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Low level industrial access & mast booms

As most of us are thinking of summer vacations, many manufacturing companies will be gearing up to carry out major maintenance, repairs/replacement, cleaning or general production layout changes.

Obviously moving or installing heavy machinery requires specific lifting equipment - see Pick & Carry feature on page 17 - but as much thought and planning is required with the access element of such changes and in particular the smaller maintenance and cleaning jobs.

Viewed as 'easy' and 'simple' tasks, planning is frequently left until the last moment, all too often resulting in inappropriate equipment being used to work at height. This is borne out by the number of Death Wish reports and incidents on the Vertikal.net website. In industrial situations the pallet on the forklift is a favourite as is a ladder on top of something else.

The problem is that everyone has a ladder and it is the ideal item of

access equipment for so many low level tasks. However as soon as the work exceeds its scope, a simple task - such as changing a light bulb or fixing guttering - becomes inefficient and dangerous.

In recent years people have become much more aware of these dangers and of the powered access alternatives, but many still continue to take the risk rather than organise the right equipment for the job. This is particularly true with smaller contractors carrying out work on homes or small industrial units. Upfront costs and the extra hassle of organising the right equipment is probably the main factor, but as we have often said before, the benefits of using the right equipment include completing the work more quickly and improved safety for all involved. Even if the cost and organisational effort is not recouped by fewer hours worked, it is hundreds of times less expensive than an accident and resulting injuries, more when fines and legal costs are considered.

Defining low level access?

For this article we are looking at everything from basic push around lifts up to the larger mast type lifts offered by Skyjack, Snorkel, Haulotte and Genie along with the latest micro scissors, such as the Snorkel S3215L, MEC Micro 19, JLG 1532R or GMG 1530-ED. We are also covering the ultimate industrial work platform - the mast boom - which combines good working and up and over heights with outreach for those more awkward jobs.

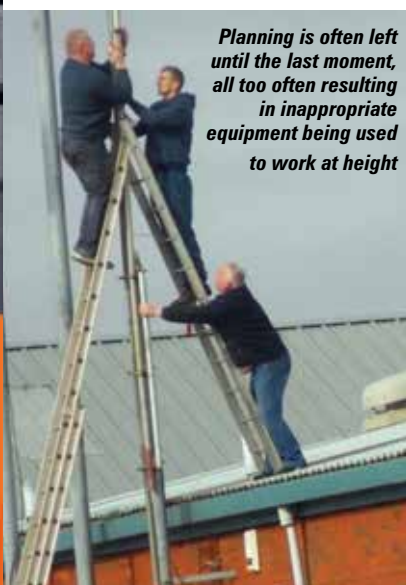


The second generation 4.2 metre HLS Hugo - manufactured in Leeds, UK - has two wheel steer, a manual footbrake for the rear wheels, automatic braking on the front and simple controls



Safelift has two models with five metre working heights

Planning is often left until the last moment, all too often resulting in inappropriate equipment being used to work at height



We will also look at some of the attachments that can make aerial lifts more efficient and non-integrated work platforms for fork lift trucks - when they should and shouldn't be used.

New introductions

There have been several new products in this wide and varied sector over the past year or so. An interesting addition to the international market are two mast type lifts from Swedish company Safelift. The company's aim was to 'produce a mast lift to replace ladders making working at height indoors safer'. It currently offers two models - a push around and a self-propelled - both with five metre working heights, characterised by

a low weight, low entry height and tight turning radius. The company says that its 'simple and easy to manoeuvre lifts are a cost effective alternative to similar lifts on the market'. The company mainly sells in Nordic countries but now exports to Germany and France. The lifts go head to head with products such as the 4.5 metre working height Power Tower Nano self-propelled, and the 4.2 metre push arounds such as the Power Tower Ecolift or the HLS Hugo but offer more working height. The product is assembled at the company's facility in Växjö with most parts manufactured locally. The two models are almost identical, with working heights of 4.95 metres, a single person



Both Safelift models have 180kg platform capacity and weigh 320kg

platform measuring 530mm by 760mm, a 16 second lift time to full height and 180kg platform capacity. Overall width is 760mm with an overall length of 1.2 metres and an overall height of 1.64 metres. Both units weigh 320kg.

