

INTERNATIONAL

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# rental

NEWS

A KHL Group Publication

Volume 14 Issue 3 April-May 2014

**Hewden's core fleet strategy paying off**

**p54**

**Shortlists announced for European Rental Awards**

**p25**

**Leigh Ainsworth on making Coates Hire more efficient**

**p13**

# Compaction

**New rollers, plate compactors and rammers**

**p39**

Official magazine of the ERA



**INSIDE: ASSET TRACKING, APPLETON COLUMN**

**IRE EXHIBITION GUIDE #17**  
Top suppliers sign up for Amsterdam rental show



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## Rental emerges from M&A slumber

**E**verywhere you looked in March there were acquisitions or significant deals being made, with four big stories in three different continents, and all very significant in their own ways.

First up was United Rentals, spending more than \$700 million to acquire a sizeable pump rental business, National Pump & Compressor. This played into United's strategy of diversifying away from pure construction markets - more than 60% of National Pumps' sales are with customers in oil and gas or petrochemicals.

The price was high for a company with annual revenues of just over \$200 million, but as our correspondent Jeff Eisenberg writes in this issue, it might still prove to be a good investment if United can hit the growth targets it has set (a doubling of pump rental revenues within five years.)

The deal also emphasised that United continues to see big opportunities in its home market, despite speculation about its intentions in other, emerging rental areas.

In Europe it was Zeppelin Rentals making the headlines with a deal to acquire a large part of Hochtief's Streif Baulegistik rental business. Apart from expanding Zeppelin's activities - not least in support of Hochtief - it also seemed to be a significant change of policy towards fleet management by a major European contractor.

The acquisition did not include Streif's tower crane or formwork rentals operations, although Hochtief is now considering its options for these activities. Hochtief said the sale was part of its strategy to "concentrate on our core business". It will be interesting to see what decision it makes on its tower cranes and formwork - a sale would indeed signal a big shift in strategy towards outsourcing.

The Middle East transaction, meanwhile, shows that diversification works both ways, with a car rental company deciding that buying an equipment rental business made some sense: hence Hanco of Saudi Arabia acquiring Byrne Equipment Rental, one of the biggest rental firms in the Middle East. For Hanco, the deal gives it activities outside Saudi Arabia and the opportunity to apply its car rental expertise in managing an equipment business.

A widely anticipated reversal of that - a car renter getting rid of its equipment business - finally took place in March with Hertz making the decision to spin-off its Hertz Equipment Rental Corp (HERC) division to shareholders (the spin-off will actually take place at the start of 2015). Some shareholders had been agitating for a divestment for a while - HERC is a very capital thirsty business - and the spin-off arrangement offers tax advantages. Exactly what it will mean for an independent HERC remains to be seen.

Although different in nature, the scale of the four transactions shows that equipment rental is emerging from a mergers and acquisitions slumber. Having emerged, we can expect more.

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**KHL's rental portfolio**[www.khl.com/information-store](http://www.khl.com/information-store)**EUROPEAN RENTAL AWARDS 2014**[www.khl.com/rentalawards](http://www.khl.com/rentalawards)**ire**[www.ireshow.com](http://www.ireshow.com)**INTERNATIONAL rental CONFERENCE ASIA**[www.khl.com/irc](http://www.khl.com/irc)**rental tracker**[www.khl.com/rentaltracker](http://www.khl.com/rentaltracker)**rental newsletter**[www.khl.com/enewsletter/](http://www.khl.com/enewsletter/)**rentalweekly**[www.khl.com/enewsletter/](http://www.khl.com/enewsletter/)

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# ...inside

**REGULARS**

**NEWS & KHL.COM ROUND-UP 6**

Hertz to spin-off-HERC, Loxam's 2013 results; Zeppelin buys Streif; IRC conference speaker update; Hanco buys Byrne Equipment, IRN100 data request; IRN Rental Share Index; plus other news from the world's rental sector.



**KEVIN APPLETON COLUMN 11**

Having made several rental acquisitions in his career *Kevin Appleton* is well-placed to offer guidance on common mistakes to avoid.

**INTERVIEW: LEIGH AINSWORTH, COATES HIRE 13**

Coates Hire's chief executive tells *IRN* that the focus now is on making the company more efficient as Australia weathers a natural resources slowdown.



**SHOW REPORT: CONEXPO-CON/AGG, LAS VEGAS 51**

KHL's editorial team report from the massive Conexpo show in Las Vegas, where North America's buoyant market was again in evidence.



**INTERVIEW: HEWDEN 54**

Hewden's 'Core Fleet Guarantee' is working, with more business with small and medium sized customers and higher utilisation on the core products. *Murray Pollok* reports.



**ERA PAGE 63**

The European Rental Association (ERA) has chosen 'Internet as a Game Changer' as the theme for its upcoming convention in Amsterdam on 24-26 June. The ERA explains what it wants to achieve.

**FACES & PLACES 65**

**READER SUBSCRIPTION FORM 66**

How to subscribe to *IRN*.

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■ See page 8 for more on [khl.com](http://khl.com).

**FEATURES**

**INTERNATIONAL RENTAL EXHIBITION (IRE): GUIDE 17**

A five-page guide to the companies exhibiting at the IRE show in Amsterdam on 24-26 June, including a look at the new products that will be on show.



**EUROPEAN RENTAL AWARDS/ ERA CONVENTION 25**

The latest programme for the ERA's Amsterdam Convention, plus details of all the companies shortlisted for the European Rental Awards, being held on 25 June at the same time as the ERA convention and IRE show.



**PRODUCT FEATURE: COMPACTION 39**

*IRN* reports on some of the latest rollers, plate compactors and rammers on the market, with a special focus on rental-friendly products.



**SPECIAL REPORT: ASSET TRACKING/ THEFT PREVENTION 46**

More and more emphasis is being put on telematics systems and asset tracking technology, as *Murray Pollok* reports.



**SAMOTER: GUIDE 57**

*IRN* previews the Samoter exhibition, being held in Verona, Italy, on 8-11 May.



**RENTAL MANAGEMENT: UNITED'S LATEST ACQUISITION 58**

*Jeff Eisenberg* scrutinises the financial aspects of United Rentals' latest big acquisition, of National Pump & Compressor, one of the largest pump rental businesses in North America.



**ACCESS RENTAL REPORTS 61**

IPAF releases its latest access rental market reports for Europe and North America. *IRN* gives its readers a sneak preview.

**...outside**

Volvo's SD135 is among the products covered in this month's compaction equipment feature, starting on page 39.



## DIARY DATES

## 2014

**SAMOTER**

8-11 May, 2014.  
Verona, Italy  
[www.samoter.com](http://www.samoter.com)

**INTERNATIONAL RENTAL EXHIBITION (IRE)**

24-26 June, 2014.  
Amsterdam, NL  
[www.ireshow.com](http://www.ireshow.com)

**ERA CONVENTION**

24-26 June, 2014.  
Amsterdam, NL  
[www.erarental.org](http://www.erarental.org)

**APEX**

24-26 June, 2014.  
Amsterdam, NL.  
[www.apexshow.com](http://www.apexshow.com)

**EUROPEAN RENTAL AWARDS**

25 June, 2014.  
Amsterdam, NL  
[www.khl.com/rentalawards](http://www.khl.com/rentalawards)

**EUROPLATFORM ACCESS RENTAL CONFERENCE**

25 September, 2014.  
Cologne, Germany.  
[www.europlatform.info](http://www.europlatform.info)

**THE SHOWMAN'S SHOW**

22-23 October, 2014.  
Newbury, UK.  
[www.showmans-directory.co.uk](http://www.showmans-directory.co.uk)

**INTERNATIONAL RENTAL CONFERENCE (IRC)**

24 November, 2014. Shanghai, China  
[www.khl.com/irc](http://www.khl.com/irc)

**BAUMA CHINA**

25-28 November, 2014.  
Shanghai, China.  
[www.bauma-china.com](http://www.bauma-china.com)

## 2015

**THE RENTAL SHOW**

22-25 February, 2015.  
New Orleans, US.  
[www.intermatconstruction.com](http://www.intermatconstruction.com)

**IAPA AWARDS 2015**

26 March, 2015  
Washington DC, USA  
[www.iapa-summit.info](http://www.iapa-summit.info)

**INTERMAT**

20-25 April, 2015.  
Paris, France  
[www.intermatconstruction.com](http://www.intermatconstruction.com)

## 2016

**BAUMA**

11-17 April, 2016.  
Munich, Germany.  
[www.bauma.de](http://www.bauma.de)

# Hertz to spin-off HERC division

Hertz Corp is to spin-off its equipment rental division, Hertz Equipment Rental Corp (HERC), in a US\$2.5 billion deal that is expected to close in early 2015.

The separation of HERC from the car rental businesses is planned in the form of a tax-free spin-off to Hertz shareholders. Hertz said proceeds of the transaction will be approximately US\$2.5 billion, with the funds used to pay down Hertz debt and support a newly approved \$1 billion share repurchase programme.

Mark Frissora, chairman and chief executive officer of Hertz Corp, said; "Our rental car and equipment rental businesses are leaders in their respective markets with valuable assets and tremendous long-term potential. Through unbundling these undervalued assets, we unleash current and future shareholder value.

Mr Frissora said there was potential for "multiple expansion even if both businesses only trade in line



with their peers. Additionally, the separation will help each business focus on its strategic and operational performance."

HERC reported revenues of more than US\$1.5 billion in 2013, making it one of the top three rental businesses in the US alongside United Rentals and Sunbelt Rentals.

# Loxam weathers difficult 2013

Loxam saw a slight recovery of its rental business in the final two quarters of 2013 but not enough to prevent a 2.8% fall in revenues to €805 million for the year (see graph below). EBITDA profits were down 10.1% to €239 million.

The business - the largest equipment rental company in Europe - reported that the French market, where it generates 85% of its revenues, remained an uncertain one with total construction forecast to fall by between 0.5 to 2.3% this year.

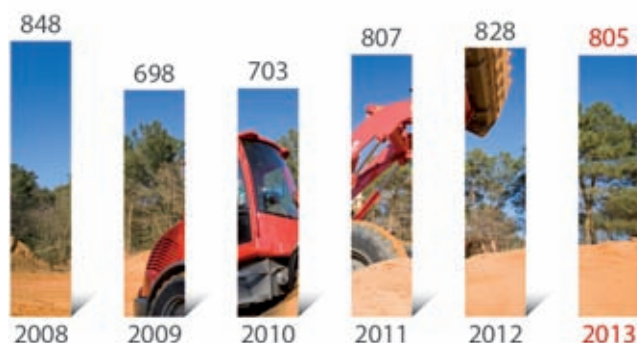
Revenues at the group recovered in the third and fourth quarters of 2013, with 2% growth in each. These increases followed three straight quarters of falling sales, including a 14% year-on-year reduction in France

in the first quarter of 2013.

Its specialist divisions - including access, power, accommodation, events and heavy construction machines - performed relatively better, with full year revenues steady at €138 million compared to 2012.

Likewise its international divisions were stable, with revenues rising marginally to €119 million (not including the recently acquired Danskluft business.) Loxam's general rental business in France saw the largest fall in 2013, with revenues down 4.2% to €571 million.

The company said the focus in 2014 would be continued organic growth in its specialist business and international operations, while in France it will continue to focus on operational efficiency.



## Lei Shing Hong CEO joins IRC speaker line-up

Lawrence Poh, CEO of Lei Shing Hong Machinery - one of the largest Caterpillar dealers in China - is the latest speaker to be confirmed for the International Rental Conference (IRC) in Shanghai, China, on 24 November, the day before Bauma China.

Mr Poh, who will talk about Lei Shing's rental strategy in China, joins other speakers including Leigh Ainsworth (CEO of Coates Hire) and Masaki Kurita (president, Nikken Corp).

See [www.khl.com/irc](http://www.khl.com/irc) for details.

This TX2500 Traxporter manufactured by Italian company Hinowa has a swivel skip which can be operated at the same time as the vehicle is in motion, and a 180° rotating seat and controls so the operator can face in the direction of travel. The machine - shown as a prototype at Bauma last year - will be exhibited at the ScotPlant 2014 show near Edinburgh, UK, in April by Hinowa's UK dealer, Access Platform Sales (APS).



Ramirent has added 45 Geda transport platforms to its fleet, comprising 25 300 kg capacity and 20 500 kg capacity units. The hoists can be used as a materials-only hoist or for personnel and materials. The order follows a change in regulations in Finland from February this year, with Finland's Department of Occupational Safety and Health authorising the use of transport platforms for carrying personnel.



## Saudi car renter buys Byrne Equipment

Saudi Arabian car rental and leasing company Hanco has acquired Byrne Equipment Rental, one of the largest rental businesses in the Middle East, for US\$163 million.

Hanco has acquired Byrne from Havenvest Private Equity Middle East and HSBC Bank Middle East. The deal includes Byrne's sister division, Spacemaker, a portable accommodation sales and rental business.

Hanco has acquired 75% of Byrne with the Venture Capital Bank acquiring the other 25%.

Byrne is one of the top 100 equipment rental companies in the world and probably the second largest in the Middle East, after Zahid Tractor's rental operation. It has 450 employees and 13 offices in Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi

Arabia, and the United Arab Emirates.

Hamad S Al Sulaiman, CEO of Hanco, said: "The acquisition gives a strong impetus to Hanco's aspirations to be the leader in the MENA [Middle East and North Africa] region's asset rental and lease market.

"Byrne's current GCC [Gulf Cooperation Council] market presence and planned expansion dovetails well with our own regional expansion plans, making it an exciting acquisition for us...Synergies between Byrne's and our other businesses will make Hanco a powerful force in the equipment rental market".

Hanco was established in 1976 and its main business is leasing, car rental and fleet management. It owns more than 20000 vehicles and has five regional offices, 130 outlets and 14 workshops in Saudi Arabia.

## IRN100 data needed now

IRN readers are requested to submit their IRN100 survey data before Friday 9 May.

The IRN100 list ranks the world's top 100 equipment rental companies by rental revenues (excluding sales of new equipment).

Companies with annual revenues of more than €45 million are requested to provide the following data:

- Rental revenues in 2013 (or 2013/14 fiscal year)
- Number of depots
- Number of employees.

Please E-mail your company data to IRN Editor Murray Pollok at: [murray.pollok@khl.com](mailto:murray.pollok@khl.com)

The list will be published in the June issue of IRN. Thank you for your help.

## One Call invests £13m with Finning

UK rental business One Call Hire has purchased 242 new Caterpillar machines from Finning in a deal worth £13 million.

The London-based firm has added 80 Cat 312Es, 72 Cat 308E2s, 60 Cat 305Es, 20 Cat 320EL HSRs and six Cat D6T LGPs dozers to its fleet following an increase in customer demand.

John Fitzpatrick, director at One Call Hire, said: "With the construction industry growing again, we're able

to continue our investment in our plant hire fleet to meet the increased demand for hydraulic excavators in particular."

The deal reflects renewed optimism in the UK. Among other examples include Hewden, which is to invest around £180 million in its fleet in the 2014-2016 period, while Lynch Plant will spend £57.3 million this year, including £40 million on Kubota excavators.



## Zeppelin Rental acquires Streif Baulogistik

Hochtief has sold the majority of its Streif Baulogistik rental business to Zeppelin Group, the Caterpillar dealer in Germany. Zeppelin will merge Streif with its Zeppelin Rental division.

The deal, for an undisclosed price, will see Zeppelin Rental take on its power, portable accommodation and project planning and logistics operations.

Not include in the acquisition is Streif's formwork rental business or its fleet of 500 tower cranes.



## IRN Rental Share Index

COMPANY		SHARE PRICES			
		Start date 11/1/06	Previous mth 18/2/14	Current mth	% change
Acces Industrie (France)	€	0.47	3.02	3.52	+16.6%
Aggreko (UK)	£	2.75	16.17	15.03	-7.0%
Ashtead Group (UK/US)	UK£	1.83	8.39	9.75	+16.2%
Boom Logistics (Australia)	A\$	3.70	0.16	0.15	-6.2%
Cramo (Fin)	€	13.0	15.20	15.60	+2.6%
GAM SA (Spain)	€	8.00	0.78	0.77	-1.3%
GL events (France)	€	29.96	17.05	16.48	-3.3%
H&E Equipment	US\$	-	30.51	40.27	+32.0%
Kanamoto	Yen	-	2618	3035	+15.9%
Lavendon (UK)	UK£	2.20	2.02	2.42	+19.8%
Mobile Mini (US)	US\$	46.2	41.57	44.48	+7.0%
Ramirent (Finland)	€	23.43	8.91	8.36	-6.2%
Speedy Hire (UK)	UK£	8.32	0.67	0.59	-11.9%
United Rentals (US)	US\$	24.9	83.31	96.02	+15.2%
<b>IRN INDEX</b>		<b>100.0</b>	<b>257.7</b>	<b>274.5</b>	<b>+6.5%</b>

**Note:** The index is based on aggregate changes in market values of the companies in the list. The initial index value of 100 is based on values on 11 January 2006.

# News from khl.com

## MANUFACTURERS

■ Liebherr has outlined plans to invest CHF200 million (€164 million) to expand capacity at its engine and fuel injection system production site in Bulle, Switzerland. Diesel and gas engines, fuel injection systems, hydraulic components and splitter boxes are produced at Liebherr's Bulle facility for use in its own machines and for external customers.

■ Volvo CE has opened a new technology centre in Jinan, in China's Shangdong province. The 50000 m<sup>2</sup> site will focus on developing machines and components for customers in emerging markets. The SEK270 million (US\$42 million) centre features design offices, workshops, two testing buildings and a test track.

■ German engine manufacturer Deutz saw improvements in all key figures for its year-end 2013 results. The company received orders worth €1.65 billion (US\$2.3 billion) in 2013, up 33.4% on the previous year's figure of €1.2 billion (US\$1.65 billion), and a new record for the company in its present structure. Deutz attributed its growth in new orders to winning new customers, an increasing proportion of higher value products and the advance production of engines in anticipation of new emissions standards.

■ JCB has announced plans to close its factory in Gatersleben, Germany. JCB acquired the factory when it bought German compaction equipment manufacturer Vibromax in 2005. Compaction machines will now be made at JCB factories in the UK and India. "Demand for compaction

## RENTAL ROUND-UP

■ HSS is to acquire UK power rental company APex Generators from Nevis Capital for an undisclosed price.

■ United Rentals has agreed to buy National Pump & Compressor, the second largest pump rental company in North America, for US\$780 million. National Pump has grown rapidly since its creation in 2007 and currently has annual revenues of around \$215 million. It operates from 35 locations - including four in Canada - and more than three quarters of its fleet is made up of pumps. Customers in the oil and gas and petrochemical sectors represent around 63% of its revenues. See also our report in this issue on page 59.

■ Cramo has created a new sub-brand, Cramo Adapteo, for its portable accommodation rental business to help it penetrate non-construction markets. The new brand will be used to increase sales in areas such as real estate and the public sector, providing temporary facilities for offices, schools and healthcare.

■ APR Energy has signed a 60 MW power rental contract with a mining client in the South Pacific - its largest ever industrial project. APR has also announced its annual results, with revenues up 16% to US\$308 million and after tax profits of \$19.8 million, compared to a \$14.9 million loss in 2012.

