

INTERNATIONAL

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rental

NEWS

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DIGITAL
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**Rental
Awards
supplement**



Official magazine of the ERA



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Forging ahead

Although the peak of the Covid-19 pandemic is behind us – assuming we don't experience a second wave – the industry is still very much in the middle of dealing with its effects. Indeed, the transition back to some sort of normal could prove tricky to navigate, as outlined by Kevin Appleton on page 11.

It has been a period of forced experiment with things like remote working and paperless processes, and given the discoveries made during this time, the painful experience could prove to be of some benefit for many firms in the long-run.

Rental companies are finding that some of the adaptations they've had to make are in fact worth carrying forwards beyond the pandemic. Some examples are described in our piece on the impact of Covid-19 on rental operations on page 22, which is part of this issue's Health & Safety focus.

One of the most noteworthy effects, though, is how the crisis has accelerated the adoption of digital technologies. This has regularly been mentioned in conversations I've had with industry professionals, and rental software companies are seizing it as an opportunity. Turn to page 34 to get an update, including a conversation I had with Wayne Harris, CEO of Point of Rental, which is also available as an audio podcast on KHL.com.

At the same time as tackling the challenges of Covid-19, there are companies that are still pressing ahead with plans to develop their businesses. A prime example is Boels Rental. On page 12, Pierre Boels, President of the European Rental Association (ERA) and CEO of Boels Rental, describes how the integration of Cramo has continued almost unimpeded.

Another example is Sany Europe, which, in the middle of the current chaos, is launching into rental. Its Construction Machinery division's Sales Director Ronald Ziegler explains, on page 38, how rental could hold the key to unlocking Sany's potential in Europe.

And, of course, International Rental News and the ERA weren't going to let the pandemic stop us from celebrating the great achievements of the industry in 2019. So the European Rental Awards ceremony was held as an online event this year. Turn to page 16 to find out who the winners were.

I'm wishing you all well as the industry works hard to pull through.

Thomas Allen

Editor

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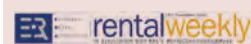
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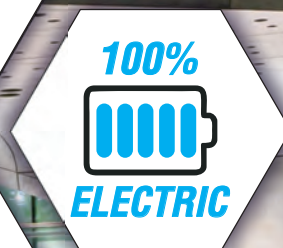


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inside

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THE APPLETON COLUMN

Kevin Appleton considers the challenges of running rental operations and returning to work as Covid-19 restrictions are gradually eased.

ERA PAGE

UK and southern Europe hardest hit by Covid-19, but the rental industry has a "bright future".

**PRODUCT UPDATE**

Decontamination light from Lind Equipment helps fight Covid-19; Kubota introduces sustainable mini excavator; Takeuchi dumper replacement; Trime launches sanitising tunnel; Mecalc offers two machines in one.

EVENTS**REVIEW: RENTAL AWARDS**

Despite the challenges presented by Covid-19, this year's European Rental Awards still went ahead – as an online event. *IRN* congratulates the winners.

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DIARY DATES

2020

SAMOTER

21-25 October, 2020
Verona, Italy

ALH CONFERENCE

23 October, 2020
Online event

INTERNATIONAL RENTAL CONFERENCE (IRC)

23 November, 2020
Shanghai, China

BAUMA CHINA 2020

24-27 November, 2020
Shanghai, China

2021

IAPA AWARDS

18 March, 2021
London, UK

IPAF SUMMIT

18 March, 2021
London, UK

INTERMAT

19-24 April, 2021
Paris, France

easyNoleggio platform launched in Italy

A new online rental platform called easyNoleggio – which translates as easyToolHire – has been launched in Italy, with the aim of unifying small to mid-size rental companies under a larger brand, to help them compete in the market.

This follows the launch in February of easyEventHire in the UK, which is focused on event rental, and there are plans to launch easyToolHire in the UK in September, with a focus on the tool and equipment rental sector.

In the first quarter of 2021, a similar model will be introduced in France and Spain.

It is part of the well-known easyGroup of brands, which includes easyJet, and is backed by investment from the group and from Sir Stelios Haji-Ioannou, founder of easyJet.

The platform is powered by Rentuu, a cloud-based technology specialist with offices in the UK, Italy, the Netherlands and Ukraine.

