

GULF WAREHOUSING COMPANY

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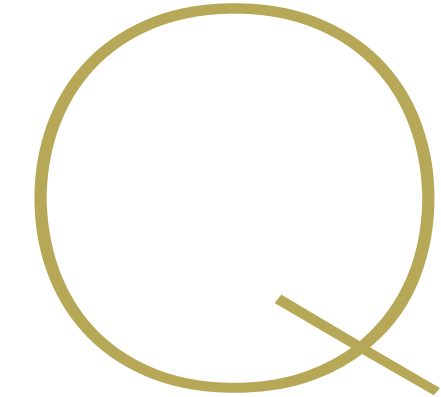
CORPORATE BROCHURE





From strength to strength


Since opening its first warehouse in 2005, Doha-based Gulf Warehousing Company has grown at an impressive rate. Chief executive officer Ranjeev Menon talks to Gay Sutton about building the new Logistics Village and plans to replicate this highly successful business model internationally



atar is a peninsula of land some 100 miles long, surrounded on three sides by the warm and salty waters of the Persian Gulf and linked to the Arabian peninsula by a narrow 35-mile border with Saudi Arabia. As a consequence, its summers are not only very hot but also very humid, while the winters are mild. Like its Arab Emirates neighbours, the country has a reputation for enormous oil wealth, and has translated this into phenomenal growth. Its per-capita GDP is among the highest in the world, and this is likely to continue for a considerable period of time following the discovery of significant gas reserves off the north-east coast. Meanwhile, Qatar has attracted and hosted such international sporting events as the Asian Games in 2006 and the Pan Arab Games this winter, and won the bid a year ago to host the 2022 FIFA World Cup.

New logistics trends are beginning to take shape in the Qatari business world, pioneered by Gulf Warehousing Company (GWC), a Doha-based warehousing and logistics company that listed on the Qatar stock exchange in 2004. The company began operating in 2005 with a single small warehouse and a few vehicles, and has grown to become Qatar's largest logistics provider in terms of infrastructure, employees and range of services.

"We do everything in-house—we don't outsource any of our core activities," explains chief executive officer Ranjeev Menon. "This means we train all our 1,100 staff to provide a customer-oriented service, and focus on




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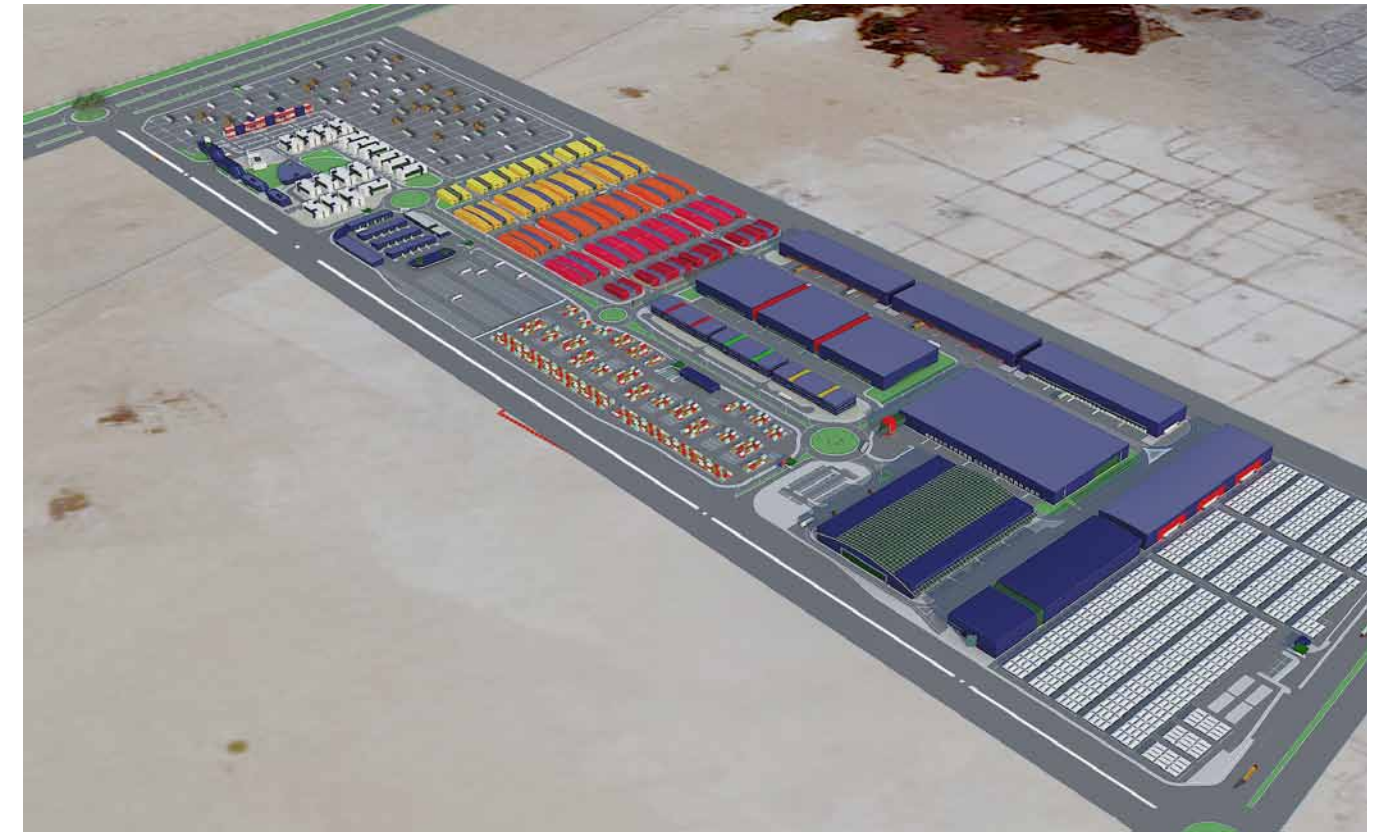
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“ We train all our 1,100 staff to provide a customer-oriented service ”