■ Ramirent has signed an agreement to acquire the telehandler business of Kurko-Koponen, a leading rental provider in Finland. In addition, Ramirent has signed a co-operation agreement with Kurko-Koponen for telehandler operator services. It means Ramirent will have the widest telehandler service offering on the Finnish market.

■ HSS' Abird generator division has launched a Remote Fleet Monitoring (RFM) system. Using telematics, Abird's RFM-enabled solution means that customers can manage their power remotely. The system works from a PC, Smartphone or tablet using an intuitive interface.

equipment has been improving in overall terms in recent years, but the emerging markets now account for the bulk of demand," JCB said.

■ Sandvik is to cease manufacturing

at its plant in Swadlincote, UK. The factory makes mobile crushing & screening equipment. Production will be transferred to the company's Ballygawley, UK plant, which manufactures similar machines.

■ Longer versions of these stories, plus hundreds of others, can be found at [www.khl.com](http://www.khl.com). The site has dedicated sector pages for Rental, Construction, Access, Cranes and Demolition. (See: <http://tinyurl.com/pazyp8t>)



## MARKETS

■ Construction output in Europe showed a strong year-on-year increase in January, with a 7.3% rise across all Member States (EU28) and 8.8% growth in the Eurozone. The data from Eurostat marks a break in the long-standing trend of falling year-on-year construction output. The highest increases for January were registered in Slovenia (42.8%), Spain (17.6%), Hungary (15.9%) and Germany (14.1%), and the largest decreases in Portugal (14%), Romania (9.2%) and Italy (7.9%).

■ Average growth of 9.3% a year has been forecast for global consumption of cement and concrete additives, with demand set to hit US\$21.2 billion in 2017, according to research company Freedonia. Asia Pacific is expected to remain the largest consumer of cement and concrete additives, with demand expected to increase 9.2% a year to reach US\$10.6 billion by 2017. The strongest growth between 2012 and 2017 is forecast for Africa and the Middle East, where increases of 10.6% a year are expected, reaching a value of US\$1.37 billion by 2017.

■ European market research and consulting company PMR has forecast an upswing in the Russian Urals construction sector for 2014 and beyond. PMR, in its report *Construction sector in Russia 2014 - Regional focus. Development forecast for 2014-2019*, predicted 3% growth in the Urals federal district for 2014. PMR forecast that regions with vast natural resource potential would see the greatest growth, including Siberia, the Urals, and Far Eastern Federal Districts.

## Rental information from IRN

In addition to the published magazine, IRN provides rental news and information in a variety of formats:

### Digital magazine

IRN can be read in digital format either as a downloadable PDF document or read online with easy-to-use page turning technology. The latter version also allows readers to highlight and print out selected stories or e-mail items to contacts. To receive the digital version free of charge register at: [www.khl.com/subscriptions/free-digital/](http://www.khl.com/subscriptions/free-digital/)

### Online news

KHL's team of 10 journalists in Europe, North America and South America are constantly uploading stories to KHL.com. The site has dedicated pages for Rental, Construction, Access, Cranes and Demolition.



### Weekly newsletters

Readers can subscribe to our weekly rental newsletter, compiling all the previous week's most important Rental, Access and Construction stories. It is free to register at: [www.khl.com/enewsletter/](http://www.khl.com/enewsletter/) IRN also produces the weekly *ERARentalNewsletter* for members of the European Rental Association (ERA).

rental newsletter

### Social Media

You can track IRN on Facebook, LinkedIn and Twitter. Following us on Twitter (@KHL\_IRN) means that you get immediate alerts on news stories posted on khl.com.



### IRN tablet edition and news App

Readers can now read IRN as a tablet edition, in both Apple and Android formats. Search the App stores or use the pocketmags App or website. KHL also produces a news App covering all sectors of the market, including Rental, Access and Construction.





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\*Some features model dependent

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# Six steps to acquisition failure

Kevin Appleton has made his fair share of acquisitions over the years. Here, he offers his guide on common pitfalls to avoid.



**A**s market sentiment gradually recovers acquisitions are appearing again on the agenda: the recent sale of Streif Baulogistik to Zeppelin Rental being a case in point. I have had the opportunity to be involved in a number of acquisitions of businesses in the course of my career. Some have worked brilliantly whilst others less so. Here are some reflections on how to ensure you don't waste money in an acquisition.

## 1 Acquire a company whose market position is based around an individual leader

Often the most successful smaller businesses are ones where a single owner-manager has been instrumental in its growth and profitability, owning the key relationships with customers, suppliers and staff. This owner-manager will leave the business as soon as any earn-out period is over and there is a certain inevitability that staff and customers will follow as soon as he sets up his next business in competition with the one you bought.

## 2 Acquire a business with a highly concentrated customer base

Some businesses have made themselves immensely successful on the back of three or four customers. There is always a likelihood, given an ownership change, that the bonds of loyalty these customers felt to the acquired business will weaken. The change of ownership can make these customers nervous and, even if there are no service issues, they will initiate a supplier review which will lead to partial or total loss of business.

## 3 Acquire a business whose culture is diametrically opposed to yours

If you find that you have little common ground with the acquired business it will lead to an endless series of misunderstandings, arguments and deceptions. Needless to say, none of these are good and leads to a waste of productive energy.

## 4 Treat the acquired company like idiots

Employees of acquiring companies can develop the view that their

company has been successful in concluding the acquisition partly because they, personally, are imbued with superior intelligence, wisdom, virility and energy. They then behave towards their new colleagues with that attitude of superiority.

The truth is that you acquire businesses because they are good - often better than the acquirer on many levels - and they need to be treated with appropriate respect. Don't do this and you will find many key people leaving, while you are left with the dummies who think themselves superior.

## 5 Leave the business completely untouched

This is the counterpoint of the previous risk. Some business are acquired and then left untouched and unintegrated by their new owners - through fear, excessive deference or just sheer lack of ideas.

The only point in making an acquisition is because you think the business can achieve better outcomes under your stewardship. By encouraging interaction between old and new businesses you can be surprised at the number of new opportunities that are generated in both directions. Conversely, if you do absolutely nothing with the business then why would you think it is better under your ownership?

## 6 Acquire a business requiring a complete asset refresh

A common practice in the rental industry is for businesses who are thinking of seeking a sale to suspend or dramatically slow down their rate of investment in new fleet. This can lead to a situation where the acquiring company has to effectively rebuild the asset base in a very short period - effectively multiplying the price paid for the business.

## Conclusion

This list isn't an exhaustive recipe for failure - for example, ensuring that the price paid will support an economic return is also important - but these are some of the most common, avoidable errors.

More than in any other area of business, ego can quickly grab a hold in an acquisition process and rational judgment and common sense go out of the window in the desperation to 'do the deal'. Keeping this little check list in front of you, and measuring your acquisition targets up against it, might save you a whole lot of money.

**IRN**

**KEVIN APPLETON** is former CEO of Lavendon Group plc and former Divisional Chairman of Travis Perkins plc. He is currently Managing Director of Yusen Logistics UK Ltd, non-executive Chairman of Horizon Platforms Ltd, non-executive director at Ramirent Oyj and non-executive director of the Freight Transport Association. To comment on these articles please email: [IRNfeedback@khl.com](mailto:IRNfeedback@khl.com)

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A Coates Hire lighting tower receiving some maintenance. LED towers are a key product for Australia's mining and oil and gas sector.

**Australia's Coates Hire is retrenching in the face of a slowdown in the country's natural resources sector, as company CEO Leigh Ainsworth tells Murray Pollok.**



# Commodity prices

## Sale of Coates Offshore division

In late January US private equity firm SCF Partners acquired Coates Offshore in partnership with its existing management, for an undisclosed price.

SCF, based in Houston, Texas, owns oil and gas service companies worldwide and its investment in Coates Offshore is its second in Aberdeen, having acquired Conserve Oilfield Services in 2012.

Coates Offshore is now being rebranded as Rentair Offshore, reflecting the Rentair name it carried when it was established in 1970 and used until its acquisition by Coates Hire in 1999. The US\$30 million business rents Zone II diesel air compressors, steam generators, heat exchangers and sand filters to the worldwide offshore oil, gas and renewable energy industries.

Kieran White, who was executive director at Coates Offshore and is now CEO of both Rentair Offshore and Conserve Oilfield Services, said the acquisition represented a fantastic opportunity, with the new owners bringing "expertise and specialist knowledge of our industry on a global scale."

Andy Waite, managing director of SCF, said: "We believe this will be an excellent platform for both organic and acquisition based growth opportunities. We also believe there may be excellent synergies to be realised with other companies in the SCF portfolio."

**T**here may be vast differences in how economies are performing around the world, but at this moment Coates Hire - the largest rental business in Australia and wider Asia - has a lot in common with its European counterparts, with a shared focus on operational efficiency and cost control.

In the European case it is about succeeding in a sluggish economy. For Coates, it is adjusting to a more difficult environment after years of growth on the back of a major boom in the mining and oil and gas sectors.

"The economy is unsettled", says Leigh Ainsworth, Coates Hire's no-nonsense CEO, speaking to *IRN* in Las Vegas during a hectic visit to Conexpo, "Investment has slowed considerably. At the moment we are in a transition period between natural resources projects and the start of major infrastructure projects.

"The new government is trying to expedite significant transport projects, and we're in that lull in the middle. We probably have 12 to 18 months until the biggest infrastructure projects start."

### Lower revenues

That lull is expected to lead to lower revenues this financial year, following a 4% decline in the previous year (to 30 June 2013) when sales were A\$1241 million (£831 million). This has required the company to concentrate on efficiency and be more selective on fleet investment. It is probably no coincidence that this focus on its core operations has coincided with the decision in December to sell its Aberdeen-based oil and gas rental subsidiary, Coates Offshore, to a US private equity firm, SCF Partners (see box story left).

"It was not core - just 2% of our revenues", he says, "So I guess if the right deal comes along it is the right thing to do".

Mr Ainsworth points out that commodity prices can change quickly - with the prospect of a return to

investment in natural resources - but the reality is that "at the moment we have more fleet than we have revenue for."

Some of the larger construction equipment used in the mining sector can be redirected for construction work, but older fleet is being sold off and any investment is being channelled into areas where there is demand.

He mentions LED lighting towers - very popular in the mining sector - as an example of where Coates is investing; "Hybrid booms [aerial platforms] have been popular, and we will have more and more of these, and dual fuel generators is an opportunity to exploit for some of the gas field operations in



Leigh Ainsworth, CEO, Coates Hire.

Shoring equipment, like these standard 5 m boxes, are an area of investment by Coates, including large hydraulic struts imported from Groundforce in the UK.

Australia. We're still investing, but putting more into specialist products, growing these areas."

These include shoring equipment - such as large hydraulic struts that it is buying from UK rental company Groundforce - traffic control, pumps and environmental equipment, such as water recycling products. There is also still demand for Coates' power rental fleet, which is focused on mid-sized units rather than the 1 MW plus sector.

### Aerial platforms

Coates remains one of the largest owners of aerial platforms in Australia: asked if the company is interested in buying the massive new JLG 185 ft booms, Mr Ainsworth is positive; "I think we will. We bought the 1500s as soon as they were available, so it would be a natural thing. They are expensive machines, so will never be a big part of the fleet. We need to talk to customers and make sure there is a demand first."

He says the 185 ft units would potentially be very useful for some of the LNG plants that are currently being completed.

Capital expenditure may be more selective than in the past, but Coates has still managed to invest heavily in various projects to become more efficient.

"During any period when revenue is constrained, attention turns to cost and efficiency, that's a natural shift in focus", he says. "We've really invested in business improvement projects over the past four years [around A\$30 million]. We do expect to get returns - some are yielding quite well already."

These include a shift to paperless working, using bar codes on products to digitise service records and the like. Around 70-80% of the fleet is now barcoded and Mr Ainsworth says the company is still only getting 20% of the benefits; "We'll get to 75-80% next year."

Coates has also invested in the PROS price optimisation system. "That's the same. We've done a lot of work over the past few years and we are now rolling it out. We hope to see yield from that over the next few years. It's really about giving guidance to the branches, the ability to change prices quickly." He says it also makes it easier to review pricing on annual contracts.

As at other big rental companies, Coates is aiming to provide more data to customers, particularly its major accounts, which is in part a reflection of a more mature relationship. "We have told customers in some cases that it is better to buy than hire",



explains Mr Ainsworth, "It's a strange thing for a rental company to say, but if you get their trust, you benefit over the longer term. Of course we can also say it's better to rent than own."

The company may have sold its Aberdeen oil and gas business, but Mr Ainsworth says Coates is still on the acquisitions trail, only closer to home. "We're always in the acquisitions market - sometimes a stressed market pops up some opportunities. The last time there was a downturn we made some acquisitions." Last summer it acquired the non-access activities of Force Access, a small deal.

He says speciality rental businesses would be the preference - not least because they have no need for additional general fleet - and also says that opportunities are likely to be domestic rather than in wider Asia, for example; "When you have opportunities at home you drive past business getting there [to overseas markets]."

### Depot network

The depot network requires no overhaul, other than the usual opening and closures associated with changes in local activity levels, so no big hub and spoke projects of the kind being seen at rental companies in the US and UK.

The size of the country means that a lot of depots are required to give national coverage, and Coates has many large generalist stores stocking pretty much everything because it might be 500 km to the next specialist store.

And in the tool and equipment business, the stores are pretty much essential; "Close to 70% of the work we have we didn't know we were going to get the day before", says Mr Ainsworth.

Coates ownership has also been on the agenda in

## Safety payback

Leigh Ainsworth says Coates Hire's successful campaign to improve its safety record has cut its worker compensation payments by as much as 40%, saving it millions of dollars and creating a better culture at the company.

"You do it by not having accidents", he deadpans. "You have to be serious about safety and convince the leadership that we are serious about it...Ultimately a few people had to lose their jobs for doing things that were unsafe."

He says a big part of the success is a different attitude to unsafe practices; "It takes a long time to change a culture. In the end, a company can do so much. People have to care about themselves and their friends and colleagues.

"We are seeing that people will report unsafe practices, and will go to friends and colleagues and say 'that's not safe'. Now, people believe that Coates cares about their safety. People accept absolutely that we don't expect them to work if it means doing something unsafe."

He says Coates looked at areas where there were safety risks, such as using lathes in the workshops; "We decided that if we can't do it safely, we say we just don't do it."

Lathe work has now been outsourced to specialist engineering companies. "It's not convenient", says Mr Ainsworth, "but it's safer."



Coates staff using personal protective equipment.

recent years, with joint major shareholders Seven Group and Carlyle announcing last summer that they would retain ownership after a six month review of the business. The feeling is that this topic will reappear when they are able to attract a better price.

If this is unsettling, Mr Ainsworth's demeanour suggests otherwise; "It doesn't really make a big difference - we just run the business and the shareholders do the best they can."

In any case, he has other concerns for a business that remains in a transitional period: waiting for payback on the efficiency projects, waiting for major infrastructure contracts to start, and, of course, keeping a close eye on the prices of iron ore, natural gas and coal.

IRN



Portable accommodation units form part of Coates' rental fleet.

Leigh Ainsworth is one of the keynote speakers at the International Rental Conference (IRC) in Shanghai, China on 24 November, 2014, the day before the Bauma China exhibition. For details, see [www.khl.com/irc](http://www.khl.com/irc)

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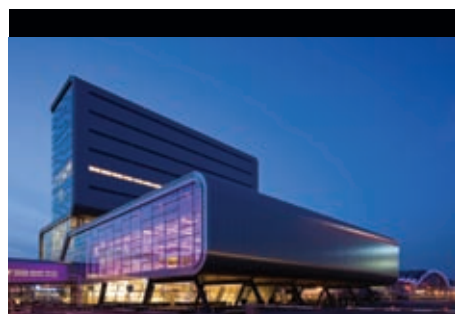


Kubota will show its new U27-4 mini excavator at IRE.

# Rental festival



**The latest mini excavators, hybrid power generators, lighting towers, compressors and much more will be on show at the International Rental Exhibition (IRE) in Amsterdam on 24-26 June. *IRN* previews the show.**



## Show details

**WHAT:**  
International Rental Exhibition (IRE)

**WHEN:**  
24 - 26 June, 2014

Tuesday 9.30 - 18.00  
Wednesday 9.30 - 18.00  
Thursday 9.30 - 17.00

**WHERE:**  
Hall 2, Amsterdam RAI, Amsterdam

**ADDRESS:**  
Europaplein, NL 1078 GZ, Amsterdam,  
The Netherlands

**ORGANISERS**  
IRE is organised by Industrial Promotions International (IPI) in association with *IRN* and KHL Group.

### TRAVEL TO RAI:

**By Plane**  
The RAI exhibition centre has a dedicated train station and is 15 minutes from Schiphol Airport on a direct line. This line is different from the trains to Amsterdam Central station. The single fare to RAI is less than €4. Schiphol train station is accessed directly from the arrivals area of the airport.

**Taxi**  
The taxi rank is located at the airport's exit. Dependent on the traffic, a taxi can take you to Amsterdam city centre in half an hour and will cost around €40.

[www.IREshow.com](http://www.IREshow.com)

**T**he 3rd IRE show offers lots of opportunities for rental delegates: the chance to engage with suppliers in an unpressured environment; to see genuinely cutting-edge, new technology alongside the product 'mainstays' of rental fleets; plus the added extra of suppliers new to the industry offering something different from the norm.

Visitors can also dip into the sessions of the European Rental Association's annual convention (at a cost, see booking page at [www.erarental.org](http://www.erarental.org)) and network at the European Rental Awards dinner on the Wednesday night. For those visitors interested in aerial platforms, a 'sold out' APEX show being held in an adjoining hall and outside the RAI offers yet another benefit.

In short, IRE - plus the convention, the awards and APEX - constitutes a three-day 'festival of rental'. Elsewhere in this issue we write about the rental awards and the ERA convention (page 25). Here, we focus on the more than 60 companies who are exhibiting at IRE, which spans established suppliers like Kubota, JCB, Hitachi, Wacker Neuson, Terex Compact, Yanmar CE, Volvo CE, Kaeser, Hilti and Husqvarna, as well as companies that are less well known, such as attachments specialist Cangini Benne, or US company Schaefer, which makes the Americ branded portable fan.

The big names will have some important products to show. Kubota, for example, uses IRE to showcase its latest 'dash-4' mini excavator, the 2-3 t class U27-4, a model that Kubota describes as a "tough zero-tail swing mini that features the largest and most luxurious cab in its class."

The manufacturer says the



The dual power version of Wacker Neuson's 803 mini excavator is now commercially available and will be on show in Amsterdam.



Thwaites says its 1 t Hi-Tip dumper is ideal for the European rental market.

new model has a working range - including 2820 mm dig depth - that rivals higher-end excavators, and that its stability is achieved without the need for additional weights.

Hitachi says it is not yet in a position to disclose details of what it will show at IRE, except to say that it will "add a new range of compact products to our range for the rental market. We think that the IRE is an excellent opportunity to introduce these products."