The investment, which was received in July, enabled Rentuu to create easyHire – a franchisor that has the rights to two equipment rental brands: easyEventHire and easyToolHire,



easyHire's CCO Dennis Helderman (left) and CEO Andrea Guzzoni (right)

across 31 territories, including the EU, Switzerland and Monaco.

Andrea Guzzoni, CEO of easyHire, said, "Our mission is to make tool hire and plant rental easy and affordable for all."

"Our world-leading technology enables anyone working on everything from a landscaping project to a renovation job, and more, to find all of their tool hire needs in one space."

He added, "By investing in leading-edge technology that is simple for the customer to use, we have ensured that a superior and value-driven experience

is at the heart of easyNoleggio.

Dennis Helderman, Chief Commercial Officer of easyHire, said the aim of this venture is to make easyNoleggio everyone's first port of call for their rental needs, from cleaning and construction equipment to lights and heaters.

"easyNoleggio has a huge portfolio of tool hire and equipment rental that can be easily delivered to an address, no matter where it is," Helderman said, "and easyHire and Rentuu have the expertise within our network to advise on the best equipment deals."

NEWS IN BRIEF

■ German manufacturer Wacker Neuson has made its telematics solution, Compamatic, available on all of its heavy-duty reversible vibratory plates and a number of its remote-controlled models. The company says Compamatic makes the process of compaction traceable and allows for documented quality control, with data on where compaction had been carried out and to what degree. The system allows project managers to, for example, plan asphalt deliveries without having to visit sites for quality control purposes.

Kubota introduces new U50-5 mini excavator

Kubota's new U50-5 mini excavator is aimed at the rental industry and is available across Europe.

It completes the company's new series of 5 tonne machines, joining the KX060-5 and U56-5, which were also made available recently.

Glen Hampson, Business Development Manager for Construction at Kubota UK, said, "The U50-5 is a brilliant entry-level

machine, it's easy to operate and the new features ensure it's safe to use."

The U50-5 was said to offer easy maintenance access, with accessible radiators and wide-opening bonnets.

Also, the longer service intervals on the new DPf's (diesel particulate filter) regeneration filter and ash cleaner make for reduced maintenance.

Given the growing importance of sustainable machines, the U50-5 has been fitted with a Kubota Original Direct Injection Engine with CRS (common rail system) and DPf Muffler, and a Stage-V compliant engine.

Operator comfort and safety



The U50-5 offers easy maintenance access

were also important to the design. The operator is given easy access to machine information via a full-color, high-resolution 7" LCD screen navigated using a job dial. Along with information about parameters such as AUX flow adjustment and maintenance updates, the operator is also able to view detailed alerts.

Digital issues...

For those of you now working from home, we remind you that you can read IRN, and all other KHL titles, in digital format.

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We have a rolling news story on coronavirus on our website, providing stories and information from all over the world.

We are also producing a newsletter, Construction & Coronavirus, focusing on the impact that Covid-19 is having on construction – on sites, in factories, and in offices. Once again, you can subscribe to this on the KHL website.



German construction equipment rental company HKL Baumaschinen, with operations also in Austria and Poland, is celebrating its 50th anniversary this year. The family-owned company has been serving the construction industry since 1970, when its first operations opened in the cities of Hamburg, Kiel and Lübeck. The picture shows the 1980 inauguration of its headquarters in Hamburg-Hummelsbüttel. HKL intends to open five new depots this year.



NEWS IN BRIEF

■ The UK's events trade show The Showman's Show 2020, scheduled for 21-22 October, has been cancelled due to the effects of the Covid-19 pandemic. A statement from the organisers said it was clear the damage caused to confidence and finances during the pandemic would result in greatly reduced exhibitor and visitor numbers. The organisers will, however, be using its digital platforms and database to launch a digital campaign to promote its exhibitors. The 2021 show is scheduled for 20-21 October, at Newbury Showground.

■ Doosan group is reported to be planning to sell its stake in construction equipment manufacturer Doosan Infracore to raise funds to repay loans. The deal is said not to include Doosan Bobcat. According to multiple press reports in South Korea, the group received a 3.6 trillion won (€2.67 billion) emergency loan from the state-owned Korea Development Bank, after bailing out its engineering arm, Doosan Engineering & Construction, which suffered losses from unsold real estate. Doosan Heavy Industries & Construction has a 36.27% stake in equipment and engine producer Doosan Infracore.

