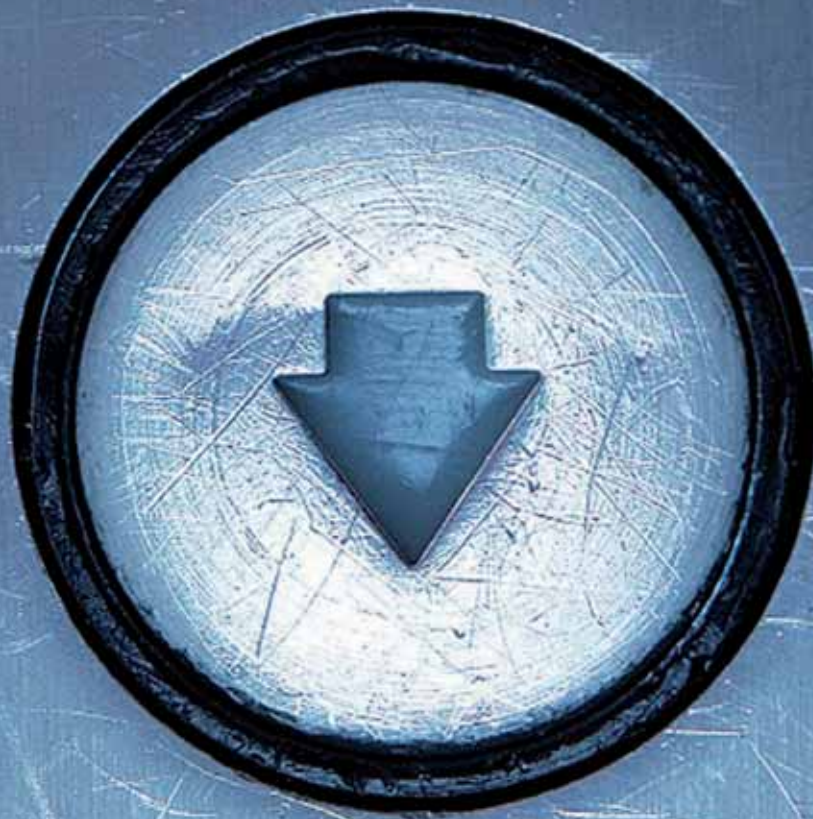


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On the cover:

A spider crane in its natural habitat - perched on the upper floors of a building overlooking Oxford Street in the heart of London.



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Mini and spider cranes 17

Although mini crane awareness continues to grow, there is still much to be done to spread the word, both informing and educating potential users. We take a look at the sector that as yet, has not achieved anywhere near its full potential.

Face to face - Christer Dijnér Kranlyft 21



If you had to name one person as being most responsible for developing the mini crane sector outside of Japan, it would have to be Christer Dijnér of Kranlyft who has spent more than 30 years with Maeda's European master-distributor Kranlyft. He talks about his time in the specialist sector.



Conexpo stop press 27

This year's big international show - Conexpo in Las Vegas - is almost here. We round up the last minute product announcements.

In the next issue of C&A we have an extensive review of the Conexpo show in Las Vegas and features on Rough terrain cranes, Mast booms and Remote controls.



Heavy duty scissors 33

The aerial lifts currently reported as providing one of the best returns on investment and utilisation are heavy duty scissor lifts - both large and tall narrow aisle. We take a closer look at this sector of the market as well as profiling rental company Riwal UK which is making a name for itself specialising in supplying the larger booms and scissors.

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comment



Las Vegas vibes?

The annual big construction equipment show is here once again and for those of us who routinely attend the big international shows - Bauma, Conexpo and Intermat - it is a perfect opportunity to gauge the state of the world market.

While we all ostensibly go along to look at equipment there is much much more to be gained by both exhibitors and visitors alike. Meeting a large number of industry people - suppliers, customers, competitors and colleagues - at the same time, in the same place and on neutral ground, is still by far the best way to take stock of where we are, where we might be heading and how long it might take.

At Conexpo 2008 business was still good for most, but it certainly felt like a game of musical chairs just before the music stops. This time round it looks like we are at the start of a steady upward trend into an economic cycle that might just be different to anything we have seen before? Issues like the environment, efficiency and equipment management are all likely to play a much more important role than in the past.

The deepest recession in most people's memories has hardly ended - in fact for many it continues - and yet the usual post-recession growing pains have already started to emerge. After two to three years lack of investment, the average age of equipment in rental fleets is beginning to reach uncomfortable levels. The initial glut at the beginning of the downturn has all but vanished with a large amount of used machinery having been exported. Commodity prices that spiked up in 2007 and 2008 now look like resuming their upward trend and component suppliers are warning of shortages and price increases.

On products that dipped early, such as telehandlers, there is already a four to five month wait for some models and this can only increase and spread as more new orders are placed. Even if manufacturers could bring mothballed capacity back on stream quickly, it is unlikely that they would obtain sufficient flows of key componentry to make it work and there is little appetite to ramp up while the economic atmosphere remains nervous. Both JLG and Genie have already warned that price increases are looming as the buyers' market looks set to rapidly turn into a sellers' market.

At times like this fortunes are to be made by those who sense the future and make the right calls. There is nothing quite like a trade show for gathering the sensory input required. If you feel lucky, Las Vegas is obviously the place to be.

Mark Darwin

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