Wacker Neuson will have a selection of small and compact equipment, with rental companies perhaps most intrigued by its new 803 mini excavator with electric or diesel 'dual power' system, which is now being commercially launched following its premiere at Bauma last year. Wacker Neuson says that for rental companies; "In only one device, both diesel and electric drives are combined and ensure optimum machine utilisation."

The German manufacturer will also show its mini





On show from Kaeser will be this Mobilair M 27 compressor, which can be fitted with an integrated 6.5 kVA generator.



The new PR 30-HVS rotating laser from Hilti is built to withstand rough treatment on site.

telehandler, the TH412, the EH100 electric breaker, and vibratory plates with the Compatec compaction control system. Wacker says the EH100 weighs 10 kg less than a pneumatic unit but with the same demolition performance.

Hilti will showcase a wide range of its products, with the highlights being two recently launched items from its surveying and breaker tool ranges. The Hilti Rotating laser PR 30-HVS is notable for its robust construction, which Hilti says will allow it to withstand a drop onto concrete from a height of 1.5 m.

Also on show will be what Hilti calls the "world's strongest 12 kg breaker", the TE 1000 AVR, featuring a "maintenance-free, brushless motor drive" and designed for "tough demolition work with the lowest,

One of several hybrid power system suppliers at IRE will be Off Grid Energy.



unmatched tri-axial vibration in its class."

Thwaites, the site dumper specialist, meanwhile, will be exhibiting models from its compact range which "are ideally suited to the European rental customer", says the company. The key model in the line-up is the hydrostatic 1 t Hi-Tip dumper, which is ideally suited for applications in restricted areas and an ideal partner for both mini and micro excavators.

Compressor suppliers at IRE include Kaeser and the relative newcomer MAC3. Kaeser will show its Mobilair M 27, with a free air delivery of 2.6 m<sup>3</sup>/min (at 7 bar). Optional features include an integrated 6.5 kVA generator and/or compressed air treatment equipment.

Kaeser says it is ideal for simultaneously powering two 20 kg breakers, or other tools such as air lances, impact borers and sandblasting equipment. Another useful option is the hose reel which comes with a 20m lightweight hose, as this enables the compressed air line to be safely stowed away.

A perfect example of innovative technology at IRE is hybrid generators, with two specialist companies in this field exhibiting - Off Grid Energy and Firefly, both UK companies.

Firefly has been delivering hybrid temporary power for events and festivals throughout Europe since 2007, and in Amsterdam will show off its Cygnus Hybrid Power Generator (HPG), a 24 kVA unit that can combine with a range of power sources such as solar, wind, battery, mains grid and with diesel gensets up to 60 kVA (full load back-up) or 100 kVA (part load back-up).



Firefly's Cygnus Hybrid Power Generator (HPG).

LEFT: UK company Ritelite showcases its compact lighting towers, powered by a mains supply, genset or battery pack.

# Exhibitors

(As on 31 March 2014. See [www.IREshow.com](http://www.IREshow.com) for latest list.)

<b>ACCESSA</b>	604
<b>American Rental Association (ARA)</b>	138
<b>Annata</b>	610
<b>Armada Dynamics AS</b>	265
<b>BBA Pumps</b>	425
<b>Brendon Powerwashers</b>	440
<b>Cangini Benne</b>	215
<b>CLMiller Consulting</b>	545
<b>CONTAINEX</b>	300
<b>CNSE</b>	525
<b>Dagico Software</b>	110
<b>Dantherm</b>	108
<b>Dehaco</b>	560
<b>Dieci</b>	510 & 614
<b>DIS Sensors</b>	634
<b>Ditch Witch</b>	624
<b>El Björn</b>	114
<b>Eliet Europe</b>	555
<b>EuroGate International</b>	230
<b>Firefly Solar Generators</b>	535
<b>Flue Gas Recovery Sweden</b>	540
(GlobalRep stand)	
<b>GlobalRep</b>	540
<b>GreenMech</b>	100
<b>Hilti</b>	140
<b>Himoinsa</b>	420
<b>Hitachi</b>	310
<b>HTC</b>	618
<b>Husqvarna</b>	128
<b>InspHire International</b>	565
<b>Intermat</b>	124
<b>Irium Software</b>	160
<b>JCB</b>	400
<b>Jura Filtration</b>	120
<b>Kaeser Kompressoren</b>	430
<b>KHL Group/IRN</b>	104
<b>Kubota Europe</b>	315
<b>Kunzle &amp; Tasin</b>	118
<b>MAC3</b>	158
<b>MCS Global</b>	260
<b>Off Grid Energy</b>	445
<b>Paclite Equipment</b>	608
<b>Postpullers (UK)</b>	460
<b>Pullman Ermatör</b>	644
<b>Ritelite Systems</b>	360
<b>Schwaborn Gerätebau</b>	530
<b>Schaefer Fans</b>	545
<b>Sibilia</b>	655
<b>SPE International</b>	630
<b>Stanley Hydraulic Tools</b>	650
<b>Swepac</b>	225
<b>Terex Compact</b>	250
<b>Thermobile Industries</b>	550
<b>Thwaites Dumpers</b>	330
<b>Tower Light</b>	410
<b>Trackunit</b>	150
<b>Trelawny</b>	130
<b>Trotec</b>	200
<b>Varisco</b>	450
<b>Vermeer</b>	640
<b>VF Venieri</b>	535
<b>Wacker Neuson</b>	500
<b>Western Global</b>	600
<b>XTRUX s.r.l.</b>	320
<b>Yanmar C.E. Europe S.A.S.</b>	350
<b>Volvo CE</b>	210

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- Powerwashing
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One of its competitors, Off Grid Energy, will showcase two new models at IRE, the 3-3 phase and 3-1 phase versions of its Grid to Go product. The Grid to Go - which was Product of the Year at the 2013 European Rental Awards - has found success among UK rental companies, including A-Plant.

Several manufacturers will be showing lighting towers at the show, including one company that is launching a compact tower into the mainland European rental market for the first time.

Ritelite (Systems), based in Stamford, UK, is a manufacturer of portable, industrial work light products, and will use the show to launch its K50 and K65 towers. Already successfully in use with major UK Hire companies, the K50 & K65 are 5.0 m or 6.5 m high towers powered either by battery pack, mains or a generator, and can be fitted with four or six metal halide lamps or LED lights. The rechargeable battery pack is for the LED versions.

The big benefit of the towers is that they can be collapsed into a compact shape - closed dimensions are 192 x 77 x 75 cm - and they are also lightweight in comparison to most conventional towers, weighing between 150 and 200 kg depending on specification.

Italian-based TowerLight, meanwhile, is already a key player in the rental sector around the world, with a wide selection of conventional and LED lighting products, including in recent years many 'eco-friendly' products with lower fuel use.

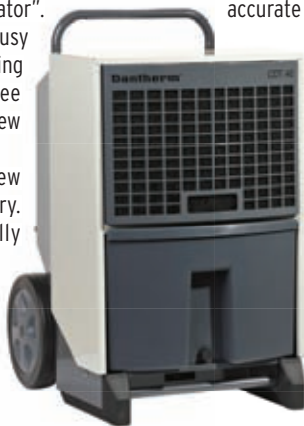
At IRE, the company will highlight several of its new LED towers, including the VT-LED and the Linktower-LED. The VT-LED can be fitted with either 300 W LED or 450 W LED lamps, with the smaller lamps providing "a very similar light intensity to 1000 W Metal Halide lamps, whilst the 450 W LED lamps have an even higher illumination factor."

The Linktower-LED is an LED version of Tower Light's well established link tower system, which allows individual lights to be linked in series, "resulting in a row of powerful lighting sets all from one power source - mains or generator".

Europe's pump sector has had a busy winter season, with so much flooding in the continent, and IRE will see two of its major suppliers show new pumps and accessories.

BBA Pumps is now using a new dashboard as a standard accessory. The LC30 is for electronically controlled engines and the LC20 is for mechanically controlled engines. Both have the same

The CDET 40 mobile dehumidifier from Dantherm.



Fuel Proof launches a range of bunded fuel tanks for fuelling generator sets.



Varisco exhibits a selection of its pumps.

modern housing and automatic start/stop control by means of floats. The dashboards can be deployed worldwide and are prepared for the new Stage IV and Tier 4 Final diesel engines.

The company will also highlight its new four year warranty policy, with all BBA products sold after 1 January this year - for the PT, BA and BE ranges - supplied under the warranty policy. On its stand will be two pumps, the BA100K D193 diesel driven, sound attenuated dewatering and sewage pump, and the BA150E D285, a diesel dewatering unit.

Italy's Varisco, meanwhile, will show pumps from its new ranges, including the high efficiency dry prime Z Series, the Thor Series piston pumps for well point applications and with low fuel consumption, and the new Titan A range of submersible, aluminium drainage pumps.

## Heating & cooling

In the site heating and cooling sector Dantherm will show its updated CDT range of mobile dehumidifiers with capacities from 30 to 94 l per 24 hours and a maximum working temperature of 32°C.

Recent changes to the range include the use of digital controls, with a finger touch display allowing accurate setting of RH-values to automatically turn the unit on and off when the desired relative humidity is met. The display also specifies exact energy consumption, a feature that Dantherm says will be welcomed by insurance companies "who normally have had to pay an estimated energy consumption based on running time."

El-Björn, on the other hand, will focus on its new TF 36EL units, which joins its existing TF 9EL and TF 18EL products. The TF 36 provides "high-efficiency drying and heating, with a maximum output of 36 kW and three power settings", says the company.

The new unit has already found favour in the Nordic rental market, with Skanska Maskin AB, for example, using eight to help dry out concrete at the massive Universitetsholmen project in Malmö.

A new-ish company in Europe is Schaefer, which is well known in the US for its Americ branded fans, designed for rental use. Its blowers are available in ratings from 750 cfm (1275 m<sup>3</sup>/hr) up to 10000 cfm (17000 m<sup>3</sup>/hr).



TowerLight will display various lighting tower options, including this VT-LED.



BBA's BA100 K dewatering and sewage pump. The company will be demonstrating its new pump control panel.

Designed for rental, the blowers are "rugged and reliable while providing unrivaled performance to ensure a safe, comfortable and controlled environment in the most extreme areas", says Schaefer. The products can provide positive and negative airflow (blows and extracts), are designed to be lightweight for easy portability, and are stackable to save storage work area space.

Also new at IRE is a company from Sweden that is part-owned by former El-Björn CEO Lars-Owe Kron. Mr Kron is now an investor in a Swedish company called Flue Gas Recovery Sweden AB (FGRS) which is "committed to reducing the carbon footprint from construction sites and buildings."

The company's products include a twin container solution for heating/drying/cooling of construction sites. Mr Kron says the company is "currently in discussions in several major construction projects."

Both Schaefer and FGRS are exhibiting under the umbrella GlobalRep brand, a body set up by US rental consultant Charles Miller to help companies market their products to the rental industry.

## Site equipment

Fuel storage tank manufacturer Fuel Proof Ltd is to launch a new range of bunded fuel storage units for fuelling generator sets. The generator tank (GT) units will be sold in mainland Europe by distributor EuroGate International, and will be on show at IRE. "In the last 12 months our partnership

US manufacturer Schaefer shows several of its portable, rental-friendly fans.



El Bjorn's TF-36 has already found favour with rental companies in Scandinavia.



inspiHire Mobile gives users important business data while they are out on site.



with EuroGate International has brought our products to the attention of some key players in the European market", said Fuel Proof director Andrew Hargreaves, "and the feedback we've received from these companies, together with some new design and production capabilities on our side, has led to the development of the new GT range."

Western Global is an established name in worldwide rental markets with its fuel tanks and other products, and the company will highlight its newly developed Transtainer Standby fuel tanks and bulk fuel transfer skids, as well as the original, time-tested Transcube Global portable fuel tanks.

The Transtainer Standby, a bulk fuel container tank, is a 100% bunded tank available in four sizes: 9590 l, 12000 l (non-UL), 25500 l and 58470 l. They are built to ISO Sea-Can dimensions for manoeuvrability and lower freight costs, and can be stacked.

Western's Transfer Pod Heavy duty pump skid for bulk transfer, fuel and tank cleaning operations is described as "an ideal tool for remote tank farms, temporary generator power stations, mining operations and construction equipment industries". It offers high accuracy metering for when the transfer of fuel is taking place.

Also exhibiting at IRE is Austrian portable accommodation specialist Containex. The company has its own rental fleet of site huts, sanitary cabins and storage containers - mainly for the eastern European market - but a large part of its business is the manufacture of units for rental companies.

Containex has six production sites round Europe and produces around 40000-50000 units every year. At IRE it will focus on its status as a

Trelawny's TCG250 grinder.

Postpuller's products are ideal for homeowners.



supplier of huts to Europe's rental sector.

Brendon Powerwashers says 2014 has seen a good start, with the company "receiving many repeat orders from...European rental customers." The company will show its latest models at IRE, including the Brendon Mini-Bowserwashers and its well-established hot and cold water bowserwashers.

Meanwhile, the company is this year celebrating its 30th year of trading. To mark the occasion, Brendon has linked up with local cider producers Sheppy Cider - one of its first customers in 1984 - and will be offering customers at IRE a cider glass and a couple of bottles of cider.

### Surface preparation

In the surface preparation market, Trelawny Surface Preparation Technology will show how its latest range of grinding accessories "has transformed [our] grinders and polishers to a multi-purpose range of products for numerous applications regardless of the surface area."

Italy's Klindex will also have a selection of its products on show, including its new line of industrial vacuum cleaners, the Supervak, featuring a 'automatic cleaning filter' that allows non-stop operation. Also on show will be the Levighetor 640 for polishing floors in apartments, villas, hotels and shops, the Levighetor Max for terrazzo floors, the large area product Expander 750, and the Hercules grinding machine for floor preparation and resin coating removal.

French manufacturer Accessa will meanwhile have a selection of its sanding and grinding units for walls and ceilings.

Groundcare equipment will be on display from several companies, including GreenMech and Postpullers.



GreenMech's CS-100: "For big jobs in small spaces."

## Fun-run to support children's charity

Exhibitors and delegates to the IRE and APEX exhibitions will have the chance to raise funds for a deserving Netherlands-based charity by taking part in a 5 km fun-run to be held at the RAI convention centre on 26 June.

The run, which will start at the RAI exhibition centre at 7.00am, is in support of the children's charity ClinClowns, which provides entertainment for children undergoing treatment in hospitals throughout the Netherlands as well as hospitals in Europe, Australia and the US.

The charity's aim is to offer a welcome diversion for children in hospital; "Not only because these kids deserve it, but also because they benefit greatly from it. Distraction and fun both work to relax the children and reduce their stress levels."

Runners are encouraged to obtain sponsorship for the run, either personally or through their employers. The IRE and APEX exhibitions are covering the costs of organisation, so every Euro raised by runners will go to the charity.

A similar run during the 2011 APEX show raised €3690 for the Ronald McDonald Huis in Maastricht, a charity that provides accommodation for families visiting their children in hospital.

The start and the finish of the run are close to the Amsterdam RAI exhibition centre, and most of the trail is off-road in the Beatrix Park. A cyclist will accompany the runners.

The show organiser, IPI, would like to have an idea of the number of runners who will take part, so if you are planning to run please send an e-mail to Han Heilig at: han@practica.nl



Brendo Powerwashers is celebrating 30 years of trading by teaming up with a local customer, cider brewer Sheppy Cider.

Postpullers UK designs and manufactures a range of machines for the removal of all kinds of posts, from fence posts to street signs, gateposts and motorway barriers. Its machines can remove posts with any concrete footing up to 60 cm across in less than 2 minutes, with no digging or breaking necessary.

### Rental IT

IRE will be a good place to catch up with the latest development in rental software and IT, with at least four suppliers from the IT sector.

New from inspHire are important enhancements to its recently launched inspHire BI Dashboards and inspHire Mobile. inspHire BI Dashboards have been designed using customers' input, giving users key business information, in a simple graphical format, streamlining many different operations within the rental business.

inspHire Mobile provides users with the ability to access important, up-to-the-minute business data out on site and execute changes on the move directly from your Android device.

French supplier Dagicco shows off two development in its Vary rental ERP system. The



Trackunit is offering an integrated tracker unit and user identification system, the 401 SmartID.

new Vary customisable E-Catalogue is an IOS application (multi-lingual) that will allow rental customers to look through a rental company's catalogue, order equipment and plan the delivery on the move.

MCS will demonstrate its Android Transport Manager Mobile application alongside the Microsoft.NET rental software solution, MCS-rm. With route planning functionality, the new Transport Manager 'App' means that field-based drivers are able to work more productively and provide proactive customer service.

"These technologies can drive costs down by minimising the dependence on traditional paper-based processes such as delivery notes and printing and reduces fuel consumption by optimising driver routes", says Guy van der Knaap, MCS managing director.

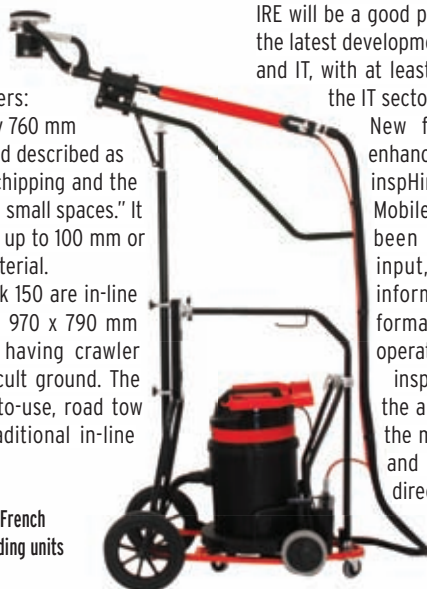
Finally, Denmark's Trackunit will show its Trackunit 401 SmartID, an access control and GSM/GPS tracking unit in one single box. A fleet management tool incorporating user identification, the system is designed to prevent unauthorised use of machines and equipment on work sites.

The company says it is the first system on the market to combine two user identification solutions in a single box. The solution allows the operator to gain access to the machine by entering a unique PIN code or with a personal identification card. **IRN**

GreenMech will show three of its wood chippers and green waste shredders: the CS 100 is compact (only 760 mm wide) and easy to move, and described as "perfect for 'on-the-spot' chipping and the ideal chipper for big jobs in small spaces." It will receive solid timber of up to 100 mm or large volumes of bushy material.

The Arborist and ArbTrak 150 are in-line chippers and have a wide 970 x 790 mm in-feed chute, the latter having crawler tracks to operate on difficult ground. The Arborist 150 is a "simple-to-use, road tow chipper designed in a traditional in-line format."

The Gazelle-XB from Accessa, the French manufacturer of sanding and grinding units for walls and ceilings.



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# Award shortlists



The shortlists for this year's European Rental Awards on 25 June were published in February after the meeting of the judges. Here we provide details of the shortlisted entries. Plus, on page 35, the latest version of the programme for the European Rental Association's convention, taking place in Amsterdam on 24-26 June.

## Event details

### EUROPEAN RENTAL AWARDS

Wednesday 25 June, 2014

Elicium Centre, Amsterdam RAI  
www.khl.com/rentalawards

### ERA CONVENTION:

Tuesday 24 - Thursday 26 June, 2014  
Elicium Centre, Amsterdam RAI  
www.erarental.org

### BOOKING:

To book your place at the awards dinner visit [www.erarental.org](http://www.erarental.org).