Bauma China to proceed as planned

Show organiser Messe München has announced that Bauma China will take place as planned from November 24 to 27, 2020, at the Shanghai New International Expo Centre (SNIEC) in China.

A host of construction equipment shows have been postponed this year due to the impact of Covid-19, but Messe München has said that they expect more than 3,000 exhibitors at Bauma China.



Stage V deadline extended

The European Parliament has backed a delay in the implementation of a major Stage V engine emissions regulation.

The original EU regulation (2016/1628) required a transition for non-road mobile machinery (NRMM) to Stage V engines in the power categories up to 56kW and equal to or above 130kW, by 31 December 2020.

The amendment – made due to the Covid-19 pandemic – gives equipment manufacturers an additional year to bring their modified equipment to



market (31 December 2021).

The decision has been roundly welcomed by the industry and follows lobbying from industry associations, including the Committee for European Construction Equipment (CECE) and the European federation for materials handling (FEM).

Hitachi CM to stop manufacturing in Europe

Hitachi Construction Machinery Europe (CME) is planning to cease manufacturing in Europe, instead importing standard machines from Hitachi's factories in Japan for customisation at its facility in Amsterdam, the Netherlands, and then distribution across Europe.

As part of the change, Hitachi CM's production and assembly activities

at Oosterhout, the Netherlands, will be shifted over to the company's Amsterdam facility.

This decision was said to come as a result of poor market conditions, "meagre" financial results in recent years, and changing market demands.

Hitachi said the decision had been made to secure the long-term future of the business.



Kennards grows New Zealand network

Australia-based Kennards Hire has opened a new depot in Mount Maunganui, bringing its network in New Zealand to 26

It will serve the growing industrial area of Maunganui, which currently has a population of approximately 20,000 people.

Between the port and the growing population, the area is set to expand residentially and commercially.

The new branch will be offering a range of equipment to support local trades, residential and commercial construction, as well as DIY enthusiasts.

It enables Kennards Hire to engage with some innovative operators in Mount Manganui on a larger commercial scale.

Mike Perkin is manager of the new Mount Maunganui branch and he is joined by equipment rental professionals Craig Whitaker, Michelle Noble and Blake Scrivener. Kennards Hire has also employed three new staff from the local area to complement the team.

Production and assembly activities currently taking place in the Oosterhout factory (pictured) will be shifted to Hitachi CM's Amsterdam facility

IRN Rental Share Index

COMPANY		SHARE PRICES			
		Start date 07/01/06	Previous mth 22/05/20	Current mth 16/07/20	% change
Aggreko (UK)	£	2.75	4.74	4.3	-9.3%
Ashtead Group (UK/US)	UK£	1.83	29.4	33.5	13.9%
Cramo (Fin)	€	13.0	13.23	13.23	0%
Emeco	US\$	–	1.1	0.9	-18.2%
GAM SA (Spain)	€	8	1.05	1.14	8.6%
Herc Rentals	US\$	–	24.73	34.79	40.7%
HSS Hire	UK£	–	28.2	24.6	-12.8%
H&E Equipment	US\$	–	15.21	18.84	23.9%
Kanamoto	Yen	–	2264	2395	5.8%
Mobile Mini (US)	US\$	46.2	30.84	29.5	-4.3%
Ramirent (Finland)	€	23.43	8.77	8.77	0%
Speedy Hire (UK)	UK£	8.32	0.53	0.53	0%
United Rentals (US)	US\$	24.9	127.72	159.6	25%
VP PLC	UK£	–	6.93	7.27	5%
IRN INDEX		100	360	401	11.4%

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.

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CAT deliveries are coming in! NEW @caterpillarinc 259D3 Track Loaders are being delivered to add to the #TalismanRentals fleet.

@TalismanRentals

7 July, 2020



Caution with MEWP guardrails – be careful not to trap your fingers when lowering or raising guardrails. Download this poster and other #AndyAccess MEWP/MCWP key topic posters for use in your daily operations and promote the safe use of powered access.

@AndyAccessIPAF

16 July, 2020

Newly added to our STR fleet the Haulotte 12DX rough terrain scissor lift delivers exceptional performance, productivity and safety in a wide variety of outdoor applications.