Both the PushAround AP30 and the MoveAround AD30 have push buttons to raise and lower the platform, with a joystick drive and steer control on the AD30. Both have two, 75Ah, 12 volt batteries with onboard chargers.



The Safelift's harness anchor point is mounted on the side of the mast just below the emergency stop button and a 12 volt USB socket for charging a tablet or mobile device.

The models look small and compact with a typically clean Swedish design and some nice features. The entry height is 350mm through a single swing gate, a harness anchor point is mounted on the side of the mast, just below the emergency stop button and a 12 volt USB socket for charging a tablet or mobile device. Safelift says it plans to broaden the range with a PickAround for stock picking in shops and warehouses, while adding models with lower and higher lift heights. Finally, if the appearance of the machine makes a difference the Safelift makes many other platforms look 'industrial' and would not be out of place in a hi-tech office or showroom environment.



Haulotte showed these two low level prototypes - a push around and a self propelled - at Intermat

New Haulotte push around

At Intermat earlier this year Haulotte showed several new prototypes including a low level push around lift and a new self-propelled scissor lift. The scissor has a working height of five metres, a 200kg platform capacity and overall weight of 580kg. The unit has an overall length of 1.5 metres by 750mm wide, with an overall height of 1.8 metres.

The physically smaller Haulotte push around has a working height of 3.8 metres, a platform capacity of 240kg and an overall weight of 270kg. It is relatively compact with an overall length of 1.2 metres, an overall width of 750mm and is just 1.74 metres high.

Larger mast type lifts

The new Safelift and Haulotte scissor lift are handy for a surprising number of work at height jobs, along with the top end of the low level push arounds such as the original Power Tower with a 5.1 metre working height along with the Bravi Leonardo HD and Faraone Elevah 50 Move. The 4.9 metre Bravi has a useful twin deck extension giving a maximum platform length over just over 1.7 metres and in our comparison table is the third lightest at 508kg topped by the Safelift and 5.1 metre Faraone.

With a little more height, the slightly larger 12ft mast type self-propelled lifts are increasingly

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popular, including models such as the Skyjack SJ12, Snorkel TM12E, Genie GRC-12 and Haulotte Star 6 with working heights of 5.6/5.8 metres. Skyjack led the trend for higher versions with its SJ16 offering a working height of 6.8 metres, Snorkel has now joined the market with its TM16E and now Haulotte has taken it a step further, with its 20ft platform height/eight metre working height Star 8S which should be available this summer. The company also unveiled its first tracked mast type lift, the Star 6 Crawler. With its six metre working height it adds new application potential to this type of lift. Features of the new crawler include a zero

turning radius and a 400mm platform extension. Dedicated fork lift pockets make it easy to load and move the lift, while the machine has direct electric drive with brushless AC motors and Activ'Screen on-board diagnostics. It will be available from September.

Mast booms

If your work requires a 10 to 12 metre work with outreach, an increasingly popular alternative to industrial articulated boom lifts such as the Skyjack SJ30, Manitou 120 AETJ-C and Genie Z33/18 is the mast boom. This machine type has been very popular in its country of origin - France - but sales have



been growing consistently as their compact dimensions, lower weight and up and over capability prove invaluable for many industrial maintenance tasks.

While mast boom working heights range from eight and 15 metres and outreach can be as much as eight metres, the 10 metre model with around three metres outreach accounts for around 90 percent of total sales, although several manufacturers are now offering larger 12 metre units.