### ORGANISERS:

The European Rental Awards are jointly organised by the European Rental Association and *International Rental News*.

The judging panel in Brussels on 18 February. Top row from left: Michel Petitjean (Secretary General of ERA), Claudio Fiorentini (Managing Director - Special Projects, JCB Sales) and Murray Pollok (IRN Editor). Bottom row from left: Pedro Luis Fernandez (CEO, GAM Alquiler, Spain), Sat Dhaiwal (CEO, A-Plant, UK) and Vesa Koivula (ERA president & CEO, Cramo, Finland). Mr Petitjean was the non-voting chairman on the panel.



The judging panel for the European Rental Awards met in Brussels on 18 February to decide the shortlists, with the winners to be announced at the awards dinner in Amsterdam on 25 June, during the European Rental Association's annual convention and the International Rental Exhibition (IRE).

The shortlists for each category, in alphabetical order, are:

#### LARGE RENTAL COMPANY OF THE YEAR (REVENUES >€15 MILLION)

- **AFI** (UK)
- **GAP Group** (UK)
- **Loxam** (France)

#### SMALL/MID-SIZED RENTAL COMPANY OF THE YEAR (REVENUE <€15 MILLION)

- **Crestchic** (UK)
- **Dromad Hire** (Republic of Ireland)
- **GGR Group** (UK)
- **Hotmobil** (Germany)
- **Industrial Access** (Romania)

#### RENTAL PRODUCT OF THE YEAR

- **Firefly (Cygnus hybrid generator)**
- **Niftylift (HR28 hybrid access platform)**
- **Power Towers (Pecolift access platform)**
- **SDMO (Rental Compact generators)**
- **Towerlight (VTLED lighting tower)**

#### RENTAL SAFETY CAMPAIGN OF THE YEAR

- **AFI** (UK)
- **Lavendon Group** (Europe)
- **Ramirent** (Finland)

#### RENTAL MARKETING CAMPAIGN OF THE YEAR

- **4-punto-1** (Italy)
- **Hewden** (UK)
- **Nationwide Platforms** (UK)

#### RENTAL PERSON OF THE YEAR

- **To be announced at the awards dinner.**

#### ERA/IRN LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD

- **To be announced at the awards dinner.**

The judges said the more than 50 entries for the awards "demonstrated the passion and enthusiasm

that is in the rental industry, with companies proud of their achievements and willing to share their experiences.

"Even in a generally difficult year for rental in Europe, as 2013 was, many companies were able to grow and innovate. It was encouraging, for example, to see small companies making their own space in the market, often with niche products or in new sectors - a sign that there are great opportunities still to be found in rental."

To book your place at the awards dinner visit [www.erarental.org](http://www.erarental.org).

Ritchie Bros is the Gold Sponsor for the awards, and IronPlanet is the sponsor of the awards drinks reception. Silver sponsors are Caterpillar, Grindex and Hilti.

On the following pages we provide brief summaries of the submissions from each of the shortlisted companies.

### LARGE RENTAL COMPANY OF THE YEAR (REVENUES >€15M)

#### AFI (UK)

2013 was a year of profitable growth for AFI, one of the UK's largest powered access rental companies.

Following an £85 million refinancing it made acquisitions in the UK (Hi-Reach and Wilson Access) and the Middle East (Access Rental Gulf), with revenues growing 37% and operating profits up 44%.

More even than its financial growth, the year was





GAP Group

notable for AFI's investment in safety. It more than doubled the number of training days to 1302 - for its 348 employees - and has reduced the number of personal injury and road accidents by a third compared to 2012.

Its commitment to safety extends beyond its own workforce. During the year AFI launched an updated version of its SmartZone system, which controls and monitors the use of powered access machines. SmartZone uses a smart card recognition system to only allow operators with valid training to operate a machine.

### GAP Group (UK)

GAP Group's diversification project continued successfully in 2013, with the Glasgow, UK-based company investing further in its specialist divisions.

Its new lifting division was a prime driver behind its growth last year, with six new depots and revenues more than doubling. The non-mechanical plant division also grew, by 95% in revenue terms. These specialist businesses helped GAP grow its annual sales by 22% in 2013.

In support of the lifting division, in 2013 GAP established a dedicated Test, Inspect and Certify team. This led to the company winning significant inspection and rental contracts for the Ministry of Defense naval base at Portsmouth and with Southern Water.

The company is committed to an apprenticeship scheme that it has been running for several years. In 2013 it recruited 14 new apprentices, taking the total employed to 61. Every depot in the network employs at least one apprentice and all apprentices have the option to be employed by GAP when their training is completed.



Dromad Hire

### Loxam (France)

Despite difficult market condition in its home market of France 2013 was something of a 'year of action' for Loxam.

It shifted to the single Loxam Rentals brand for its general rentals operations (merging the Laho Equipement, Loueurs de France and Locarest operations in France), continued the expansion of its city-centre LoxamCity stores with five new openings, and expanded its Loxam Laho Tec business, which offers suspended access, access towers and formwork.

Loxam also opened up a potentially significant distribution channel through partnerships with DIY and builders merchants networks Leroy Merlin and Weldom. By the end of 2013 it had established 81 'corner stores' in Leroy Merlin locations and 32 in Weldom branches.

The DIY stories and LoxamCity initiatives were part of a wider plan to be 'closer to the customer', with other initiatives including LoxamDrive, which allows customers to reserve equipment by phone or online and pick it up at the branch of their choosing.

Loxam remains Europe's largest rental business, with revenues of €805 million in 2013 and EBITDA profits of €239 million. It continued to expand its international operations in 2013 with the acquisition of Dansklift, and aerial platform business with depots in Denmark, Norway and Sweden.

### SMALL/MID-SIZED RENTAL COMPANY OF THE YEAR (REVENUE <€15M)

### Crestchic (UK)

Crestchic Loadbanks is a UK company that rents loadbanks for testing power supplies, primarily in sectors such as oil and gas, marine, data centres and power generation. In addition to its UK depots it has offices in France, Germany, the Netherlands, Dubai, Singapore, North America and Brazil.

During 2013 - the company's 30th year - Crestchic invested heavily, opening a new £2.5 million rental facility close to its headquarters, providing a single base for its international loadbank rental operation.

The facility - which has reduced lead times by 50% - can deploy units from 30 kW for a day's rental up to a 50 MVA high voltage package to the other side of the world for an extended project. The new rental yard has helped Crestchic increase customer retention rates to 95%.



GGR Group

The company also added new products to its range, including a 6 MW, 20 ft containerised loadbank; a 'first of its kind' microprocessor controlled DC loadbank for testing battery banks and UPS systems; and the Modus control system, allowing customers to control a loadbank via their own on-site control system.

Revenues increased by 5% during the year, and the company says it is targeting double that growth rate this year. "The investment made in 2013 into new facilities, products, technologies and the team has expanded Crestchic's presence on the international stage", says the company.

### Dromad Hire (Republic of Ireland)

The winner of this award last year Dromad Hire has had another successful year, expanding its Fitness4GHire brand, adding parts supply to its activities and reporting a 32% increase in revenues in 2013.

In the face of Ireland's severe downturn following the financial crisis, Dromad established a new operation renting fitness equipment to sports centres, hospitals and other customers.

Last year it further expanded this operation by establishing a franchise for the Fitness4Hire brand, and now has three independent franchises around the country offering next-day delivery.

The company has also established a parts supply operation by joining forces with UK parts supplier IPS. Dromad is now offering 10000 parts to the Irish rental market through IPS Ireland.

### GGR Group (UK)

This specialist mini-crane and vacuum lifting specialist continues to expand its business, with revenues in 2013 growing 12% to £8.5 million and a 26% increase in the number of customers to more than 1300.

The family-owned business added to its range of niche products during the year, offering for the first time the new Unic Eco-095 - offering fume-free, zero noise lifting in enclosed spaces - and also the 20 t electric Galizia F200E pick and carry crane.

The company's fleet now comprises 155 spider cranes, 55 pick and carry cranes, 470 vacuum lifts, 85 cladding lifters and 50 glazing robots.



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2013 also saw the company implement some initiatives to improve customer service and satisfaction levels and now uses a third party online feedback system called Trustpilot to gather customer responses. Around 75% of its business is repeat business.

The company's professionalism is highlighted by the number of important projects it has been involved in, including London Crossrail, the SSE Hydro Arena in Glasgow and the Olympic Aquatic Centre legacy project.

**Hotmobil (Germany)**

Hotmobil has exploited the shift towards a rental culture in mainland Europe to rent a range of mobile



Hotmobil

heating, chiller and steam units. The company, which employs 80 people and has a fleet of 1000 rental units throughout Europe, also has expertise in product design, manufacturing some of its own units.

Its range of heating units spans ratings from 40 kW to 2.5 MW, suitable for supplying hot water during a renovation project or for temporary structures such as marquees. For example, it rented hot water for showers for the Formula 1 race at Silverstone in the UK and during the Tour de France.

In meeting the needs of a growing rental market Hotmobile has been able to develop products specifically designed for rental applications, including the 150 kW MHZ 150 trailer mounted boiler, the smallest trailerised unit in its range. Weighing just over 1500 kg, it can deliver up to 2580 litres of domestic hot water per hour at 10 bar, or deliver heating water at up to 90 degrees at 3 bar.

**Industrial Access (Romania)**

Faced with the challenge of a depressed Romanian construction market Industrial Access reported "the most challenging year in the history of our company".

It responded to the crisis in several ways, but mainly by improving on its internal processes and increasing the amount of work done by computer systems. This allowed it to streamline its staffing from 55 to 43 people.

It integrated all its computer systems into a single Smartrent system, giving instant access to all its processes, from asset management to customer service. Automation of processes was important: for example, the service department now has five



Industrial Access

automated key performance indicators, while sales staff have online decision making tools allowing them to take swift and effective decisions.

The company maintained its presence in four countries - with seven depots in Romania, two in Bulgaria, and one each in Serbia and Moldova - and despite the challenging conditions managed to keep reductions in its profit to less than the market slowdown and maintained a strong cash position.

**RENTAL PRODUCT OF THE YEAR**

**Firefly (Cygnus hybrid generator)**

Firefly launched its new Cygnus Hybrid Power Generator (HPG) in April 2013, offering customers an integrated power solution that can combine with a range of power sources such as solar, wind, battery



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- > **Fuel saving system** - VB9, 2009
- > **LED lamps** - VB9 LED, 2011
- > **Hybrid engine** - VT-Hybrid, 2013

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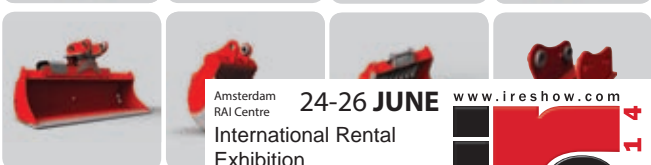
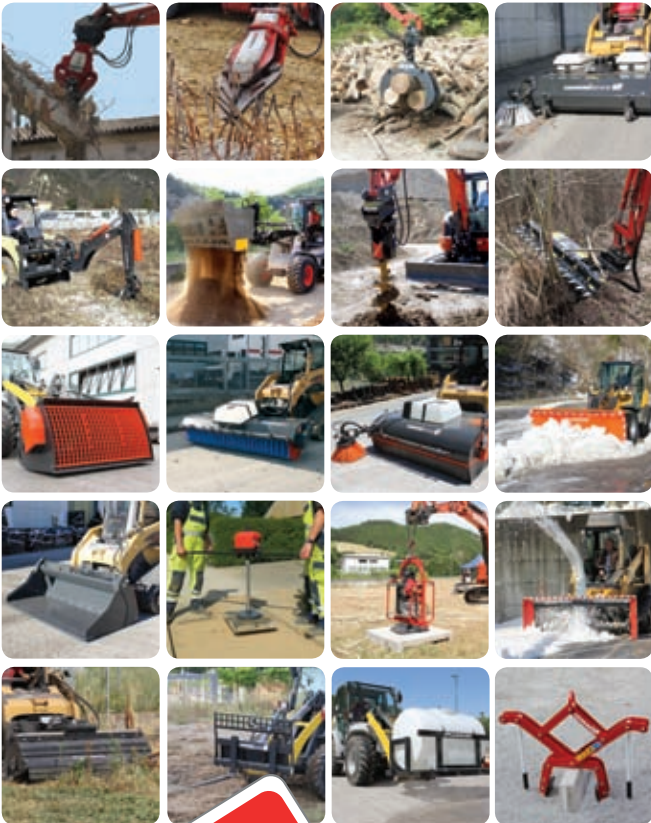


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Firefly

and mains grid. It will also connect to a conventional diesel generator to manage variable load requirements, reducing diesel fuel consumption and CO<sub>2</sub> emissions.

The new 24 kVA, 48 kWh Cygnus HPG offers automatic switching between single and three phase power, and can integrate with genset up to 60 kVA (full back up) or 100 kVA (part load back up). Firefly says trials have shown that genset fuel use can be reduced by up to 50%, with a 60% decrease in genset runtime.

Firefly says that what sets it apart from other hybrid systems "is its ability to provide both single and three phase power in one unit. Meaning the contractor or the plant hirer does not need source two units to provide both forms of power. The contractor benefits from being able to use both types of power at the touch of a button from the HPG."

### Niftylift (HR28 hybrid access platform)

The Height Rider 28 (HR28) is a hybrid four wheel drive articulated boom platform powered by a diesel engine supplemented by battery power when required, allowing the use of a smaller engine and thereby reducing fuel consumption, engine emissions and noise.

The HR28 can operate on battery alone for indoor,

quiet or clean applications, and the diesel engine then recharges the batteries without a mains power source. Niftylift says it is the highest reach electric-powered aerial platform, offering a maximum 19 m outreach.

Weighing 14.5 t it is also one of the lightest platforms in this reach class, meaning that it can be transported on a 26 t truck rather than a larger 'low loader', leading to savings in transportation costs.

The platform also incorporates Niftylift's patented SiOPS safety system, a secondary guarding system that prevents the operator being crushed onto the controls. Niftylift was the first manufacturer to develop this technology and has now been followed by others in the market.

### Power Towers (Pecolift access platform)

Power Towers' Pecolift is a 3.5 m working height vertical mast platform that uses a patented "stored power mechanism" in the mast that makes it very easy for the operator to manually lift the platform using a handle. This means the platform has no need for an engine, battery, hydraulics or electrics, making it a low maintenance, rental friendly platform.

"We call it 'Non-powered Powered Access'", says UK company Power Towers, "This is clearly also a very Eco-friendly alternative to traditional batteries, hydraulics and electrics...This has clear advantages over both existing mechanical forms of access and existing traditionally powered low level access platforms."

The manufacturer says it is intuitive to operate. The operator pushes the Pecolift into position, steps into the platform (no climbing steps). The machine sinks onto its front rubber feet and is braked and the gates close behind the operator, who then turns the handle clockwise to lift, anti-clockwise to descend.

Launched in the UK in January 2013 the Pecolift has been an unqualified success, with over 2600 machines sold. Many of the UK's major rental companies have purchased Pecolift in large quantities, including Lavendon/Nationwide Platforms, Hire Station, HSS, Brandon Hire, A-Plant



Power Towers

and Select Plant Hire. It is also now being sold in mainland Europe, the Middle East, Australia and New Zealand.

### SDMO (Rental Compact generators)

During 2013 SDMO completed the launch of its new Rental Compact line of gensets for the rental market, comprising models in the 16 to 550 kVA power range.

The sets have been developed specifically with rental in mind with SDMO saying that the "revolution" was the realisation that rental sets are often used by people with little knowledge of power equipment; "This was an important change that has led to a complete rethink of the functions to make it more accessible, safer, more robust and easier to use."

In addition to features that make the sets easy to handle on site, SDMO has also developed the technology - the sets use Stage 3A engines and there is a new, patented cooling system that reduces noise, makes the machines more compact, and allows them to be operated effectively even in very hot conditions.

These features have helped the Rental Compact range find rapid acceptance among rental companies in Europe, including in major power rental markets such as France and the UK.

### Towerlight (VTLED lighting tower)

Tower Light is well known in rental markets around the world for its lighting tower products. In 2013 it built on its reputation for innovative products with the launch of a LED lamp version of its well-established VT lighting tower range.

The VTLED can be fitted with either 300 or 450 W LED lamps: the 300 W version provides similar light intensity to 1000 W metal halide lamps, while the 450 W unit offer a higher illumination factor.

The use of LED lamps means that the less power needed to light up the

lamps and therefore Tower Light was able to replace the standard 9.0 kW engine with a 5.0 kW unit. This lowers fuel consumption from an average of 1.8 l/min to 1.0 l/min.



Niftylift



AFI

Other benefits of LED lamps, says Tower Light, include zero maintenance, longer life, lower disposal costs, and the ability to be restarted when hot, unlike metal halide lamps that have to cool first.

## RENTAL SAFETY CAMPAIGN OF THE YEAR

### AFI (UK)

AFI is shortlisted for its development of the SmartZone, a device that controls and monitors the use of powered access platforms and ensures that machines cannot be operated by anyone who has not been properly trained and authorised to use them.

The system recognises a smart card - such as an IPAF PAL card - and will only unlock the machine if the operator has the required licence category and if the card is not out of date.

In addition, the system builds up a profile of what each operator has been doing and will prompt familiarisation training if the operator has never used a particular model. Similarly, it will prompt the user to carry out pre-use checks if he or she has not operated a machine for the previous 24 hours.

In addition to these features the system can also be used to create a geofence, with the machine unable to restart in areas outside the prescribed zone. Also included is an autolock capability, if a machine is left without being locked.

The system successfully completed trials with a major client, BAE Systems at the Portsmouth Naval Base. AFI says BAE is now looking to use the system at a major site in the UK.

### Lavendon Group (Europe)

Europe's largest powered access rental company created a 'Your safety, our priority' campaign targeting both its own employees and external customers.

The campaign, including printed, digital and



Ramirent

video content in four languages, aimed to provide straightforward and consistent way of informing and engaging its customers on key areas of health and safety.

A key part of the initiative was to involve employees in the development of the tools, with staff at five locations in the UK, France, Brussels Germany and the United Arab Emirates participating. This also served to show customers that its employees played an important role in maintaining safety on their jobsites.

Lavendon says the all 1500 of its staff have a copy of the 'Your safety, our priority' guide, helping codify high standards of the group to all new and existing staff, and that the programme as raised awareness with its customers about the importance Lavendon places on safety and demonstrates the high standards that must be met.

In the process, the online health and safety sections of Lavendon's websites have been transformed from a static, seldom updated page to "a six page journey featuring videos, downloads and health and safety guidance."

### Ramirent (Finland)

Ramirent's safety campaign was firmly targeted at workers on construction sites in Sweden. It set up a trailer equipped with safety information, equipment and videos and went on a countrywide tour visiting 28 major construction sites during the year, providing advice and information to more than 5000 site workers.

The trailer would arrive on site at a pre-arranged time, giving workers a welcome break from the routine while doing something useful. As part of the programme Ramirent developed a TB Safety Guide (TB stands for Tryggare byggare - Swedish for safer construction workers) for use on smart phones.