@AdaptaliftGroup

16 July, 2020

WillScot and Mobile Mini merge

WillScot and Mobile Mini have announced the completion of their merger, creating a North American leader in modular space and portable storage solutions worth approximately \$6.6 billion. Shareholders gave their approval at the end of June.

The merged company, WillScot Mobile Mini Holdings Corp, is headquartered in Phoenix, Arizona.

The combined 2019 revenues of the two companies is \$1.7 billion, and adjusted EBITDA (earnings before interest, taxes, depreciation and amortisation) came to \$650 million.

Brad Soultz, President and CEO of WillScot, said, "The closing of this strategic and financially compelling merger creates a stronger and more

diverse company that is better positioned for the future."

Benefits of the merger include a diversified customer base, a broad geographic footprint, increased scale, and multiple levers for growth driven by enhanced product and service offerings as well as cost savings.

The company is expecting to realise \$50 million in annual cost synergies.

WillScot ranked 11th in this year's IRN100 listing of the world's largest rental companies, generating 2019 revenues of just over \$1 billion (€946 million), while Mobile Mini ranked 23rd in the list, with 2019 revenues of almost \$600 million (€518 million).

The transaction is expected to close in the third quarter of 2020.

Sunbelt UK starts new business division

Sunbelt Rentals UK has launched a new Safety and Communications business, with Gary Ridsdale as Director and Mike Hogan as Operations Director.

The new business will provide equipment such as confined space access systems, breathing apparatus, gas detection devices and radio communications products for rental and sale across the UK.

Andy Wright, CEO of Sunbelt Rentals UK, said, "The launch of Safety and Communications is part of our ongoing business development strategy, to continue to add complementary specialist rental products and services to our existing market offering."

Ridsdale said, "The business has been operational now for a few months and is growing from strength

to strength.

"We have a clear plan for how we will develop the business over the next 12 months, opening additional locations, in order to provide greater service coverage across the UK, for all of our customers."

During the first few months of trading, the business has built more than 70 Covid-19 drive-through testing centres in the UK.



PEOPLE NEWS

■ **Erik Geene** has been appointed Vice President of business development at the newly-launched European division of Sinoboom. Reporting directly to CEO **Tim Whiteman**, Geene will be responsible for overseeing Sinoboom BV's business development across the continent. Geene, who has more than 25 years experience in the access industry, joins Sinoboom BV from Poland-based Liftstore, which has been responsible for promoting the Sinoboom brand across Europe and will continue to work closely with the manufacturer. Previously, Geene was a longstanding employee of Genie, having been a sales director at the company.

■ **Peter Lancken**, former CEO of Australia-based Kennards Hire, has been awarded an Order of the Medal of Australia (Member of the Order – AM) for his service to the equipment rental industry and the community. After stepping down as CEO of Kennards in 2009, Lancken joined the company's board and held the role of Chairman from 2012-2017 and, to this day, remains a non-executive director of the Kennards Group. Lancken originally joined Kennards in 1994 following the acquisition of GKN Rentals.

■ **Pat Fallon** stepped down as the Chief Operating Officer (COO) of UAE-based rental company Byrne Equipment Rental on 10 June, after 26 years with the company. Fallon said, "I will reflect on my time at Byrne with tremendous pride on what we achieved, along with my sincere thanks and respect to its team of people across the region who I was privileged to work with on the journey to deliver its enviable growth and success."

Rental information from IRN

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rental newsletter

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Sinoboom Europe and North America open

Sinoboom's North American and European subsidiaries have officially taken possession of their new regional headquarters, in Houston, Texas, US, and Rotterdam, the Netherlands.

"We are delighted that Sinoboom BV in Europe and Sinoboom North America LLC have been able to complete this auspicious stage in their development on time and simultaneously," said Susan XU, General Manager of parent company Sinoboom Intelligent Equipment.

Both facilities will be used to house scissor lifts, boom lifts and other

MEWPs from the company's extensive range of products. Sinoboom started production more than 12 years ago and was the first Chinese company to design and build its own boom lifts.

