

cranes & access

April/May 2022 Vol.24 issue 2

www.vertikal.net

**ELECTRIC
CRAWLER
CRANES**

**BOOM
LIFTS**

**VERTIKAL
DAYS SHOWGUIDE**



Vertikal Days Showguide inside

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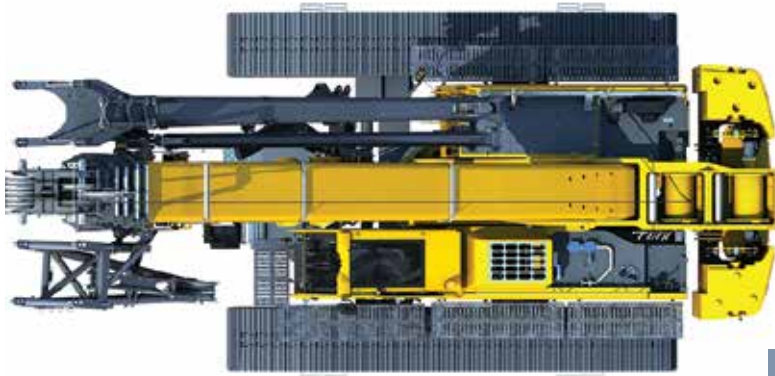
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Liebherr announces all-new 2,500t crawler, Haulotte enters low level sector, Mecaplus all-electric self-levelling boom, Marchetti electric crawler cranes, New Potain MCT 805, New Grove telecrawler, 100t Liebherr LR 1100.1 crawler, 16ft mast lift from MEC, Electric power for Liebherr LTC 1050-3.1, 'No Oil' Dinglis, Comet spider lift range, New Geda free-standing hoist, Versalift UK takes over Ruthmann distribution, Quinto Cranes calls it a day, Oz safety system for scissors arrives in Europe and financials round-up.

ELECTRIC CRAWLER CRANES 17

Over the past year there has been a surge in electric crawler crane launches and use on site. We take a look at the latest machines and profile the UK's Select Plant - one of the first to buy Liebherr's Unplugged electric crawler crane - and ask what is it like to own and operate one of these cranes?

BOOM LIFTS 27

The boom lift is celebrating more than 50 years since it was first launched. Here we take a brief look at its history and the increasing number of manufacturers as well as the growing Chinese presence. We also review the latest products including the numerous self-levelling booms now available.

VERTIKAL DAYS SHOW GUIDE 37

Vertikal Days is back once again at the Peterborough Show Ground and raring to go with a record number of innovations and new products making their World, European and UK debuts. Our comprehensive guide contains everything you need to know about the show, the exhibitors and the products they plan to showcase.

HS2 - THE REALITY 95

A sizeable number of modern crawler cranes are helping construct the UK's HS2 high speed railway, Europe's largest construction project. Nick Johnson reports.

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ON THE COVER

A new 250 tonne Liebherr LR-1250.1 'Unplugged' crawler crane from Select on charge at the HS2 Old Oak Common site in London. An unimaginable sight just few years ago.



IN THE NEXT ISSUE Scheduled for June, the next issue of Cranes & Access will include features on Low level access, Telehandlers, All Terrain cranes, Remote controls and a review of the Vertikal Days Show. If you have any contributions or suggestions to make or are interested in advertising in this issue, please contact our editorial or sales teams.



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COMMENT

BOOM OR BUST

History has numerous examples of seemingly indomitable companies or national industries fading away as new players move in, all too often the result of arrogance, sense of entitlement and complacency of established players, taking dominant market shares and customers for granted. A classic example is the demise of the British motorcycle industry, at the end of the 1960's. After dominating much of the world market for decades it almost vanished overnight when it failed to respond to the arrival of modern, competent, well-built products from Honda in Japan. A similar fate impacted the domestic US auto industry in the 1970s.

When Chinese companies began building and then exporting aerial work platforms 10 to 15 years ago, their products were understandably viewed as a joke, being cheap and often incompetent copies of established products with poor quality, no backup and no idea of international marketing. You would have been mad to have purchased them at any price.

How times have changed...

Looking at the exhibitors signed up to Vertikal Days, now just a week or two away, it is striking how many of the innovative product launches promised will come from Chinese manufacturers, a totally improbable thought even a couple of years ago. Even more surprising is that many will be high ticket items, such as large electric boom lifts or mega scissor lifts. You might be forgiven for thinking that some western manufacturers have been 'caught on the back foot' and unsure how best to respond.

The speed with which the leading Chinese manufacturers have taken up customer feedback, adapted and made changes is astonishing, leaving some western manufacturers struggling to decide how to respond. Some blame it exclusively on low prices or unfair tactics however buyers are much cannier than that and will not buy a duff product no matter how cheap it is or go along with unethical methods.

When a newcomer attempts to break into a mature affluent market, the 'establishment' can often adopt an 'All is fair in love and war' attitude, lobbying law makers to change the rules of the game or use arcane legal barriers to block the upstarts. However, protectionism rarely works over the long or even medium term and can have unintended consequences such as the 25 percent tariff on steel imports which has certainly harmed some US crane manufacturers.

Those that can adapt to change in a positive and strategically smart manner, without resorting to questionable tactics and alienating their customers, tend to prosper and grow. Those that don't are resigned to history as famous names of the past...

Mark Darwin

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