The guide provides guidance on issues such as working at height, dust control, vibration levels on hand-held equipment and lifting.

As well as improving safety knowledge on sites, Ramirent also used the trailer to visit its own depots and improve its staff knowledge on safety and related products. The programme has led to an increase in demand for safety-related products, led customers to ask for more training, and made an obvious connection between machines, safety knowledge and Ramirent.

## RENTAL MARKETING CAMPAIGN OF THE YEAR

### 4-punto-1 (Italy)

Facing extremely difficult economic conditions, four of Italy's biggest rental companies decided to work together to create an alliance that would provide customers with a single point of contact for a wide range of products.

The four - Venpa (access and earthmoving equipment), Milantractor (power rentals), Tecnifor-Fae (portable accommodation) and E-Mac (cranes and scaffolding) - created a rental alliance called 4punto1 designed to offer equipment to large customers working on major projects.

The alliance was launched in March 2013 with a joint marketing and promotions plan, which included the alliance presenting the concept to 100 of the largest contractors in Italy.

The concept has already paid off, with 4punto1 winning work on major projects, including the new Metro 5 line in Milan, the Hotel Marriott project on Sacca Sessoly Island in Venice, and the Expo2015 site in Milan.

### Hewden (UK)

Hewden created a Core Fleet of its most popular 30 products - excavators, telehandlers, dumpers, rollers, scissor lifts and telescopic booms - and guaranteed that any orders from the Core Fleet placed before midday were guaranteed delivery the following morning, while orders place between midday and 5.00 pm would be delivered before 5.00 pm the next day. If it failed to deliver customers would receive a £100 credit note, no questions asked and a written apology from our CEO.

The initiative has succeeded. It has broadened Hewden's appeal to the small and medium sized contractors and builders, with business to these customers increasing by 11%, and it has increased time utilisation on the core products from 53% to 62% (on a now larger fleet).

As of 20 February this year, Hewden had made 35145 Core Fleet deliveries, of which 35074 were on time, giving a success rate of 99.8%.

The success of the programme has led Hewden to invest heavily in the core fleet, spending £35 million on more than 500 new machines last year and plans to invest more than £40 million on the core fleet this year.



Hewden



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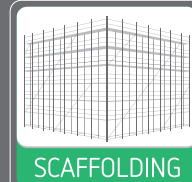
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# ERA Programme

## 'Internet as a Game Changer'

### TUESDAY 24 JUNE

**9.30 - 12.00**

INTERNATIONAL RENTAL EXHIBITION

**12.00 - 15.00**

Visit Rental Depot (optional, open to participants to the ERA Convention)  
Visit of a new Boels depot in Amsterdam

**15.00 - 16.00**

INTERNATIONAL RENTAL EXHIBITION

**16.00 - 18.00**

**CEO PANEL**

- Rental Market Development
- Rental Product Offering & Services Development
- Contractors' vision

Panelists:

*Michael Kneeland* (CEO, United Rentals)  
Other Panelists TBC  
(Moderator: *Nadine Dereza*)



**18.00 - 19.00**

**ERA INAUGURATION COCKTAIL**

Open to participants to the ERA Convention and Exhibitors at IRE Show

### WEDNESDAY 25 JUNE

**09.00 - 10.00**

**ROUNDTABLE 1: COUNTRIES IN FOCUS**

■ Japan

*Mr Xiaoming Cheng* (Board member JCRA, Japan Construction Equipment Rental Association)  
(Moderator: TBC)

**ROUNDTABLE 2: YIELD MANAGEMENT**

Speakers

*Bill Plummer* (CFO, United Rentals)  
*Zilliant*  
(Moderator: *Charles Miller*, CL Miller Consulting)

**10.00 - 11.00**

INTERNATIONAL RENTAL EXHIBITION

**11.00- 12.00**

■ Promotion Committee Report

Chairwoman: *Fiona Perrin* (Group Sales & Marketing Director, HSS)

■ Equipment Technology Report

Chairman: *Martin Holmgren* (Senior Vice President - Fleet Management, Cramo)

**12.00 - 14.00**

INTERNATIONAL RENTAL EXHIBITION

**14.00 - 15.30**

**PLENARY SESSION**

■ Welcome Address

*Vesa Koivula*, ERA President



■ Rental versus Ownership

*Judith Merckies*, MEP and author of *The Lease Society - the end of ownership*

■ The Future of the Web

*Cor Molenaar* - eMarketing and Distance Selling  
(Moderator: *Nadine Dereza*)



**15.30 - 16.30**

INTERNATIONAL RENTAL EXHIBITION

**16.30 - 17.30**

**PLENARY SESSION**

■ Trends in the US Rental Industry

*Chris Wehrman* (CEO, American Rental Association)

■ Trends in the European Rental Industry

*Graham Arundell* (Managing Director, Hire Association Europe and Chairman, ERA Statistics Committee)  
Moderator: *Nadine Dereza*

**17.30 - 18.00**

INTERNATIONAL RENTAL EXHIBITION

**18.00 - 20.00**

**EUROPEAN RENTAL AWARDS COCKTAIL RECEPTION**

**20.00 - 23.00**

**EUROPEAN RENTAL AWARDS DINNER**

### THURSDAY 26 June

**09.00 - 10.00**

**ROUNDTABLE 1: PARTS MANAGEMENT**

*Alex Schuessler* - SmartEquip  
Other Speakers TBC  
Moderator: *Martin Holmgren*, Cramo

**ROUNDTABLE 2: INTERNET AS A GAME CHANGER**

*Eugen Russ* (right) - Erento  
*Christian Seifert* - Avenit AG  
(Moderator: *Nadine Dereza*)



**10.00 - 11.00**

INTERNATIONAL RENTAL EXHIBITION

**11.00 - 12.00**

**ERA GENERAL ASSEMBLY**

**12.00 - 12.30**

INTERNATIONAL RENTAL EXHIBITION

**12.30 - 13.30**

**GUEST SPEAKER**  
*Richard Robinson* (Director, Google)



**13.30 - 15.30**

**ERA LUNCH**

**15.30 - 17.00**

INTERNATIONAL RENTAL EXHIBITION



**Nationwide Platforms (UK)**

Nationwide Access created an extensive marketing campaign around the new Pecolift low-level access platform that it added to its fleet in 2013.

The effectiveness of the campaign can be measured by the fact that the company attained 70% utilisation on the fleet of 1000 Pecolifts.

The campaign, undertaken during the first six months of 2013, included 30 trials and demonstrations around the UK, internal

communications to Nationwide staff to familiarise them with the machine, a professional video, leaflets, web content (a special Pecolift landing page) and digital communications with customers.

In addition to the high utilisation rate reached for the fleet, Nationwide says it managed to get the Pecolift rented to prestigious projects and major industrial sites, including St Barts Hospital in London, Heathrow Terminal 2, Hartlepool Power Station and Heysham Nuclear Power Station. **IRN**



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***Atlas Copco***

# ECO compaction

**Among the many new compaction launches of recent months there are plenty offering 'Eco' operation, with lower fuel use. IRN reports.**

**A**ltrad Belle, the UK manufacturer of small compaction, concreting and cutting equipment, continues to expand its compaction range, with the first few months of 2014 seeing a new, lightweight version of its twin-drum roller, its first electric powered plate compactor, and a diesel powered rammer.

The walk-behind TDX 650A roller is an alternative to the company's previous TDX 650, launched at the end of 2012. The key difference is an operating weight of 650 kg, which is 125 kg lighter than the original machine.

"A lot of the 650s were being sold in France", says Ray Neilson, managing director of Altrad Belle, "but some customers were saying that they were being used for small layers of hot asphalt, where you don't need the same weight. So we have created this second machine." The original 650 - popular in markets like South Africa, the Middle East, South America and parts of Africa - will still be produced.

Using a 7.5 hp Yanmar diesel engine - and now with an electrical start and manual start as back-up - the 650A has a drum width of 650 mm and a centrifugal force of 16 kN. It has the same 65 litre water capacity as the standard 650.

"Two of the top five rental companies in France have pre-ordered the new 650A", says Mr Neilson. Production started in March with availability building up in April, May and June.

## Diesel rammer

Altrad Belle, which is part of the French concrete mixer and scaffolding business Altrad, also has a new



Altrad Belle is introducing the TDA650A, a lighter weight version of its 650 walk-behind roller. Inset: Belle is also now selling a diesel powered rammer, the RTX80D.



diesel rammer, the RTX 80D, using a 3.5 kW diesel Yanmar engine.

This unit, weighing 86 kg and offering 20.5 kN impact force and 450-600 blows per minute, draws on the design work done for the new range of RTX 66 and 74 rammers launched last year. It will be available with three foot sizes - 6, 9 and 12 in pads.

Target areas include emerging markets and in particular the oil and gas sector. Anthony Gibbs, Altrad Belle's export sales manager, says; "In the oil and gas applications you can't use petrol rammers because of the sparks - it has to be diesel."

Finally, the Buxton, Derbyshire-based company has added its first ever electric powered plate compactor to its range of plates. The PCEL 400E is designed for use outside on applications like patios, or inside buildings during refurbishment work or during construction.

Priced the same as the petrol equivalent, but a lot cheaper to operate, the 50 kg compactor uses a fixed-speed motor designed specifically for this unit to Belle's specification.

"This means that if you give it to a home user, it won't trip out the consumer electric board", says Ray Neilson. In addition, it will accommodate wide variations in electric cable length, which creates variations in electric power supply.

Available in both 110 V and 230 V versions for the UK and



Atlas Copco's new Dynapac CG2300.



This CB24 is one of a new range of rental-friendly tandem rollers from Caterpillar.

mainland Europe, the 400E has a plate width of 380 mm and centrifugal force is 11 kN. Mr Neilson says it was an enquiry from a major European rental company that led Belle to develop the product.

The new machines reflect continued investment in the business since its acquisition by Altrad in 2008. The company has doubled production staff at the factory to around 110 over the past year, and is increasing in-house content of its products, including the new twin-drum roller.

Mr Neilson says this reflects both an upturn in market demand - including from the UK, which still represents half of all sales - but also improvements in its product range; "Our range of rammers is now in a different league - we've got a better, more reliable product. In the past they were nice machines, but didn't have enough power. The rammer redevelopment has been huge for us."

The business grew its sales by around 10% last year, to around £30 million, and Mr Neilson says this year could see similar growth, although it could be more. Belle's parent, Altrad, has been growing even faster, from revenues of around €300 million five years ago to more than €700 million last year.

### Atlas Copco investment

Also investing in its compaction products is Atlas Copco Road Construction Equipment, which is now making machines in five countries worldwide:



The 11 t VM117 is one of two new soil compactors from JCB.

Germany (pavers), Sweden (rollers), Brazil (rollers), China (rollers, pavers) and India (rollers), each with its own engineering design team.

The company has set itself some ambitious targets for the 2014-16 period, with the aim, it says, of retaining a "lead" position globally on rollers, staying at number two in pavers, and working to reclaim a leading place in the planer market as well.

At a recent product launch in Sweden, the company

said new machines were being designed with three main criteria in mind - they have to be better than before, conform to the ideals of sustainable productivity, and be safe.

"We have to make sure the new product is doing better than before, with enhanced productivity, but needing less energy and producing less emissions", says Herman Mattyssen, vice president marketing.

Environmental issues are important, he says. "We always have to be one step ahead, and so we are already working with Tier 4 Final engines. Also noise is very important." This is for operator comfort and to be able to work in cities.

With ergonomic changes to the cabins, operators can stay fit all day, he said, adding that this was important in places like Scandinavia when there are extended shifts in the lighter summer months as a result of the shorter roadbuilding and repair season.

New from the company is the Dynapac CG2300, adding to its articulated CC machines. The CG2300 is 3.99 m long - important for manoeuvrability - and 2.99 m high. Instead of central articulation, machines in the Dynapac CG roller range traditionally have steering on the drums.

The cab on the Dynapac CG2300 has been designed with the operator in mind, and drum edge visibility is described as excellent thanks to an extended sideways sliding seat and steering assembly.

A standard ECO mode reduces fuel consumption by more than 15%. The company says the ECO mode was the result of closely monitoring the fuel consumption of the new Dynapac CA2500 - 6500 soil compactor



Volvo CE's new soil compactors - including the SD75 and SD135 pictured here - offer a 30% reduction in fuel use over previous models.



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range and its large CC asphalt rollers, as well as the new CG2300. It claims all the rollers consume 15 to 20% less diesel than the previous range without ECO Mode.

The engine is Stage IV/Tier 4 Final ready and claims low emissions. Advanced options that are available, include an edge presser/cutter (left and right), and a chip spreader.

### Utility compactors

Caterpillar is also promising lower fuel use with its latest compaction products, with the new B-Series utility compactors in the 1.8-5 t classes comprising eight models: the CB22B, CB24B, CB24B XT, CB32B, CB34B, CB34B XW (extra width), CC24B and CC34B.

These machines, which will typically be used for smaller applications such as streets, bike paths, courtyards, patchwork, parking lots, driveways and town centre work, have several improvements over previous models.

Designed for rental, they have an ECO mode that makes a "significant" difference to fuel use, the seating area has more legroom, and the new dashboard design includes "intuitive controls and easy viewing LCD display for day and night operation".

Other improvements include a more robust, reliable water spraying system with a larger capacity tank allowing up to 10 hours operation. The 3X models have 300 litre tanks and the 2X have 235 litre tanks.

The rollers can also be fitted with up to 400 kg of additional ballast to increase linear loads, making the rollers more versatile. Drum diameter increases from 700 to 720 mm, which reduces the rolling resistance. The 3X models have two vibration frequencies, while the 2X units have three.

Meanwhile, JCB, in addition to adding several new compactors to its range, has also announced some changes to its manufacturing strategy. It is to close

Wacker Neuson's new version of its RD27 roller.



JCB says that "significant enhancements" have been made to the compaction criteria, including amplitude, frequency, centrifugal force, static linear load and weight distribution, resulting in fewer passes being required to meet the material density requirements.

JCB's Automatic Vibration Control (AVC) automatic compaction control system, which avoids over-compaction at the end of each pass, is a standard feature of both the VM117D and the VM137D.

Like many other suppliers, an ECO Mode is available, an option that JCB says will reduce fuel consumption by 16% fuel. With the Tier 2 engine, an optional variable fan kit provides up to 5% fuel savings.

### More power, greater efficiency

Volvo CE's latest soil compactors are the SD75, SD115 and SD135, all offering more power, greater efficiency and up to a 30% reduction in fuel consumption over previous models.

The three new models are Stage IIIB emission compliant and are fitted with the new turbocharged 4-cylinder Volvo D4 diesel engine producing between 75 and 110 kW.

Volvo CE Road Machinery product manager for sales region EMEA (Europe, Middle East and Africa), Paul Johnson, says the new SD soil compactors "put performance and operator comfort at the heart of the process with shock absorbing cab mounts and highly effective sound-insulation throughout the Volvo cab ensuring new levels of well-being. Vibration is essential for efficient material compaction so distancing and protecting the operator from this represents a significant step."

He says all three SD compactors have high and low amplitude and frequency as standard, while a five-frequency selector is available as an option for even greater optimisation when matching drum frequency to material type.

Volvo Smart Power mode is available as an option on both the SD115 and SD135, which helps reduce fuel consumption without having any adverse effect of compaction performance.

A further benefit of the new SD compactors is the ease with which the smooth drum can be converted

its factory in Gatersleben, Germany, which it has operated since the 2005 acquisition of Vibromax.

Production of its compaction range will shift to JCB factories in the UK and India, reflecting increased demand from emerging countries. Ninety jobs will be created in the UK and India, although 145 will be lost in Germany.

JCB CEO Graeme Macdonald said, "The decision to relocate production of compaction equipment to factories in the UK and India is right for our business. The decision wasn't taken lightly and the impact on our employees in Germany is regrettable. This will improve competitiveness of JCB in the compaction sector. It will also create a far more sustainable position on which we can build as we grow business in the future."

Walk-behind compactors and the two smallest tandem rollers in the range will be built at the JCB Attachments factory in Uttoxeter, UK, while production of all soil compactors and two larger models of tandem roller will be moved to Pune, India.

### JCB soil compactors

In that soil compactor range, JCB has launched the first two of what it says will be a new and improved range. The VM117D and VM137D are powered by Stage IIIB/Tier 4 Interim JCB Ecomax engines delivering 93 kW (125hp).

The VM117 and VM137 machines will be offered for sale globally and will be manufactured in India and Brazil, available with Tier 2, BS3 and Tier 4i/Stage 3B engines.

The VM117D has an operating weight of 11 t, while the VM137D weighs in at 12.2 t. Both come with a smooth drum as standard, although for cohesive soils both compactors are available with pad foot drums as an option.



Weber MT's SRV590 rammer is one of two new tampers being introduced by the German manufacturer.



Chicago Pneumatic's new SR130PD.

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to a padfoot. "We have designed in the Volvo clamp-on kit which means users require minimal tools to convert the drum," said Mr Johnson. "This further extends the flexibility of these compactors."

**A new Wacker**

From Wacker Neuson in Germany comes the new version of its asphalt roller RD27, with additional features such as a detailed control panel giving a quick overview of all functions as well as a multi-function lever for controlling the vibration options and the water supply with one hand.

With a compact design - only 2.5 m long and 1.0 m wide - the roller can be switched between low and high compaction force. The low centrifugal force is best for asphalt compaction while the high level is ideal for the compaction of granular materials.

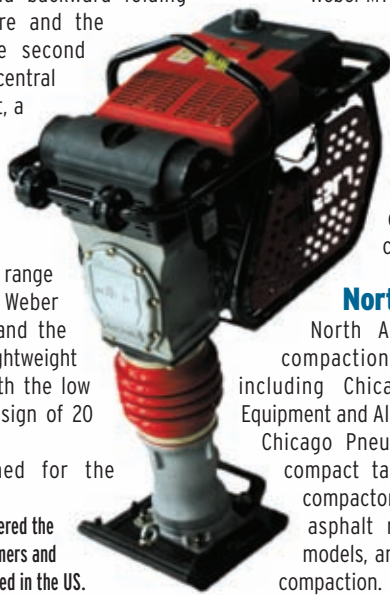
All-round visibility has been improved, with a modified shape of the hood and a high seating location providing for more safety on the job site. A new vibration damped driver's cabin and a new seat provide greater comfort and fatigue-free working.

The RD27 is available in two versions: a base variant has the forward and backward folding roll-over protective structure and the ergonomic driver's seat. The second version additionally offers a central lifting point for easy transport, a left-sided armrest, drum-edge lighting, and a fold-down scraper bar, as well as an optional automatic vibration connection and water cut-off.

Making improvements to its range of tampers and rammers is Weber MT, with the new SRV 590 and the SRV 600i. The SRV 590 is a lightweight unit, weighing just 62 kg, with the low weight put down to the redesign of 20 components.

The SRV 600i is designed for the

Allen Engineering has entered the compaction market with rammers and plate compactors, all assembled in the US.