"We have chosen to locate in Houston, Texas because of its unrivalled transportation links and close connections to major commercial activities," said Kolin Kirschenmann, CEO of Sinoboom North America. He added, "We are now finalising a full team to support our customers across the US and Canada and look forward to success."

Tim Whiteman, CEO of Sinoboom

Sinoboom North America, Houston



BV, said, "Our purpose-built facilities in Ridderkerk have been an important part of this industry for many years and we are delighted to be able to refurbish them and give them a new lease of life with a new, high-quality brand of MEWPs."

JLG Romania closure

JLG Industries has announced plans to close its manufacturing facility in Medias, Romania, next year.

"In an effort to optimise and better align operations to support our customers and enable sustainable growth, JLG conducted an assessment of its global manufacturing footprint and has made the decision to close the company's manufacturing facility in Medias, Romania," said Karel Huijser, General Manager and Vice President of JLG EMEAIR.

"This move follows significant investments that we recently made in a new manufacturing facility for PowerTowers and a JLG customer innovation centre in the UK, and a state of the art JLG service centre in Stockholm, Sweden. We remain committed to our customers in the region, and production will be redistributed across other global JLG facilities."

All operations in Medias, Romania will cease by 30 June, 2021.

Peinemann fleet grows with 75m Ruthmann

The Peinemann Mobilift Group has added a 57m working height

Ruthmann Steiger T 750 HF truck mount to its fleet.

The handover took place in Rotterdam, the Netherlands, via Ruthmann's sales and service partner Kwak Hoogwerker Centrum. The truck mounted platform has a 41m outreach and incorporates the company's highflexRüssel and highflexKorb. The highflexRüssel enables a 220° basket jib rotation angle and the highflexKorb a maximum basket rotation angle of 440°. The basket can also be telescoped up to 3.82m and offers a capacity of 600kg.

With the working platform upright, the truck mounted platform is ideal for 'under and

Podcast: India in focus

Aahan Sethi, Director at India-based access equipment distributor and manufacturer Gemini Power Hydraulics, speaks to Access International's editor Euan Youdale about the effects of Covid-19 on the country and the access sector there.



up' applications and, with the Rüssel lowered, offers the complete range of 'up and over and back' movements, for example when working across a house.

Family-run Peinemann was founded in 1954 in Hoogvliet, Rotterdam and started renting forklift trucks and personnel in the port of Rotterdam and grew into a full service provider.



NEWS IN BRIEF

■ Multitel Pagliero recently delivered 25 new 3.5 tonne truck mounted platforms to access and lifting rental company O.Mec, based in Ancona, Italy. The new Multitel Pagliero articulated and telescopic units, ranging from 16-25m working height, will enrich the rental fleet which already includes around 70 units in the 3.5 tonne category. The units will be distributed over O.Mec's eight branches in central and southern Italy. The company's fleet of truck mounted platforms, largely from Multitel Pagliero, will be topped out by a 77.5m working height model set to be delivered towards the end of next year.

■ Mantall has introduced a new series of crawler mounted scissor lifts. The electric-powered XE-CT tracked scissor, from the Chinese manufacturer, is able to work on soft ground and will not cause damage to terrain even when turned at zero degrees. The 'tank style' crawler system has low noise and low vibration, and is particularly suited to travelling at maximum speed over rough terrain. Being electric, the series also has zero exhaust emissions and powerful climbing capabilities, with 40% gradeability.

■ Ahern Deutschland, the sales, service and spare parts provider for Snorkel and Xtreme Manufacturing equipment in Germany and Austria, has been appointed as the official distributor for Faresin agricultural telehandlers in Germany. Initially, Ahern Deutschland will carry five agricultural telehandler models, which includes the Faresin 6.26; 7.30C 74hp, and 9.30C 74hp in the compact range; and the 7.45 HLS, 8.40 HLS 74hp, and VPSE 100 variant in the mid-size class, and plans to expand the stocked model range in line with customer demand.