JLG's Toucan range was first on the market - albeit under different ownership - and remains the market leader. Its range currently runs from eight metres to the 12.6 metre T12E Plus which has an outreach of 6.7 metres at an up and over height of more than seven metres. Haulotte has also carved out a sizeable share of the market with its Star 10 which has now gained AC direct electric drive for longer battery life. Manitou has also updated its most popular model - the 10 metre 100 VJR - with a new hydraulics providing faster lift speeds, a new battery pack, new lifting lugs to make loading and unloading easier and safer

How the Safelift and new Haulotte prototypes compare

Make/Model	Safelift AD30	Haulotte Prototype	Bravi Leonardo HD	Skyjack SJ12	Snorkel TM12E	Haulotte Star 6	Genie GRC-12	Faraone Elevah 50 Move
Max ht	4.95m	5.0m	4.9m	5.65m	5.65m	5.8m	5.6m	5.1m
Max cap	180kg	200kg	180kg	227kg	227kg	230kg	227kg	200kg
Weight	320kg	580kg	508kg	864kg	884kg	835kg	869kg	387kg
Height	1.64m	1.8m	1.75m	1.79m	1.67m	1.75m	1.7m	1.69m
Width	760mm	700mm	739mm	770mm	760mm	790mm	800mm	760mm
Length	1.2m	1.5m	1.19m	1.37m	1.37m	1.4m	1.37m	1.02m
Platform L	760mm	1.04m	1,115 -1.71m**	850mm	960 - 1.41m*	1.38m	970 -1.4m*	760mm
Platform W	530mm	700mm	680mm	690mm	740mm	770mm	750mm	700mm

*single deck extension **twin deck extension



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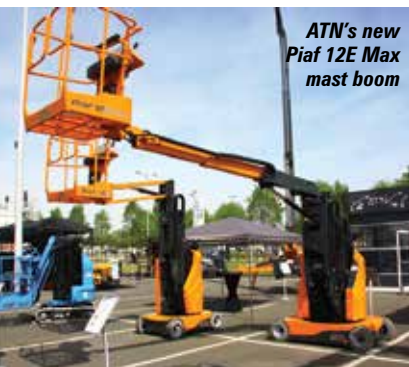
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Manitou has also updated its most popular model - the 10 metre 100 VJR

and a new counterweight design. Deliveries are expected to begin towards the end of the year.

GMG and ATN have also launched new mast booms, with ATN unveiling the 12 E Max. with a 12.65 metre working height, and just over six metres outreach at a height of 7.3 metres. It offers an 800 x 980mm platform with 200kg capacity, 352 degrees of slew and has transport dimensions of 1.2 metres wide, 1.98 metres high and chassis 1.75 metres long. Overall stowed length of 3.72 metres and the unit weighs a relatively hefty 5,140kg.



ATN's new Piaf 12E Max mast boom



GMG launched its first 10 metre working height VM26-J mast boom earlier this year



The Helix 1508 has up to eight metres of outreach at an 'up and over' height of seven metres

GMG launched its first mast boom - the 10 metre working height VM26-J - earlier this year, with direct electric drive, a heavy duty box section mast with fixed length jib with 120 degrees of articulation and outreach of 3.15 metres at a height of around six metres. With large diameter wheels, 40 percent gradeability and a passive pothole protection system, the VM26 looks like a classic 10 metre model with an overall width of 910mm, a height of just under two metres and overall weight of 2,905kg. The lift also has an automatic Smart battery charger for quick charging and comes with a two year warranty.

At the top end of the mast boom market is German manufacturer Hematec which produces the 15 metre Helix 1508 based on its well established 12 metre Helix 1205 model although neither have sold in significant numbers outside of Germany so far. This is beginning to change as the company starts to appoint distributors overseas, the most recent being Alpha Access Services in the UK earlier this month.

The Helix 1508 has up to eight metres of outreach at an 'up and over' height of seven metres, thanks to its four section telescopic jib, allowing it to reach over obstructions and even carry out work over the widest of conveyor belts or production lines. Maximum platform capacity is 200kg and overall width is just 1.2 metres - the same as most 26 and 32ft compact slab scissor



Haulotte showed a prototype painter kit for its scissor lifts at Intermat



An Airo XS7 with pipe rack

lifts - while its overall chassis length is less than such scissor lifts at 1.96 metres. One downside is that it is very heavy - the total weight being 6,500kg. Direct electric drive however provides a decent work shift duration between battery charges and plenty of gradeability.

Attachments

In recent years various attachments have become available from manufacturers, from tool trays and cup holders to netting, board and pipe handling racks to built-in welding kits.