German contractor Hermann Kirchner Bauunternehmung GmbH has been using Bomag's new BW 161 ADO-5 10 t rollers featuring the company's new tangential oscillation system on a section of the B 327 'Hunsrückhöhenstraße' road connecting north Saarland and Koblenz. For the connecting sections and for processing longitudinal joints, it is usual to roll first in static mode and subsequently with vibration. With the BW 161 the tangential oscillation in the rear drum generated horizontally directed shearing forces, allowing gentle and efficient joint compaction without the need for vibration in colder weather. Bomag reports that the operators appreciated the system; "When I activate the 'TanGO', I only hear a quiet hum. It's amazing that despite this everything is so well compacted".

international market, a basic model stripped of some additional features, and weighing 63 kg.

Weber MT says; "These reductions, however, do not impair the model's suitability for professional applications in any way... Despite its light weight of 63 kg, this tamper will satisfy the highest standards in terms of performance, reliability and quality even under the harshest conditions."

**North American launches**

North America is getting additional compaction machines from companies including Chicago Pneumatic Construction Equipment and Allen Engineering.

Chicago Pneumatic is offering a range of compact tandem asphalt rollers and soil compactors, including articulated tandem asphalt rollers in gasoline and diesel models, and small vibratory rollers for soil compaction.

The new models now available in North America include the gasoline asphalt AR90G, the diesel articulated tandem asphalt roller AR100, the AR120, and the following soil rollers: SR130D and SR130PD.

These ride-on models complement Chicago Pneumatic light compaction equipment.

**Allen's compaction move**

Allen Engineering, meanwhile, has moved into the rammer and plate compactor model to widen its product range beyond its core concrete products, such as power trowels.

The new products, assembled by Allen in North America, include the ATC130H and ATC170H rammers, both using Honda petrol engines that are built specifically for rammer use.

The new reversible and single direction plate range have three models in each line. The reversible plates give the uchoice opf either Honda gasoline or Hatz diesel engines and have working widths of between 0.5 m and 0.63 m.

The three single direction plates are the APC140H, APC160H and APC210H, which use Honda GX120 and GX160 gasoline engines.

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# Bird's eye view

**The impetus behind asset tracking and theft-prevention technologies is fast growing, with more and more options available to rental companies. Murray Pollok reports.**

**A**sset tracking technology is starting to take centre stage in the construction equipment market - that much is clear from the number of telematics specialists and manufacturers offering tracking systems.

It was notable at Conexpo, for example, that Caterpillar CEO Doug Oberhelman made the company's CatConnect system one of the key messages of his presentation to the world's press, calling it a "game changer for customers".

That system goes way beyond simple asset tracking - encompassing the integration of multiple machines on a site and productivity improvements - and it is clearly a key strategy for Cat and other OEMs.

Of course, most rental companies have a narrower view of such technology than do end users. Rather than looking at how systems can increase a customer's productivity - although that will surely come - many rental companies are instead concerned about how they can manage their equipment and how they can efficiently monitor a mixed fleet using different OEM or third party telematic systems.

There are now definite signs that the market is adjusting to these particular needs by making the technology more open, either by agreeing on what data to collect or by creating systems that allow fleet owners to manage multiple data streams.

For example, just before Conexpo a group of global heavy equipment manufacturers, fleet managers and industry associations announced an agreement on a defined set of asset data that, when communicated via telematics, can be sent to the end user or rental owner.

## Telematics agreement

The Association of Equipment Manufacturers (AEM) and the Association of Equipment Management Professionals (AEMP) - both based in the US - announced that 19 data points will be part of a standard being developed and maintained by the two



Steve Blackburn, vice president North America, Navman Wireless, "Our new portal offers a single view of all telematics data regardless of the source".



Strattec Security Corp's latest theft prevention device is the i-Guard, developed for the construction, fleet and rental industries.

Associations and their memberships.

The organisations said data will be provided to end users via an Application Program Interface (API) server to server data sharing standard. That will allow end-users and rental companies to use their own business software to collect and analyse asset data from mixed equipment fleets.

That push towards integrating data streams from different telematics systems is evident also in some of the OEM and third party systems being developed.

One example is a new web-based telematics portal being introduced by Navman Wireless USA. The system is designed to streamline the management of mixed heavy equipment fleets by consolidating machine data from all OEM and Navman Wireless-tracked assets into a single interface.

The solution complies with the AEMP Telematics Data Standard, provides one-stop fleetwide visibility without adding third-party hardware to machines that already have factory-installed OEM technology, and supports integration of data into an existing ERP system for broader business use.

Fleet operators can request data access credentials from each OEM represented in their fleet, with data from each reporting source securely transmitted to operators' servers and then aggregated for use in the portal's dashboards, maps and reports.

Information available from the portal ranges from machine location, fleet utilisation, fuel burn, and geofence and curfew violations to equipment use by jobsite, as well as preventive maintenance schedules.

"For the past decade, contractors with mixed fleets have been increasingly handicapped in their use of telematics by the fractured nature of the reporting", says Steve Blackburn, vice president North America, Navman Wireless, "Only the largest fleets with exceptional budgets and large IT teams have been able to afford to consolidate the data from each OEM website."

The portal is scheduled to begin testing in April,



Caterpillar is pushing its CatConnect technology, focusing on benefits of productivity, equipment management, safety and sustainability.

with availability by subscription and priced according to the number of assets tracked.

## Open access technology

Manufacturers are also working to make their machines easier to link up to telematics systems. Terex AWP is introducing a "plug-and-play" system that it describes as the "the industry's first telematics-ready connector" to enable third party devices to be plugged into its Genie boom lifts. The telematics-ready connector is available on the Genie S-80, Z-80, S-100, S-120 and ZX-135 boom lifts, with the connector added to smaller booms over the coming year.

"Our customers have many brands of equipment to manage, and many proprietary types of telematics solutions to go along with them," says Christine Zeznick, associate product manager, Terex AWP. "The last thing many of our customers wanted was another OEM providing a proprietary solution for fleet management. Our solution provides a unique and open approach to help our customers".

The connector - factory installed and available worldwide - is capable of providing machine hour meter reporting, location, utilisation and security capabilities such as geo-fencing, alarms by movement, and remote machine disabling.

The growing interest in telematics is benefitting third party suppliers such as Denmark's Trackunit. The company reported that its sales in 2013 grew by almost 60%, and the company pointed out that the potential for growth is enormous; "Analyses show that only 5% of the total global market use online fleet management systems like Trackunit. It is, thus, a market in an early growth stage, and Trackunit sees untapped potential in the rental industry".

It says rental companies are well placed to benefit from telematic systems because they allow them to bill their customers for the exact use of the machines.

The company is now building a stronger presence outside Denmark, recently opening sales and service offices in Germany and the UK.

Crack is another tracking company with global coverage - its parent company is in South Africa and it has offices all over the world. Richard Lane, Crack's European distribution and partnership manager, tells *IRN* that it has products covering tracking of equipment - including non-powered units like trailers - as well as lone worker products.



## UK renters push access control

Powered aerial platforms require well trained operators, which is perhaps why it is the access rental sector that has been leading the way in developing systems to prevent unqualified or unauthorised people from using machines.

Major access rental specialists in the UK including Nationwide Platforms and AFI are both marketing access control systems, and others are starting to follow suit.

Nationwide has adopted technology developed by Irish anti-theft specialist Kosran - the Kosran Safety Access control System (SAC) - that prevents non-qualified operators from using lifts.

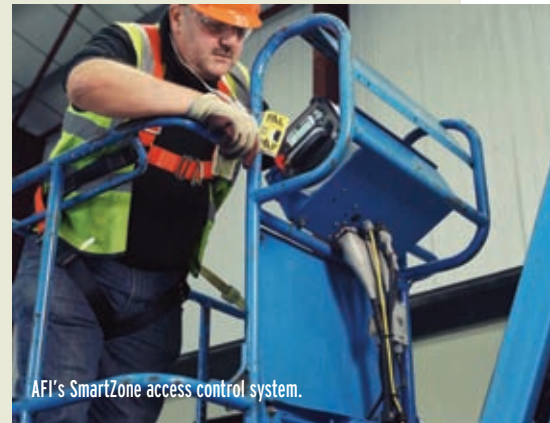
Under the system, which has evolved from the Kosran ECV electronic coded valve, anti-theft immobilisation system, operators are given a PIN code that relates to their IPAF Powered Access Licence (PAL card). The rental company can add or delete PIN codes - up to 100 on each machine - providing authorisation for a specific operator on specific machines. Authorisation can be done on site or via a remote laptop or PC or using Kosran's App.

It can also be used to control access for specific time periods, and the system will automatically determine if a PAL card is out of date. An optional 'plug and play' telematics system provides a rental company with additional information on machine use.

The system has been adopted on certain sites by Nationwide Platforms - rebranded as SkySentry - and was last year rolled out to the wider rental sector by Kosran, and not just in access. For example, the system has been adopted by BAM Nuttall for its crawler crane fleet.

AFI, one of the biggest UK access rental firms, has meanwhile implemented its SmartZone system, which is very similar in concept, relying on a smart card and PIN codes. AFI says the latest version of the system has completed trials with BAE Systems at the Portsmouth Naval Base.

It will prompt if familiarisation training is required, and will highlight the need for pre-use checks if a machine is used for the first time in 24 hours.



AFI's SmartZone access control system.

With technology on asset tracking having developed over decades, companies like Ctrack are able to offer a wide range of products, including asset tracking, immobilisation systems, RFID technology and, most recently, a smart card systems that can integrate with a company's existing employee cards.

The company's enhanced Driver ID system allows companies to take advantage of their existing workforce identification systems - employee or building entry cards - to determine which driver is operating a vehicle. With Driver ID, it is possible to separate driver and vehicle data to better understand

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Cranes and Handling



Contractor BAM Nuttall has fitted Kosran's Safety Access Control system (SAC) on its crawler crane fleet, ensuring that only authorised workers can operate the machines.

the movements and actions of individuals in real-time or historically, irrelevant of how many vehicle they have operated within the reporting period.

The company has also launched a 'plug and play' telematics system targeted at plant and equipment where hardwired tracking systems may be unsuitable or too expensive. The device connects to a vehicle's OBD II onboard diagnostic port.

Mr Lane says Ctrack is also looking further at RFID technology as a way of keeping tabs on equipment attachments or ancillary equipment - if a piece of equipment comes back and the associated attachment isn't with it then the system will alert the user.

Ctrack is well aware of further opportunities in the construction equipment sector and Mr Lane says the company is talking to potential OEM partners who could badge its technology. "It's quite likely that



Volvo CE is offering some of its excavators with augmented anti-theft features incorporated into its CareTrack telematics system.

you'll see us taking a part of that market", he says.

There are other trends in the sector, not least a focus on driver behaviour, mainly for delivery truck drivers. DPL Telematics, a US-based provider of asset monitoring and telemetry, has launched the Skyhawk OBDII vehicle tracking system designed to increase driver safety and productivity while reducing fleet costs.

The system allows managers to wirelessly monitor all their vehicles continually on the internet, with managers able to receive alerts on air bag deployments, driving without the seatbelt, harsh braking, rapid acceleration, speeding, towing and more.

The Skyhawk OBDII also looks at the vehicle's operating data such as engine temperature, pressures and diagnostic fault codes, "thus empowering the fleet manager to proactively take immediate corrective action instead of reacting to a catastrophic failure."

Tony Nicoletti, director of strategy and business development at DPL Telematics, says a key benefit of the solution is that it is wireless and easy to install, "allowing anybody to perform an installation in seconds without any wiring or external antenna."

**Telogis launch**

Another telematics specialist, Telogis - a US company with operations in Europe, South America and New Zealand - has introduced a telematics system for heavy equipment, including commercial vehicles, construction plant, non-powered assets or a combination of all three.

The system incorporates the now-common geofencing option, as well as tracking the operation of equipment.

"By the year 2020, there will be more than 26 billion mobile devices connected to the Internet of Things, and nowhere will that be more important than in the management of mobile resources," says Jeff Cohen, vice president, asset

DPL Telematics says its new Skyhawk OBDII tracking system will increase driver safety and productivity and reduce fleet costs.



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chip in the machine's key or fob key. The code is transmitted between the two components by a small antenna over what Strattec says are difficult-to-mimic radio frequencies.

When a key is inserted into the ignition or a fob used with a push-start button, the vehicle requests authorisation. If the engine and key or Fob codes don't match, the vehicle will not start. Strattec says the majority of criminals do not have the skills to disable such a system, "unlike easily hacked GPS technology".

"Deploying robust security is becoming increasingly critical as equipment theft rates rise year after year," said Fred Kosloske, aftermarket sales manager, Strattec. "The i-Guard system not only can help keep costly equipment from being stolen, it can help lower insurance costs, while reducing workforce downtime and project delays." **IRN**

UK supplier Castle Group's new lone worker protection system, Loner SMD, is a personally worn device that contains protection features including a silent or audible panic alarm, a fall detector and a motion detector for man-down alerts. The system will also alert when its user logs on or off the system, all of which can be tracked on a simple internet portal. Loner SMD uses multiple mobile phone networks and a high-power aerial, so alerts can be sent even in areas where the mobile signal is very poor.



Ctrack's plug & play telematics system is designed for equipment which doesn't warrant the expense of a fully wired tracking device.

solutions at Telogis. "Customers who connect their vehicles, assets and heavy equipment to the Telogis platform benefit from actionable intelligence that drives profitability, productivity and safety."

Theft prevention continues to be an issue, with rental companies presented with a choice between asset tracking systems incorporating geofencing to more proactive immobilization systems of the kind developed by Kosran.

Volvo VE, for instance, has recently introduced an integrated anti-theft system for its D-Series and new for 2014 E-Series excavators in the 13 - 49 t category. The anti-theft option is fully integrated in the Volvo CareTrack telematics system and offers machine owners "extra peace of mind and over the standard CareTrack offering".

The anti-theft functionality features multiple triggers including such as machine tampering, movement sensors and time and geo-fencing.

**Leading the charge**

In the UK, Kubota says it is leading the charge on theft prevention with its standard anti-theft system. Its one-key technology includes one master 'Red' programming key, plus two 'Black' operational keys - up to four Black keys can be programmed to any of one master.

Only programmed keys will start the engine, which Kubota says distances it from the 'standard key' approach. Kubota UK says even identically shaped keys cannot start the engine, unless they are programmed.

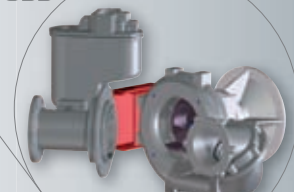
Third party suppliers of anti-theft systems include Strattec Security Corp in the US, whose latest theft prevention device, the i-Guard, has been developed specifically for the construction and rental industries.

i-Guard is a radio frequency identification (RFID) immobiliser, with a unique electronic code programmed into the engine module and into a



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Almost 130000 visitors attended the show, up 8% on 2011.

# 'Fabulous' Conexpo

**IRN reports from the Conexpo-Con/Agg show held in Las Vegas on 4-8 March.**



**A**n 8% increase in visitor numbers to almost 130000 reinforced an upbeat feeling at the Conexpo-Con/Agg show in Las Vegas. International visitor numbers were also up by 8% to around 31000, a number described by AEM show director Megan Tanel as "fabulous".

The feel-good factor was replicated in many of the press conferences held during the show,

although there was caution as well. Caterpillar chairman and CEO, Doug Oberhelman set the tone with a guardedly optimistic overview of prospects for the global construction equipment industry this year.

He singled-out North America as one of the most promising markets, with the region "showing the best growth signs for March in four years." On Europe he said the market was, "Somewhat better, coming back from a very deep hole...Most of the bad news is behind us."

He sounded a similar note of cautious optimism on China, saying the country's equipment market was recovering, but added, "I should not expect China to be a big boom, as we have seen in the past." He acknowledged liquidity problems, but said the country "will not fall off a cliff."

"It is a mixed bag, with North America the strongest growth prospect. I am guardedly optimistic, but the global economy is a fragile thing."

Hipower, Himoina's US subsidiary, showed off a range of diesel, bi-fuel and natural gas powered gensets at the show. Pictured is a 165 kVA natural gas unit using a PSI engine and equipped with a system to 'scrub' the gas before it enters the genset. Hipower can make natural gas sets up to 1 MW and also now has a 50 kW propane powered set.



## Terex to retain Construction

Terex CEO Ron DeFeo said the company remained committed to retaining and growing its Construction division, with a greater focus on rental market sales in the future.

Mr DeFeo, speaking at the Terex press conference at Conexpo, said the company would leverage its Genie aerial platform business to increase sales to the rental channel and further adapt its products - which include excavators and backhoe loaders - to the rental market.

"Our construction products are still too expensive and too traditional", he said, "Give us some time to adapt them and work with Genie [for the rental channel]...I'd rather grow the business than walk away from the business."

There had been some speculation about the future of the Construction division following the decision to sell the dump truck business to Volvo CE, a transaction which is due to close in the second quarter of this year. Mr DeFeo said the decision had been the right one for Terex.

George Ellis, president of the Construction division, said the company would develop a range of 'channel specific' backhoes and material handling products during 2014 and 2015.

## Wacker Neuson plugs American gap

Wacker Neuson has launched four skid steer and compact tracked loaders developed for the North American market and said the new range would help it fill gaps in its distribution network in the region.

"We didn't have a skid steer loader line, that is the reason why we have gaps in the distribution network", said Chris Barnard, president and CEO



of Wacker Neuson's North American subsidiary, speaking at Conexpo, "We have now completed the puzzle."

The four models comprise two skid steers and two compact tracked loaders, being built in Europe but jointly designed by Wacker Neuson's Austrian and US design teams.

The SW 24 is a radial lift skid steer with 2350 lb of rated operating capacity and the SW 28 is a 2800 lb, vertical lift model. The compact tracked loaders are the 3500 lb ST 35 - a radial lift unit - and the ST 45, a 4500 lb, vertical lift loader.

More machines in the range will be introduced over the next two years, with the full line likely to be available by the end of 2016. Although they are currently being produced in Europe, Wacker Neuson hopes to eventually make them in North America.

Cem Peksaglam, Wacker Neuson's CEO, said; "This makes us even more attractive to many dealers and we can now provide customers with high-quality and high-performance compact machines, all under one roof."

# 185 ft boom is star of the show

Big machines often take the plaudits and it was JLG Industries' turn to enjoy the publicity as it launched what is now the largest self-propelled aerial platform in the world, the 56.4 m (185 ft) platform height 1850SJ, offering a maximum outreach of 24.4 m (80 ft) and an impressive 21.3 m (70 ft) outreach at a height of 36.5 m (120 ft).

Competing head-to-head with Terex AWP's SX-180 machine launched last year at bauma, the 1850 has a similar geometry, with a five section stick boom - JLG's first five section boom - and telescoping fly jib.

In some respects too similar for Terex's liking - the rival manufacturer has sent a letter to JLG claiming that JLG's outrigger design, using

JCB unveiled a new 'functional' version of its 3CX backhoe loader designed for large fleet owners, particularly in North and South American markets but also available in Europe, Russia and the Middle East later this year. The unit has a more basic cab than the standard model, with simple controls designed for multiple users. The backhoe will be available in North America as a Tier 4 Final unit using JCB's Ecomax engine with no diesel particulate filter (DPF).