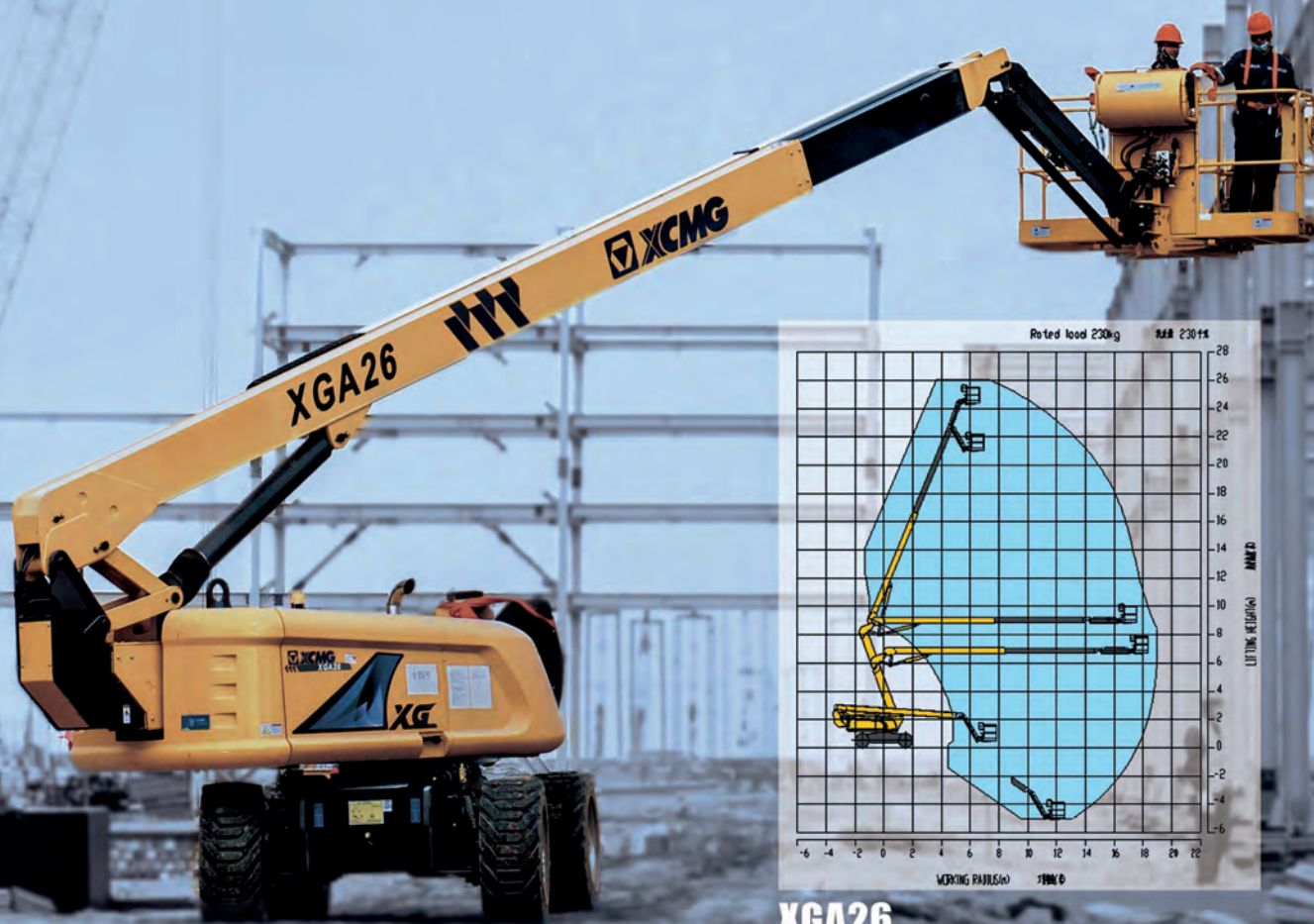
■ In early June, Haulotte Shanghai provided a large-scale training package on behalf of China-based Zhongneng United Rental Company. It followed the provision of more than 100 Haulotte aerial platforms by Zhongneng United Rental for a hospital construction project in Guangzhou City, in the south of China. More than 70 project managers from the contractor of the project attended the training.

NEWS IN BRIEF

■ Platformers' Days, the Germany-based exhibition for mobile lifting and powered access, has been postponed to 2021. Organiser Messe Karlsruhe said regulations concerning Covid-19 had forced the postponement of the event, which had been due to take place 18-19 September this year. It will instead take place in Karlsruhe, 10-11 September 2021. The latest coronavirus regulations of the local Baden-Württemberg state government, which came into force on 1 July, prohibit events with more than 500 people until 31 October 2020.