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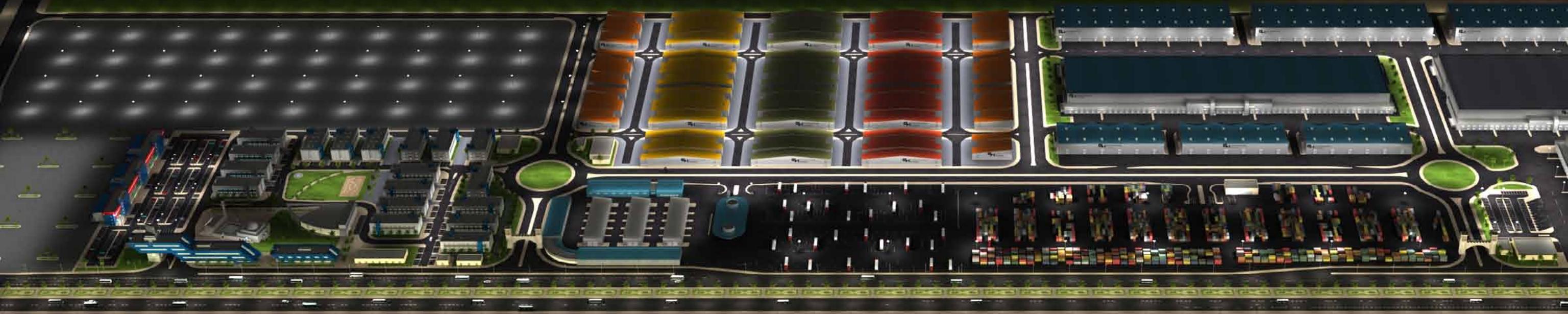
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delivering the job right.” Finding the necessary skills sets for these specialised areas is always a challenge, and GWC addresses this by appointing people with in-depth logistics experience and then providing extensive and ongoing training in the appropriate specialist areas.

“Our operations are broken down into various departments or solutions, and we have a separate specialist team within each department,” Menon explains. Warehousing and transportation and freight management lie at the heart of the business: there are five major warehouses located in the key industrial areas, and two of them provide chilled and frozen temperature-controlled zones for the food industry. Meanwhile, the company operates a fleet of 351 trucks and over 700 trailers maintained and serviced by a

staff of 25 engineers. Freight forwarding services and transportation management is provided throughout the GCC states.

Over the years, the company has added a range of more specialised logistics and warehousing services including the storage of hazardous chemicals at Ras Laffan for the oil and gas industry in the north of the country. The state-of-the-art flagship chemical facilities are the first ISO-certified and government-approved chemical storage facilities able to service third parties, providing segregation of chemicals in accordance with the stringent US CFR 49 (Code of Federal Regulations) standard; temperature-controlled storage; fire-rated walls and doors; explosion-proof lighting; and separated spill tanks. The company also provides relocation



services; rack-up management—an archiving service for the banks; asset management; and consultation services.

With Qatar increasingly prominent as a global sporting event destination, the company has developed a sport and events logistics service which includes freight and transporting event equipment along with expertise in managing the event. The most recent addition to the service portfolio is the Fine Art solution: this involves packing and transporting valuable museum items and fine art from around the world, under high security, and then installing them in the Qatar museum.

Doha is very much a growing market, says Menon, and GWC aims to carve out an even larger market share by identifying and exploiting future gaps in the marketplace, and promoting a wider use of outsourced logistics. “Awareness of third party logistics (3PL) is still not very widespread here in Qatar. Many companies believe in setting up their own warehouses and running their own

logistics operations. Our strategy, going forward, is to educate them about the benefits of using a 3PL provider, so they can reduce operational costs and increase efficiency by forgetting about the logistics headache and focusing on their core business.”

As part of the drive for greater efficiency and an integrated and comprehensive service provision, GWC is investing around two billion Qatari riyal in the construction of a large integrated one million square metre logistics facility, appropriately named the Logistics Village Qatar. Phase I became fully operational in May 2011 and includes eight new warehouses, a container yard and storage facility, a fully equipped repair depot for maintaining the fleet of vehicles, and a data centre. Phase II is in progress, and the final phase should be completed by 2013. “When completed, it will enable us to offer a unified distribution service from a single location.”

IT plays an important part in running a seamless

“If there is an acquisition that will really work for us we will look at it: we don’t want to shut that option out”

operation capable of providing complete 3PL services, and the new data centre is integral to that. “The data centre is the hub of our IT infrastructure, and houses the warehouse management, transport and freight management systems that manage all arms of the operation, and these are linked through our business process management system, giving us a dashboard and summary of all our activities.”

Extremely high standards of performance are expected from each area of the business. The hazardous chemicals facility, for example, is used by many of the global petrochemical and oil and gas companies. It has recently been awarded the contract to store hazardous

materials for the various leading oil and gas companies operating the world’s largest GTL plant, converting petroleum gas to liquid. From a quality management perspective, the company currently holds ISO 9001:2008 for general management, ISO 18001:2007 for health and safety, ISO 14001:2004 for environmental performance and ISO 22000:2005 for hygiene and food storage.

Menon believes that organic growth creates the greatest stability. “However, down the road if there is an acquisition that will really work for us we will look at it: we don’t want to shut that option out,” he concludes.

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