Skyjack debuted a new electrically powered rough terrain scissor lift at Conexpo. The SJ6832 RTE is the "most compact machine on the market that is capable of lifting 1000 pounds [450 kg] to 32 ft [9.7 m]," said Barry Greenaway, product manager for the machine. "It is also the only machine in its category with four-wheel drive and 45% gradeability as standard design." The zero-emission scissor lift uses the same chassis as the existing diesel and dual fuel 68RT units. "An electric version of one of Skyjack's most popular machines is a great addition to the options we can offer our clients," said Brad Boehler, Skyjack's president.



hydraulic cylinders to extend the axles, was in breach of its patents for its own X-profile chassis. JLG said it was confident it had not infringed any patents.

Regardless of that disagreement, it is clear that the 1850SJ, like the SX-180, is a considerable engineering achievement. The unit weighs 30 t (60300 lb), requiring it to have a special over-weight permit in the US, but not an over-size transportation permit. With a length of 14.5 m (46 ft 9 in), it is just a couple of feet longer than JLG's 1500 unit.

"We are excited to introduce the world's largest boom to the industry," said Jeff Ford, JLG Industries global product director, aerial work platforms. "This one-of-a-kind machine represents the latest example of JLG's long and well-documented history of innovation in boom lift design and manufacturing."

The 1850SJ is already in pre-production and will be ready to ship this spring. List price is US\$614950, which compares to \$516725 for the 1500.



## Hilti offers 'On Demand' service

Hilti used Conexpo as the launch platform for a new tool hire programme in North America - Hilti Tools On Demand - that allows contractors to use the company's tools during peak months.

The new programme complements its existing Tool Fleet Management service, which is targeted at contractors that want to use Hilti tools year in and year out, and its short term rental option for emergencies.

Tools On Demand has been designed to offer contractors the use of tools for those months when projects peak.

Marketing sales manager David Schimmel said, "We have over 10000 customers signed up to our Tool Fleet Management service in North America, and they were calling for a programme like this that would allow them the use of tools for three to five months at a time, instead of years at a time or quick rental periods."

Mr Schimmel said the programme was available in some European countries but was initially being rolled out large-scale in North America, where the company was seeing the highest demand. "The new service does not conflict with our rental network, but fits in between the short-term rental and long-term fleet management services," he said.

Under Tools On Demand, contractors pay to use tools with full Hilti service and support for a minimum of three months, and return them when they are no longer needed.



Atlas Copco Portable Energy introduced the new OAS 25 and OAS 50 generators at Conexpo - its first Tier 4 Final compliant generators. The 60 Hz sets for heavy-duty applications are using Isuzu 4LE engines with a Diesel Oxidation Catalyst (DOC)-only configuration to achieve Tier 4 Final emission levels. The OAS 25 and OAS 50 models will replace the existing OAS 25 and OAS 45 units and Atlas Copco said that its entire range of portable generators will be Tier 4 Final-compliant by the end of this year. The two new models use the same engine, enclosure and controls, meaning that rental companies need to stock fewer spare parts, including air and oil filters.



The wraps were taken off Volvo's latest concept construction machine - the GaiaX mini excavator - at the Las Vegas Convention Centre. The name derives from Gaia, the creator and mother of the earth from Greek mythology. "The Mother Earth figure embodies many characteristics of the concept compact excavator - its innate affinity with the ground, its power, strength, and all-seeing control, as well as its protective qualities", said Stina Nilimaa Wickström, design director at Volvo CE, "This is a machine designed to work in harmony with nature, with minimal environmental impact, and that cares for the user and site staff, keeping them safe from harm."

## Sullair invests in portables

Now part of private equity owned Accudyne Industries, Sullair is investing heavily in its portable compressor business and is again targeting export markets, although a move into small portables for Western Europe is likely to wait until 2015.

The company showed two new compressors at Conexpo - the new Tier 4 Interim 1600 family and also a remanufactured unit to illustrate the company's new REMAN programme.

Carrie-Ann Flank, vice president and general manager of Sullair's portable compressors business, told *IRN*; "We're increasing our research and development budget by 50% over last year - it's a big investment."

Although North American markets remain an important part of its business Sullair is also targeting exports, including the Middle East and Russia, where its large compressors are finding applications in the oil and gas sector.

In support of the export push, Euan McCulloch, the company's sales director, is soon to relocate to Sullair's European corporate office in Sunderland, UK.

The company closed its portables factory in France

Euan McCulloch, director of sales at Sullair, with Carrie-Ann Flank, vice president and general manager of Sullair's portable compressors and OEM business.

in 2010 and Mr McCulloch says they will move back into the European market when the time is right; "We want to re-establish ourselves in Europe. That doesn't happen overnight - we have to recapture our channel partners." Small portables are unlikely to be available for Europe until 2015.

The company is also expanding its range of Tier 4 Interim compressors, with 900 and 1150 models to follow the new 1600 platform later this year. Tier 4 Final units will be available by the end of the year. Ms Flank said Sullair would not be a "made in the US" manufacturer.

Meanwhile, the REMAN programme is designed not just to give customers a lower cost way of improving their fleets, but Sullair will exchange out machines immediately, giving rental companies an equivalent remanufactured compressor when they ship their own units to Sullair.



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- Dan Stucker, Hotchkiss Rentals

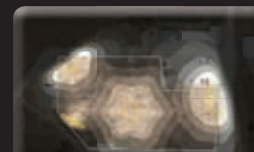


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## Hewden says its 'Core Fleet Guarantee' is increasing utilisation and successfully generating more business with small and medium sized customers. Murray Pollok reports.

**H**ewden is reporting success with the Core Fleet Guarantee project it introduced in March 2013, and is now building on the programme by adding to the range of products in the core fleet and investing heavily in new machines.

Under the initiative Hewden offers next day delivery on its 30 most popular products - excavators, telehandlers, site dumpers, rollers and aerial platforms. Any machine ordered before midday is guaranteed for delivery by the following morning, while an order placed between midday and 5.00pm will be delivered before 5.00pm the next day.

The rationale was two-fold: to make it easier for companies to order the most important products, and to target small and medium sized and regional customers, many of whom may have felt that Hewden was focused on larger customers.

Hewden says that in the almost 12 months since the launch of the guarantee it has made 35145 core fleet deliveries, of which 99.8% have met the delivery times. Where the delivery is late, customers receive a £100 rebate and a letter of apology from Hewden's CEO Kevin Parkes.

Darren Woods, Hewden's chief financial officer, tells *IRN* that this rebate had to be paid out about 20 times in the first month - costing Hewden around £2000 - and the number has been kept at similar or lower levels ever since.

The guarantee has clearly struck a chord with the target audience: spending by small and medium sized customers has increased by more than 10% since April 2013, and the physical utilisation of the core fleet - which has grown in size - has increased from 53% to more than 60% now.

The importance of the initiative - and the

This one of Hewden's nine 'hub' depots. It has a national network of 35 locations, including 10 in-plant sites.



Hewden guarantees next day delivery on 30 'core fleet' products. Selected portable accommodation units will be added to the programme later this year.

# Core promise

centrality of the core fleet to the business - can be judged by the fact that around half of the company's total revenues are now generated by core products, and £45 million of the £63 million fleet investment this year will be in the core fleet.

Mr Woods says the 'core' machines now represents around 4500 units in the 20000 unit total fleet, and is likely to grow to 5000 over the next few years and to 6000 over a longer timescale.

### £180 million investment

The £63 million fleet investment this year will be followed by £60 million in each of the next two years - bringing spending over the 2014-16 period to £180 million. This level of spending will also help expand the fleet following the significant downsizing that followed the financial crisis.

"This year it's not about growing the fleet, it's about the mix and bringing the average age down", says Mr Woods, "Next year we will start growing."

The plan now is to add products to the core

fleet programme, with 15 standard portable accommodation units to be added later this year, says Jeff Schofield, Hewden's sales and marketing director.

Hewden is aware of the dangers of focusing exclusively on the core fleet to the detriment of Hewden's other businesses, including its cranes, power generation and portable accommodation.

It continues to invest in these areas, which help support Hewden's business with major clients on projects like industrial plant maintenance. For example, investment this year on non-core products includes £9 million on 14 new Tadano mobile cranes. Hewden remains a big player in crane rental, with a fleet of 130 cranes. "We offer a credible alternative to Ainscough", says Mr Schofield.

The core fleet guarantee may be the 'headline' initiative at the company, but it takes place alongside other developments, such as investment in a new IT system that has given it the real-time visibility of assets that supports the delivery guarantee.

The fleet has also been rationalised: for example, four years ago Hewden had around 280 different types of aerial platform. The 1100 unit aerials fleet now is focused on 35 main products, of which around nine are in the core fleet - these nine types represent around 950 of the aerials fleet.





Logistics are an important element of the next day delivery guarantee on the core fleet.



In addition, and like several other big rental companies in the UK, Hewden's depot network has been completely redesigned. In 2008, before the sale of its tool hire business to Speedy Hire, it had a network of around 300 locations. That fell to 120 after the tool sale but it is now much smaller, with a new hub and spoke structure with 35 locations, including nine large hubs and 10 'in-plant' locations at major industrial sites.

The footprint is geared to providing coverage of every market area within two hours. "Customers don't mind where the depot is", says Mr Schofield.

### Ease of doing business

Other initiatives are also underway, many reflecting Hewden's desire to increase the ease of doing business.

So, Hewden now publishes rental pricing on its website and updates the prices every week (with no London weighting); it stipulates two delivery prices for core products - £75 for large products and £50 for small.

"Customers were saying to us that they wanted transparency", says Jeff Schofield. What has been the impact of publishing the prices? "We're not disappointed", he says, "We're not stopping it [the policy of publishing the prices online]."

Although the core fleet has been taking a lot of investment Hewden is still spending on its other businesses, including £9 million this year on 14 new Tadano cranes.



Other 'transparency' policies include offering customers a flat charge for insurance and damage protection, which means that a customer will not be charged if a window is broken or a beacon missing.

In addition, what Jeff Schofield calls a "genuine" eCommerce capability, with customers able to book through the website or Hewden App, is coming later this year.

The background to all these activities is a business that has been loss-making for several years. These losses were significant when Finning sold Hewden to the private equity firm Sun Capital Partners in May 2010. Darren Woods says Hewden is making progress on reducing these losses, with the potential to move towards break-even in 2014/15.

He says improvements in the UK economy and sectors like housebuilding, although obviously welcome, have not been the main reason behind the recent upturn in Hewden's business, with the core fleet guarantee helping drive activity.

"We feel that a lot of the pain is behind us. Now it is starting to grow", he says, "For the last two months we've hit our budgets, and that has not been led by market uplift."

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# Samoter jump-start

**The Samoter exhibition is to go ahead on 8-11 May despite the very difficult construction equipment market in Italy. IRN reports.**

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## Show details

**WHEN**  
8 - 11 May, 2014

**TIMES**  
Thursday to Saturday 9.30 am - 6.00 pm  
Sunday 9.30 am - 4.00 pm

**WHERE**  
Verona Exhibition Centre, Verona, Italy.

**TICKETS**  
The exhibition is exclusively for trade visitors, with registration required. Online registration opens in April 2014.

**ORGANISER**  
Veronafiore, Viale del Lavoro,  
8 - 37100 Verona, Italy.  
Tel. +39 045 8298111

[www.samoter.com](http://www.samoter.com)

## Getting there

Verona is at the crossroads of the Venice (115 km) - Milan (160 km) motorway and the Brennero (220 km) - Bologna (140 km) motorway and can be easily reached by road or rail.

The Exhibition Centre is about 3 km out of the city centre, and a few minutes drive from the Verona sud exit (Venice-Milan motorway).

A dual carriageway connects the Exhibition Centre to the local Airport (Valerio Catullo).

Komatsu attends Samoter as usual and said it will have new products to show. Pictured is a Komatsu machine at the 2011 show, featuring an MB crushing attachment. MB also attends the show.

**W**hat is certain about this year's Samoter - at least at the time of writing - is that it will take place. In early March there was speculation that the very poor state of the Italian construction equipment market would lead to its cancellation. However, a meeting on 17 March between Samoter's organisers, Veronafiore, and the many supporting industry associations - including Unacea and Assodimi - confirmed the event.

After the meeting in March the organisers said there was no hiding the difficulties facing the industry "but no one is willing to throw in the towel".

Veronafiore's managing director, Giovanni Mantovani, said the organiser believed in the show, with its 50-year history, and that the manufacturers' associations were supporting it. The exhibitions company said there was a feeling at the 17 March meeting that Samoter represented an opportunity for the sector and government to identify areas for investment and development plans to jump-start construction activity.

So the show is going ahead, but will look different from the 2011 event when around 100000 visitors attended and 900 exhibitors took part. The exhibitor list at the end of March stands at about 300 companies, which still makes it a significant exhibition, although there appears to be some high-profile absentees, including Caterpillar dealer CGT, Volvo CE, JCB and Merlo. In addition, the exhibitor line-up has almost no aerial platform suppliers - although Samoter's focus has always been general construction and earthmoving rather than access.

### Assodimi participation

Assodimi had been scheduled to attend Samoter and to organise a rental 'mini-show', although the organisation told *IRN* that it was still undecided about exactly how it would participate.

Better news for Samoter came after the 17 March meeting when Komatsu confirmed that it would take part.

Enrico Prandini, Komatsu's managing director in Italy, said the company had made the decision "after considerable thought" and for three main reasons; "First of all, because we build machinery in our own



Veronafiore's managing director, Giovanni Mantovani; "no one is willing to throw in the towel".

production plant in Italy and it is crucial for us to give a signal to the market and the country.

"Second, because Samoter is the main Italian event for earthmoving and building machinery sector and part of the trio of European exhibitions [supported by] CECE, and taking part is strategic for our distribution network. Third, for the historic status of the event and our constant attendance: this year is the 50th anniversary of the first edition and we want to stress that the relationship with Veronafiore and Samoter has been a milestone in our history." Mr Prandini said Komatsu would present "important previews" in Verona.

Samoter has indeed been unlucky in its timing, with Italy's construction equipment market falling by 18% in unit terms last year to 6192 machines - the sixth consecutive year of declining sales from a pre-crisis high of more than 30000. Sales of tracked excavators were down 20% and unit sales of road building equipment - compactors and pavers - fell by 32%.

Komatsu's Mr Prandini is also vice president of Unacea, the main earthmoving suppliers body in Italy. He said of the 2013 statistics; "I would like to say there is nowhere to go but up, but it is probably too early to trust that. The recovery will also depend on the government actions on the re-launch of public works as well as counter measures for [flooding and landslides]."

If the show will be a trimmed down version of its usual self, but there are still some major companies attending. In addition to Komatsu, taking stands will be Bobcat, Doosan Infracore, Fayat (owner of Bomag), Hatz, Kaeser, Leica, Terex Compact and Wirtgen (owner of Hamm).

The absence of some of the bigger names will give visitors a good opportunity to focus on Italy's many innovative, small and medium sized manufacturers, many making interesting niche or specialist products. Examples include Guidetti, Hinowa, Turbosol and Varisco.

And of course, Verona must be the one of the most attractive host cities of any of the major construction shows in the world. There will still be plenty to see, both inside and outside the exhibition centre. ■



# A good deal?

**United Rentals has acquired US rental company National Pump & Compressor for a price of US\$780 million, equivalent to 3.7 times National's 2013 revenues. Was it a good deal, and what does the price mean for the industry? Jeff Eisenberg reports.**



United's press release on the National Pump acquisition used carefully chosen words. The first sentence focused on "financial returns throughout the cycle" which shows a desire for United not to be seen as a cyclical rental company tied to the peaks and troughs of construction.

Fifty percent of National's revenue comes from the energy sector. National Pump was founded in 2007, and United Rentals was happy to report it has grown at over 50% per year since 2010. United's own business is growing at around 6 to 7% a year.

In the 'Private Equity Wakes Up' article in *IRN's* February 2014 issue, nearly all the recent private equity acquisition analyses disclosed very little information, sometimes not even the acquisition value. As United Rentals' shares are traded on the New York Stock Exchange it has many investors and has to maintain its credibility with these owners. It has also had its own ups and downs in the past: in 2008 it famously wrote off more than US\$1 billion in acquisition goodwill. This makes both United and its shareholders wary of overpaying for rental company acquisitions.



A National Pump trench bypass project. The company has 35 locations, including four in Canada.

## Valuation methods

The enterprise valuation method makes it easy to compare different rental companies with different depreciation policies and debt levels. Most other valuation methods focus on profit, but in rental businesses profit is heavily influenced by depreciation policy and the replacement cycle for rental fleet.

A company is more valuable the higher its cashflow, provided it can handle its debt. The enterprise value of a company is a multiple of the operating cash flow (Earnings Before Interest Tax Depreciation Amortisation or EBITDA). The price to acquire a company is usually the enterprise value minus its debt. The equipment lease portion of a company's debt usually continues with the new owner.

EBITDA multiples range from perhaps three to nine, depending on the growth rate and cash generation capacity of the company, its market position and desirability, and the certainty of its growth and cashflow.

In good times, before the 2008 financial crisis, many acquisitions of rental companies seemed to average six times EBITDA minus debt. Why six and not four, or eight?

The banks seemed to be able to handle four times EBITDA as the loan to acquire the company, so an equity investor could buy a business using this loan plus another two times EBITDA. This worked fine as long as debt was available, and the companies could profitably, reliably 'outgrow their debt' with growing cashflow.

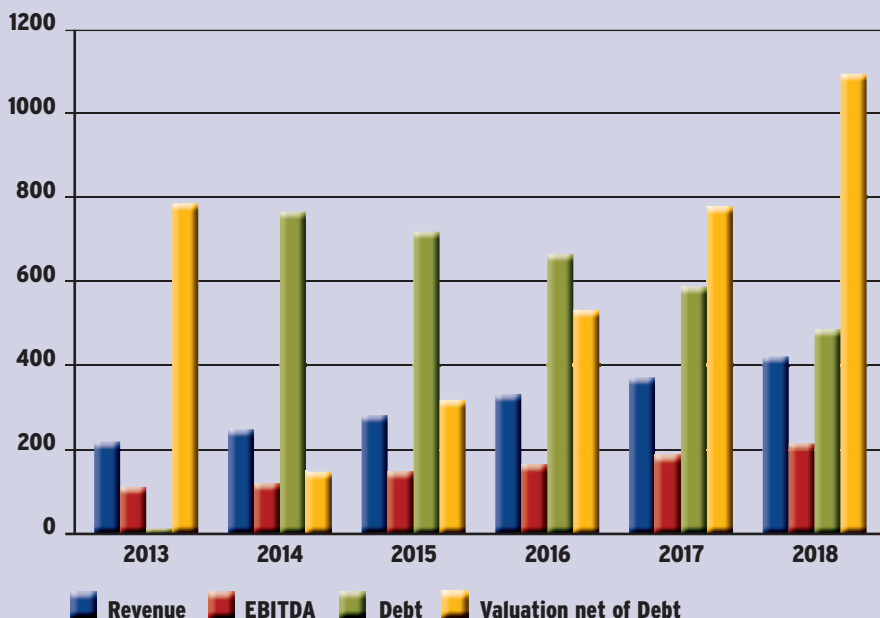
## National financials

Unusually in this case, United has given information, including National Pump's 2013 revenue (\$211 million), historical growth (50% per year from 2010 to 2013), EBITDA at 49% of revenue, and even the relationship between rental revenue and equipment original cost (dollar or financial utilisation at 80%). Very unusually, United has said it has "plans to double the size of the pump business in five years."