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Back to work

Kevin Appleton **considers the challenges of running rental operations and returning to work as Covid-19 restrictions are gradually eased**

Across most of the western world the rate of transmission of the Covid-19 virus and the subsequent pressure on healthcare systems seems to be falling and we are all starting to return to some kind of "new abnormal" in our everyday lives. Public health protocols vary by country – quite rightly in my view – as they try to consider each national culture's appetite for different levels of control or coercion. However, there are some standards that are required pretty consistently, along with mitigations that will work in any environment, and we're going to think about how to approach these.

Getting the tone right

It seems to me that one of the major challenges for rental companies returning to work is to find the narrow path between health measures that encourage a police-state-style paranoia and an attitude that is so casual that we see a rebound in infection levels and further damage to already weakened economies. This is down to leadership and in-company education.



KEVIN APPLETON is an experienced senior executive and advisor in the rental, logistics and construction service industries. He is a former CEO of Lavendon Group and Travis Perkins Builders Merchants and is currently chairman and/or non-executive director of a number of companies in the rental, construction services and logistics sectors. To comment on these articles e-mail: IRNfeedback@khl.com

The message needs to be landed with everyone that our actions are designed to protect the weakest in society and that may mean somebody we don't even work with or see; someone, maybe, like the asthmatic partner of a customer. But if our casualness towards mask-wearing, testing, regular cleaning of surfaces and social distancing can result in our passing on of our symptom-free Covid-19 to a customer who then, unknowingly, infects his asthmatic wife, then we all share a part of the responsibility. We are not all gifted at imagining the distress of others whom we can't see, but regular reminders that these precautions are not necessarily about us, but about those who are at risk and whom we cannot see, play a crucial role in ensuring that we're on the side of the good guys.

On the other hand, shouting and hollering at a colleague or customer who has put his foot 20cm beyond a distancing marker is unlikely to reduce anybody's stress levels. It is also unlikely to engage hearts and minds in the fight to be on the side of the good guys. If there was ever a time to be able to communicate with a lightness of voice and a smile, this is it. I am impressed, daily, by hearing ordinary people who have got the tone perfectly... "would you mind just stepping back a tiny bit, please? Thank you so much. This is difficult sometimes isn't it?" in a calm, smiling voice is so much more tolerable to hear than "The line's there, buddy!" at 80 decibels.

As with so many areas in business, this is a great opportunity to equip all of your colleagues with some new, soft skills. It requires them having courage to work within guidelines, because they're important and for the good of us all, whilst also delivering clear messages in a polite and humane way. What a great combination of skills to help your team to master!

Working from home

Of course, these situations apply when people are back in the office, depot or rental store, but the other substantial change is going to be making the switch, in a controlled way, from having people working at home because they must, to having people work at home because it's the most effective way for them to work.

The best practice that I'm seeing in this area is where companies are establishing work-from-home policies that enable any colleague whose job allows,

to apply to work from home in a structured way. This may mean, if the company's systems allow it, that a customer service representative can work two days per week in the office and three days a week from home. There are a large number of new skills to be learned about engaging with and managing a home-based workforce, but I suspect many of these lessons have already been learned through lockdowns. In any case, there is now a strong body of training material on leading home-based workers, running remote meetings and agreeing and monitoring performance indicators for those working remotely, much of which is accessible through an internet search.

The key thing with making the transition to more established home working is, though, to make sure it happens in an intentional and structured way. Take the time to write your new home working policy. When is it allowed? Which categories of colleagues? What company events is it mandatory to attend in person? How often is the agreement reviewed? Who decides whether it's appropriate for someone to home-work?

My fear is that many organisations will just "drift" into a situation where people never quite return to work but where there is no policy infrastructure to support the person working at home – a recipe that will work for no one. Get your HR people on working this through now!

Watch the Market

I have a hunch that the medium-term effect of increased virus control consciousness is that there will be less sharing of tools and equipment in the workplace. This could be a good demand generator for the rental industry and it will pay you now to think about how you sensitively highlight this benefit to your customers, as well as alerting them to the risks of not doing so.