One of the most interesting attachments is Bravi's Solo Gyps for its Leonardo and Bravi Lite. The Solo Gyps simplifies drywall installation by eliminating manual lifting, so that one person can do the job previously carried out by two. Using a lightweight, electric powered track and detachable adjustable frame to hold and lift sheets, the attachment allows one man to place panels without assistance. No tools are required and it is very quick. Once the job is completed, it can be easily removed from the lift. Total weight of the complete attachment is 45kg and the cradle can be adjusted to hold panels up to 3.65 metres long and weighing up to 40kg. The attachment can be adjusted to three different height positions to clear even the tallest operator and is controlled directly from the platform with a push of a button. The sheet travels up the track into



Bravi's Solo Gyps simplifies drywall installation

the overhead position holding the board in the exact location leaving the operator free to screw or nail it in place.

Haulotte showed a prototype painter kit for its scissor lifts at Intermat. The kit comprises a plastic cover that slips over the hand rails and includes a non-slip floor mat which protects the lift from paint damage, helping keep the machine looking new and maintaining its residual value. The kit also includes a tool holder for cans of paint and brushes etc.

DRXmulti

UK-based Aerial and Handling Services designed the DRXmulti for contractor BAM Ferrovial Kier JV, to help position rebar during the construction of a curtain wall at London's Farringdon Station. Mounted on a Genie GS2646 scissor lift, the system - which weighs 14kg - provides a safer, more efficient method of positioning the reinforcement. Each device is made up of various components and can be tailored to fit every current make and model of aerial platform from the Pop-Up/Power Tower to larger RT scissors. The DRXmulti can be configured as pipe/rebar rack but can be quickly converted into a board carrier by simply swapping the jaws for clamps and adding board cups.

Airo push around models now have the option of a variable platform allowing the full sized platform to



Two Genie GS2646 scissor lifts with the DRXmulti pipe rack

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accessories under its Accessoryzers brand, including board and glass handling racks, tool trays, pipe racks and fluorescent tube carriers. The light duty pipe/steel stud rack for the SJ12 and SJ16 is mounted on the outside of the platform, with a capacity of 50kg and an easy method of securing the materials. When carrying capacity is more important, Skyjack's heavy duty pipe rack attachment can be used. Mounted on the inside of the guardrails and sitting on the rear platform floor to maximise platform space, with a capacity of up to 272kg depending on the platform.

'Lie down' platform

Hematec unveiled an unusual 'lie down' prototype platform at Vertikal Days, aimed at solving the problem of working below platform level when using a boom lift or lift with a jib such as on a roof. The quickly fitted platform allows the operator to lie down on the platform floor with his head and arms protruding at one end. With the head supported on a 'rest' and controls moved to a handy low level location, it allows the operator to correctly position the platform and then use both hands to work underneath the basket but from the safety of the platform. The concept generated a lot of attention and it will be interesting to see a finished version in the near future.

Non integrated work platforms

Earlier in the article we mentioned some examples of bad practice while working at height, including the fork lift and pallet. This however does not have to be the case, with numerous companies manufacturing non



Skyjack offers a full line of attachments and accessories under its Accessoryzers brand



Hematec showed its prototype 'lie down' platform at Vertikal Days



A non integrated work platform mounted on the forks of a fork lift truck

integrated work platforms - ones without controls in the platform - that fit onto the forks where the fork lift driver operates the machine. But note that they are only intended for occasional use when it provides a safer means of access than say improvised stairs, platforms or a ladder or where it is impracticable to use a fully integrated working platform.

Occasional use

Regulation 7(2)(b) of the Work at Height Regulations 2005 places a duty on employers to select the most suitable work equipment for the task. Nevertheless, it is foreseeable (but unacceptable) that people will often use unsafe methods of access to work at height for occasional tasks such as being lifted by a forklift truck while standing on the forks or a pallet. To encourage safer working practices, occasional use of non-integrated working platforms with forklift trucks is allowed. However not all EU member states permit their use and as such they cannot be CE marked or sold throughout Europe. In the UK HSE Guidance states that

occasional use includes 'non-routine maintenance tasks for which it is impractical to hire purpose-built access equipment'. This might be for the replacement of light fittings in high-rise warehouses or clearing a blocked gutter if the task is not carried out as part of periodic maintenance operations. Routine or planned tasks, particularly those associated with production or pre-planned activities such as periodic maintenance or stocktaking, are not exceptional circumstances and are therefore not examples of occasional use. Non-integrated work platforms do not provide as high a level of safety as purpose-built aerial lifts and are clearly less efficient in terms of productivity. So, while the use of non-integrated work platforms is discouraged they may provide a safer form of working at height than in certain circumstances.