If we project the value of the acquired company on today's profitability, dollar (financial) utilisation, at the "double in five years" growth rate, which is around 15% compound per year, we can try to see if the company will grow in value (see graph on left).

The answer is yes, mostly because the financial

## National Pump - estimated growth



SOURCES: 2013 figures from United Rental's press release, 2014 and later estimates by the author.



utilization (80%) and EBITDA (49%) are unusually high compared to most rental companies, and indeed to the rest of United Rentals' performance.

Of course, looking at these things from the outside you can never see the whole picture, but with some reasonably conservative assumptions, such as that National Pump - which previously grew at 50% per year - now only needs to grow at 15% at the same profitability and investment rate to continue to be sustainable, even supporting its high acquisition price.

This is even before you factor in synergies between National Pump and United. These could include renting National Pump equipment through United's vast depot network and customer base; using United Rentals' lower cost of capital; and savings on costs by merging overlapping depots. This, plus any efficiencies that National Pump might gain as revenue continues to grow (hopefully faster than its overheads).

In conclusion, while the headline price is very

high compared to National Pump's revenue, it is an exceptionally cash generative company, which has been growing more quickly than most of the industry and indeed more quickly than United.

Does this mean that all rental companies are worth 7.8 times EBITDA and not four, five or six? The answer is that it depends, especially on the likelihood the acquired company will grow rapidly and profitably. Unusually high, dependable growth rates and high cash flow can justify even exceptionally high company valuations. **IRN**



Almost 70% of National Pumps' business is with customers in oil and gas and petrochemical plants.



United said it planned to double the pump rental business by 2018 to around US\$400 million.

### The author

**JEFF EISENBERG** has spent 18 years in the equipment and rental industry. He started and led Genie Financial Services in Europe, providing finance for large and small rental companies all over the world. Since 2000 he has held senior positions in a number of European rental companies, as well as working with startups and acquisitions. He now provides consulting services to financial institutions, equipment manufacturers and rental companies. Contact Tel: +44 7900 916933, E-mail: [jeff@claremont-consulting.com](mailto:jeff@claremont-consulting.com)



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**The US aerial platform rental market chalks up double-digit growth while there are mixed signals in Europe.**

**IRN reports on the latest market studies undertaken by the International Powered Access Federation (IPAF).**

# Lift numbers

The latest results from IPAF's annual rental market research indicate that the US aerial work platform rental market is rebounding, with stellar growth of around 10% in 2013. IPAF's 2014 *Powered Access Rental Market Reports* reveal that the European market remains stable, although marked by stark differences across different countries.

Interviews conducted with rental companies in the US confirm forecasts made in last year's report, even surpassing the growth rates predicted. Rental companies expect the market to follow similar growth trends in 2014 and 2015.

## US hits pre-crisis levels

As predicted in the 2013 report, the US AWP rental fleet expanded strongly (5 to 10%) in 2013 and has now reached pre-recession levels. This rebound is flanked by two factors - a slight increase in new machine investment coupled with a reduction in fleet sell-offs. Similar fleet growth is expected in 2014.

While the US AWP fleet has returned to its pre-recession size, rental companies did not increase the share of their business in construction applications. Instead, companies increased their rental operations in other sectors such as industrial, maintenance, utilities, leisure, events, etc. This shows that rental companies have become more cautious over the years and are keeping a good level of diversification to avoid potential business risks.

Average utilisation rates increased slightly in 2013, as did rental rates.

"The signs are that the US AWP rental market is striking back and returning to its glory days, but the industry has learnt from the excesses of the past and is banking on cautious optimism and solid growth strategies," said IPAF CEO Tim Whiteman.

The European mobile elevating work platform (MEWP) rental market remained stable in 2013, continuing the trend in 2012. However, strong differences exist among the 10 countries under study: Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, Norway, Spain, Sweden and the UK.

Some countries achieved positive growth: Germany, Norway, Sweden and the UK saw their rental revenue increase by around 5%. The UK MEWP rental fleet appears to have reached its pre-recession levels.

However, rental companies remained cautious and kept an unchanged split between construction and non-construction applications.

In Germany, both fleet size and rental rates increased slightly and the trend towards non-construction applications is continuing. In Sweden, meanwhile, fleet size and rental revenue increased while rental rates were maintained at a relatively stable level.

Other countries such as Denmark and France saw the MEWP rental market remain flat or decrease slightly. Despite a slight increase in the French fleet size, overall rental revenue did not increase, due to a decrease in utilisation rate and rental rates. In Denmark, neither the fleet nor the rental rates increased.

## Falling markets

Marking the contrasts across Europe, the MEWP rental market decreased in Finland, Italy and the Netherlands, and decreased strongly in Spain.

Trying to counter this negative trend, rental companies de-fleeted and also kept reducing their rates. Only Finland, which experienced positive growth during the previous years, kept expanding the rental fleet.

Overall, growth is expected in the European MEWP rental market in 2014, but the report predicts growth marked by contrasts among countries. Germany and the UK should lead the growth, while Italy and Spain are hoping for a stabilisation in 2014.

IRN

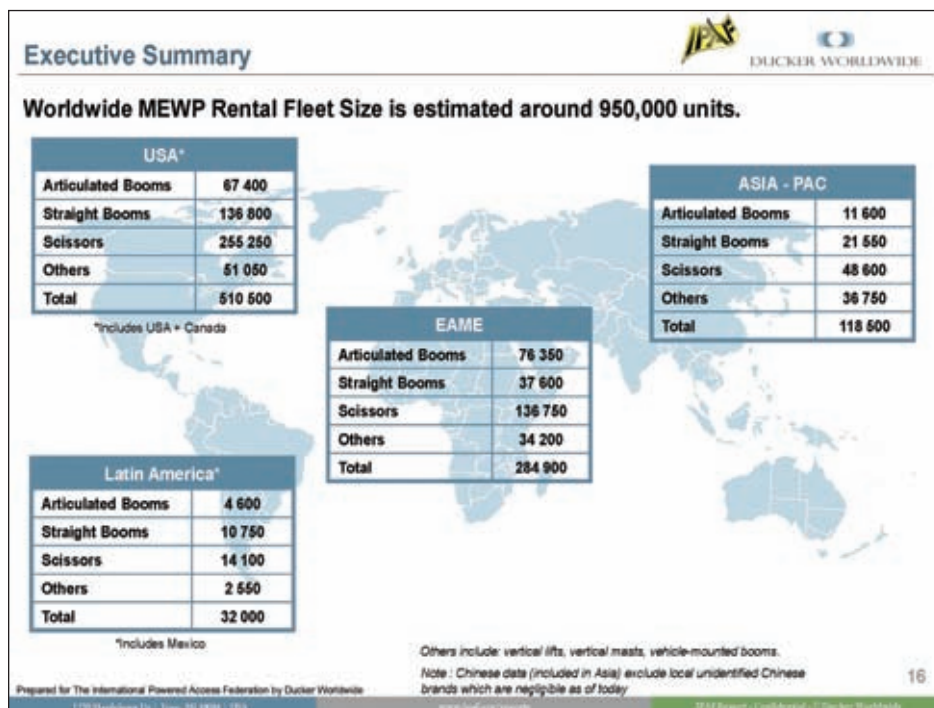
## IPAF reports

IPAF's US and European Powered Access Rental Market Reports 2014 were being finalised as this issue of *IRN* was going to press.

Both reports include forecasts for growth and fleet composition in the coming years, and an estimate of the size of the aerial platform rental fleet worldwide, with a breakdown by region and by machine type. The US report also covers Canada.

The studies were conducted by Ducker Research using the same approach to build on the reports from previous years. New for 2014 is an introduction into the AWP rental market in China.

■ Get the full figures and purchase these publications at [www.ipaf.org/reports](http://www.ipaf.org/reports)



This data is from the 2013 reports.

## China research

For the first time, IPAF has commissioned research into the Chinese market. With a low number of machines, China has been a fast growing market since 2009, with 15 to 20% annual market growth. This growth is expected to continue at a similar pace in the next three to five years.

Most aerial platforms in the Chinese rental market are locally produced. There are no more than 100 rental companies in China, with a few generalist rental companies dominating. Scissors represent by far the largest share of the market due to their size, flexibility and lower price.

More details can be found in the IPAF market studies.



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# Amsterdam 2014

The ERA's ninth annual convention takes the internet as its main theme, with experts from business, academia and politics helping delegates understand the long term impact of the web. ERA reports on the three-day programme.



Amsterdam RAI will host the ERA conference, the International Rental Exhibition (IRE), the European Rental Awards dinner and the APEX aerial platform show, all on the same three days in June.

The ERA Convention 2014 will take place in Amsterdam from 24 to 26 June 2014 at the RAI Exhibition and Conference Centre. This is the third time it has been held alongside the International Rental Exhibition (IRE), but this year for the first time it also coincides with the APEX aerial platform exhibition.

The preliminary programme, online registration, the hotel booking and other information related to the event are available on the ERA website at: [www.erarental.org](http://www.erarental.org).

The motto for this ninth Convention will be 'Internet as a Game Changer'. The aim is to help the attendees to get a clearer picture of the opportunities and challenges represented by the new technologies and, in particular, by the increasing use of the internet, including the potential role taken by the large internet networks in the equipment rental industry in the future.

The Convention will start on 24 June with a CEO Panel, a gathering CEOs of very large European and US rental companies - including **Michael Kneeland** of United rentals - as well as contractors.

On 25 June, during the Plenary session:



■ **Judith Merkies**, MEP and author of the book *The Lease Society - The End of Ownership*, will give an overview of a topic of interest at a European institutions' level.

■ **Cor Molenaar** will share his vision on 'The Future of the Web'. In 1999, Cor was appointed professor at the department Business Administration of the RSM/ Erasmus Universiteit in Rotterdam. He researches changes in marketing and the behaviour

of the people that arise from the application of information technology. Since 2007 he has also been looking at eMarketing and Distance Selling, studying the influence of the Internet and buying behaviours.

■ **Chris Wehrman**, CEO of the American Rental Association (ARA), and **Graham Arundell**, managing director of Hire Association Europe (HAE) and chairman of the ERA Statistics Committee, will focus on trends in the US and European rental industries.

A roundtable will be dedicated to the conference theme on the internet. Two experts of the internet business, **Eugen Russ**, CEO of Erento, the international online rental marketplace, and **Christian Seifert**, CEO of Avenit AG, a leading e-business solution provider, will focus on the impact of internet in the equipment rental business.

**Richard Robinson**, director at Google, head of B2B markets, will close the Convention on 26 June. Richard has spent over 15 years assisting companies in the building of brands and the development and implementation of go-to-market strategies. He has led many strategic marketing initiatives across various business and technology areas. At Google he helps businesses develop highly effective digital strategies.

The ERA Convention 2014 will be moderated by **Nadine Dereza**. Nadine has presented for CNN, Simply Money, BBC, Sky TV, SABC and Summit TV. She interviews chief executives and senior management teams on their company's performance and results, and presents reports on all the major business and financial stories.

Nadine will also moderate the seventh European Rental Awards dinner, which will take place on 25 June, also at the RAI. The awards, which are jointly organised by *International Rental News (IRN)* and the ERA, will comprise six categories as well as a special Lifetime Achievement Award.

ERA president, Vesa Koivula, says the convention has over the years become a not-to-miss meeting place for Europe's equipment rental industry; "It gathers several hundred high level leaders of rental companies from all over Europe and beyond, representatives of national rental associations and suppliers to our industry." So make sure you are there! ■

**"The aim is to help the attendees to get a clearer picture of the opportunities and challenges represented by the new technologies for our business."**



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# People news

## from the world's rental industry



■ US pump supplier Global Pump has appointed a business development manager for Europe and the CIS region.

**Victor Krotikov** (pictured) joins Global Pump to develop sales of its diesel and submersible pumps in Europe, Russia and CIS states. Mr Krotikov speaks Russian, English and Latvian and has "vast experience in business development and sales in Eastern European and former USSR countries", said the company.

Global Pump, based in Davison, Michigan, is a subsidiary of Mersino Group. Mersino was founded in 1988 by Rod Mersino to offer pump rental and contracting services.

The group created Global Pumps in 1998 to develop its own range of diesel driven and submersible pumps, which includes diesel engine driven, electric submersible and hydraulic submersible pumps. Mr Krotikov will be responsible for promoting the entire range throughout the EU/CIS.

**Bud Nichols**, Global's vice president, said: "I was pleased to find someone with Victor's business experience who can actively promote our products. His knowledge of import and export will greatly assist us as we look to increase our global footprint."

■ JLG Industries has made two appointments in the Europe, Africa and the Middle East (EAME) region.

**Jean-François Sourdoire** joins the company as aftermarket director with responsibility for all ground support aftermarket activities, while **Richard Puglia** rejoins JLG as business development and marketing director.

Mr Puglia knows JLG well, having worked as managing director of JLG Ibérica for more than 10 years. Since leaving JLG he worked at Jerr-Dann Corporation as international sales manager for Europe, Asia and Africa, and in June 2013 joined Riwal as manager of its international rental program.

Mr Sourdoire worked in the international aftermarket business and in business development and sales of capital equipment.

■ **John Ball**, the former managing director of Ireland-based Easi UpLifts/Height for Hire, has started a new rental management and consultancy company.

Specialising in the access sector, but offering services across the rental industry, Velocity Rental Solutions will offer assistance in developing rental companies in any part of the world.

Services will include equipment procurement, interim management, insurance damage and dispute resolution and equipment valuation as well as credit, fleet, sales and safety management.

Mr Ball has been involved in the rental industry for almost 30 years. Over the last 20 years he led the development

Kennards Hire chairman, Peter Lancken (second from right), received the Award for Service from the American Rental Association (ARA) earlier this year in recognition of his 35 years in the rental sector and for his role in helping establish the Global Rental Alliance. It is the first time the ARA has honoured someone from outside the US in this way. "This award is an honour not only on an individual level but for Kennards Hire as a company," said Mr Lancken, "To be recognised by such a well-respected association for work in the hire and rental industry is huge and reflects our passion for advancing the industry into the future." Mr Lancken has been with Kennards Hire for two decades, including 14 years as CEO. With Mr Lancken are, from left: Mike Flesher (ARA past-president), Mike Blaisdell (ARA chairman) and Paul Phelon (ARA president).



of rental group Easi UpLifts/Height for Hire from a small domestic company, into a large international player, with 15 locations across Europe.



■ Terex Aerial Work Platforms (AWP) has appointed **Lee Vickers** (left) to the newly created position of product safety & compliance manager for Europe, Middle East, Africa and Russia (EMEAR), based in the UK.

Mr Vickers, who will report to **Joe George**, vice president and managing director, Terex AWP and to **Rick Curtin**, director of product safety, Terex, will be responsible for providing product safety and regulatory compliance support for Genie customers in EMEAR and for Terex AWP technical service managers.

He joined Genie in 1996 as a service engineer covering field product support in the UK and Ireland, as well as some areas of mainland Europe. He held the roles of senior engineer, service manager and technical service manager, taking full responsibilities for training, UK pre-delivery inspection and product support.



■ PSS Hire, A-Plant's trenchless technology and pipeline equipment rental business, has appointed **Mark Hamilton** (above) as its new director. The appointment follows PSS's acquisition by A-Plant.

Mr Hamilton joins PSS from Balfour Beatty Utility Solutions, where he was head of plant and logistics services and had 15 years experience in senior sales and operational roles.

"It's an incredibly exciting time to be joining PSS Hire soon after its acquisition", he said, "With the financial backing from A-Plant, I am looking forward to exploring new opportunities for PSS products, developing our customer base and

driving the expansion of our depot network."



■ Former Xylem executive **Per Ohstrom** (left) is now president of HTC Inc, the North American business of Sweden-based concrete grinding and polishing business HTC.

He will be responsible for the operations of HTC Inc and also HTC Twister - the cleaning equipment business - focusing on developing the businesses.

Lars Landin, CEO of HTC said, "Per has the industrial background and domain competence needed to further develop our position as the leader of floor systems."

Mr Ohstrom told *IRN* that he was looking for sales representatives in North America with experience of equipment and concrete construction.



■ Hatz GB, the UK subsidiary of German diesel engine manufacturer, Hatz GmbH & Co, has appointed **Steve Hewson** as sales manager for the Hatz power products division.

Mr Hewson brings to the role more than 30 years of experience in the small engines and portable products market sectors. He worked on developing the Japanese-made Robin/Subaru range of engines in the UK through his company, Redbreast. For the past four years, Mr Hewson has been working with Endress, the German genset supplier, promoting power generation equipment up to 240 kVA.

At Hatz GB he will be responsible for increasing business from engine powered products and seeking out new opportunities in alternative markets. He will continue to promote some of the existing product range produced by Hatz GmbH to current and new customers in the UK and Ireland. **IRN**

## JCB says 'be your own boss'

JCB organised a special day to encourage entrepreneurs to establish their own excavator hire businesses.

The 'Be Your Own Boss' seminar was held at JCB's headquarters at Rocester, UK, and attracted delegates from all over the UK.

JCB backhoe loader business growth managing director, Yvette Henshall-Bell, said: "Many of JCB's customers started their business with just one backhoe loader and today run very successful businesses with hundreds of JCB machines. The Be Your Own Boss event is the start of a journey to encourage people to be the entrepreneurs of the future."



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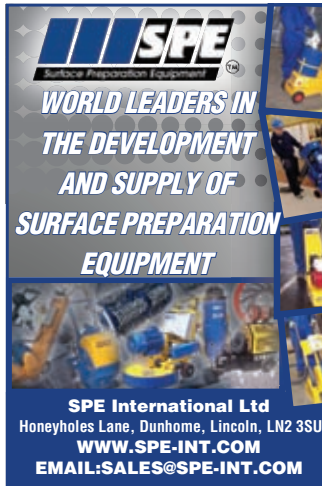
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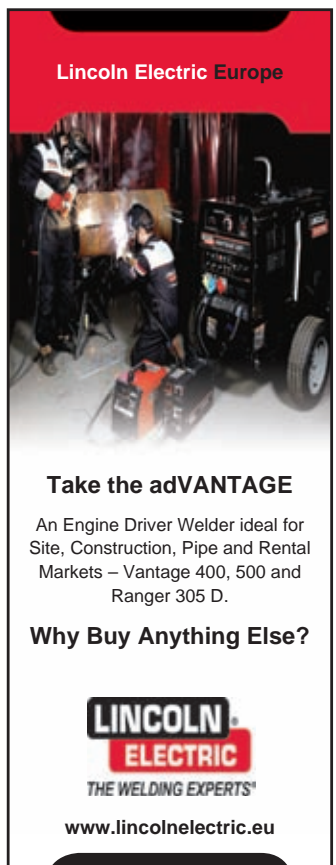


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