

cranes & access

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April/May 2021 Vol.23 issue 2

**Source
guide
Trailer lifts
Heavy lifts**

**Road
rail
lifting**

...All new Manitou telehandlers...New Genie micro scissors...New cranes from Tadano, Potain, Jaso, Liebherr....

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On the cover:

Sarens 1,250t Demag PC6800 installing foundations for 89 large turbines in the shallow waters of the IJsselmeer, the Netherlands. (See page 24)



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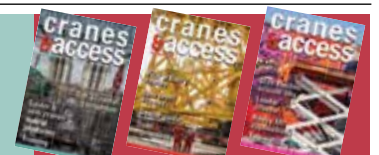
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In the next C&A

The next issue of Cranes & Access, scheduled for the end of June, will include features on boom lifts, telehandlers and tower cranes. It will also take a look at the lifting equipment used by arborists and include the main preview for Vertical Days, which is set to be the industry's first and largest show this year. If you have any contributions or suggestions to make, or are interested in advertising in this issue, please contact us today.

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Accessing stubborn minds

People are often reluctant to change the way they do things, and this applies to all aspects of life. For example, when she was growing up, my daughter preferred a particular flavour and brand of pasta sauce. As the chief pasta chef in our house, I tried switching to different, usually much nicer ones. However, my daughter always spotted the substitution and would have none of it.

That same stubborn refusal to try something different is often true when it comes to lifting equipment and working methods. While there are plenty of innovators and early adopters, most people fall into the 'early

and 'late majority' camps, people who only switch to a new product or working method long after it has come of age. Just look at tube & coupler scaffold use in the UK. And in Germany, it was not all that long ago that some builders were still using wooden scaffold towers.

We have often raised this reluctance to adopt new ways of working when reviewing certain types of equipment. For example, a mobile self-erecting tower crane can make the change-out of a rooftop air conditioning unit faster and easier and less costly than a big telescopic crane with luffing jib, yet they are still widely used. Mast climbers are a much more efficient method for many façade applications yet the majority plod on with vast volumes of steel scaffold.

I recall vividly how, back in 1979, I operated my very first self-propelled work platform, a Manlift MZ66 telescopic boom lift. I raised the platform to the top of a two storey warehouse and peered into the guttering. It was almost a spiritual experience, I thought: "Wow! This will sweep the country, the world, contractors will be clamouring to get their hands on such a brilliant machine" after all it reaches the perfect working height, quickly and without climbing. You can take your toolbox and lunch with you! How wrong was I? People were slow to warm to the concept and many didn't even want to try it.

It seemed that everyone was happy with their ladders or scaffolds. Thankfully in the 40 odd years since, that has changed, especially on construction sites and with trades that frequently work at height. However, when it comes to work on single family homes, it's a different matter. Many builders or gutter and fascia installers still eschew powered access. And window cleaners? forget it!

Oddly enough, most small builders rapidly discarded the spade in favour of renting a mini excavator and ditched the wheelbarrow for mini dumpers. But mention a platform and the interest wanes. It's not ignorance, many of them have used a platform in the past, but the experience never made converts of them.

Why the reluctance? and what can be done about it? Is it the hassle of organising a platform? It can't be the price, renting a tower can cost as much as a scissor lift. Is it the cross-examination on training and IPAF cards? Or an over-cautious approach towards domestic rental customers, leaving them to continue with less safe or efficient methods?

Incidentally, my daughter has just turned 27 and still refuses to try a different pasta sauce!

Leigh Sparrow

Comment and feedback is most welcome via post, email, fax or phone stating if we may publish them or not: editor@vertikal.net

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