While the use of non-integrated work platforms is discouraged they may provide a safer form of working at height than in certain circumstances



An Airo push around with variable sized platform

be reduced to a 520mm by 520mm 'micro cage' to work in confined spaces such as through suspended ceiling openings.

Man Lift manufacturing in the States also offers the SHU - a compact, raised extension deck attachment for scissor lifts - for working in suspended ceiling spaces or between joists. However, it also offers a service to 'customise' scissor platforms to suit the application. This includes items such as a side/lateral extension deck with or without an additional side gate and a U-shaped scissor platform so that work can continue around an obstruction such as a column.

Skyjack has also been working to offer a full line of attachments and



Man Lift's SHU is a compact, raised extension deck attachment for scissor lifts

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Rail Live is the largest outdoor rail exhibition in Europe with about 400 exhibitors and attracting more than 4,000 visitors each year.

Held at Quinton Rail Technology Centre, Long Marston near Stratford-upon-Avon, the show has live on-track demonstrations and features the latest products and innovations in the rail sector. This year also included the rebranded National Rail Conference which changed its content and location being held for the first time at Rail Live as the National Rail Convention with a variety of speakers and topics.

This year's two day show at the end of last month featured many access related products. Here are just some of the exhibits.



Jointly developed by SRS International and CRRC Sifang of China, the Icon 10 is the larger platform version of the Icon 8



One of the National Rail Convention seminars



A Trac Engineering road-rail Mercedes Actros truck with platform



Another Platform Basket RR14 EVO, this time on the Pod-Trak stand



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SPL Powerlines also had this overhead line maintenance vehicle with 425kg platform capacity



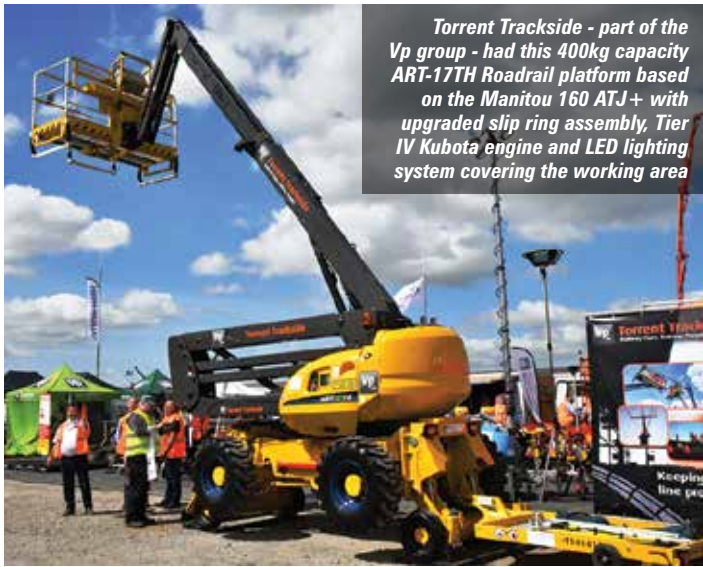
The rebranded National Rail Convention



UK Forks showed this Merlo Roto 40.30 MCSS telehandler



The Neotec Skyrailer 400 C.14



Torrent Trakside - part of the Vp group - had this 400kg capacity ART-17TH Roadrail platform based on the Manitou 160 ATJ+ with upgraded slip ring assembly, Tier IV Kubota engine and LED lighting system covering the working area



SPL Powerlines was showing this 400kg Platform Basket RR14 EVO-2/400 with a demountable height and stagger panning pantograph

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