink Kitchen
- Fulfillment Area / Pack Out

Ferguson Box’s unique ink station allows the company to make its own ink. By having the ink on location, they are able to fill customer orders faster and reduce ink inventory.

“The location of the mezzanine factored into the location of the ink in our operation,” Pridgen explains. “With the ink isolated and organized, it is easy to determine the inventory, control costs, and analyze the amount used on each job.”

At this point, Ferguson Box operates efficiently with two shifts using the space they currently have. Growth will fill their current operations, and when a third shift is added, space will have to be assessed, adjusted, and increased to accommodate the additional business.

One of the owners, Paige Ferguson Burgess, states in *Paperboard Packaging* magazine, “(I am) quick to point out that the success of Ferguson Box is a team effort. Growth comes from the guidance of very knowledgeable managers with a positive attitude, well-timed acquisitions, being located in an economically healthy region, a diverse product mix, and a strong customer focus.”

Terry Pridgen is extremely pleased with the combination Wildeck® mezzanine and VRC lift installed in Ferguson’s facility.

“The mezzanine and lift have provided our new facility with the space and efficiency we need to accomplish our goals,” says Pridgen. “We are able to have our dies and materials readily available for use on our equipment. As a result, we are able to maximize our efficiency in an organized fashion; and that greatly adds to our bottom line.”



Fully welded Wildeck® stairs provide safe access to the mezzanine level at multiple locations.

Wildeck’s dealer network is the core of our success. Thanks to Todd Harris and the professionals at LiftOne for their excellent service, representation, and the opportunity to feature Ferguson Box in this case study.



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