In any event... it's nice to be back, almost! **IRN**



Rising to the challenge

While trying to cope with the effects of a global pandemic, Boels is at the same time in the early stages of integrating the newly-acquired Cramo. The company's CEO and President of the ERA, Pierre Boels, speaks to *IRN* about how the business is navigating this period of major change



Pierre Boels, President of the ERA and CEO of Boels Rental

Boels equipment being used in the 2019 construction of the Zuttendaal bridge in Belgium



Boels Rental recently grew to double its size when it acquired Finland-based Cramo. The Dutch generalist rental company's revenues went from €579 million in 2018 to €1.3 billion in 2019. This makes it the second largest rental company in Europe, after Loxam, and put it in 8th position in this year's *IRN100* listing of the world's largest rental companies – published in the June issue of *International Rental News (IRN)*.

As a result, Boels went from having 425 depots in 12 European countries, to having 750 depots across 17 European countries. So the company has experienced directly how the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic has varied across the continent.

Speaking to *IRN*, Pierre Boels, President of the European Rental Association (ERA) and CEO of Boels Rental, says, "All over Europe, here and there, we closed depots because there were not enough employees."

This was due to employees calling in sick, not necessarily because they had the Covid-19 virus but because they feared they might have it or could contract it and pass it on.

As a result, taking the company's home market as an example, five of Boels' 120 depots in the Netherlands were closed due to staff shortages.

"That's not dramatic, but still it's closing and it's totally against my philosophy to close depots," says Boels.

Not all countries got off so lightly though, since some governments imposed severe lockdown measures; "We were actually very lucky that we were mainly in countries where governments decided not to have such a hard lockdown as in France and Spain," says Boels.

"For example, in Germany, the Netherlands and the Nordics, there were no problems. But in Austria we had to close, and in Luxembourg, Italy and Belgium. Boels is B2B and B2C, and suddenly consumers were not allowed to leave their houses – such as in the Czech Republic, Austria and Belgium."

Overall, out of Boels' 750 depots, about 10% were shut during the peak of the crisis.

They generally did not remain closed for long though; "Our employees and management wanted to open as quickly as possible," says Boels, "So as soon as it was possible to open, we opened. Some were closed for a week, some were closed for six weeks – that was the maximum."

"It depended on whether the customers were coming back; if your construction sites were not opening, like in Belgium, you didn't need all the depots."

New health and safety measures were implemented

Merger in numbers

2019 REVENUES

Boels:	€652 million
Cramo:	€614 million
Combined:	€1.27 billion
Total size of European market:	€27 billion
Boels/Cramo market share:	4.7%

STAFF

Boels:	4,200
Cramo:	2,800
Combined:	7,000

DEPOTS

Boels:	450
Cramo:	300
Combined:	750

The merged companies have a network of 750 depots



across Boels' network; "I am really proud of my staff," Boels says. "They handled this Covid-19 crisis very seriously. In the depots, measures were taken, like social distancing, extra cleaning and disinfecting of equipment, and people who could work from their homes stayed at home."

Depots have been adapted individually depending on the site; small city depots, for instance, have different limitations to large depots.

"We have a lot of equipment that can help, such as fencing," says Boels. "We provided all the necessary tools and instructions."

This included the creation and distribution of an instructional video, in which one depot was used as an example to demonstrate the various solutions that could be used in different depots.

Rental contracts

One particular challenge that a lot of rental companies faced during the peak of the crisis was the cancellation of rental contracts because construction sites were being closed down. Boels responded to this with something the company calls a 'rental stop'.

"It's already something we do with customers... when they have some specialised equipment," Boels says. "And in this instance, it was so clear that it was nothing they could manage; they were forced to close down their sites."

He adds, "We are partners with our customers, and some of them were forced to stop their activities, so we accepted there would be a delay."

"It lasted for a maximum of four weeks. But you of course feel that in your rental revenues."

Something else highlighted by Boels is the fact that the pandemic has had the effect of accelerating the adoption of digital processes.

"More digitalised companies have been better able to cope with the crisis, being able to switch over to digital processes more easily," he says.

During the second quarter of the year, Boels saw its

website visits grow by 38% and online reservations increase by 59%; "Luckily we were ready for this," says Boels, "Our online capabilities were perfectly in order. We already had a lot of customers who ordered equipment online, and that was much bigger now."

The rental sector is of course closely tied to the construction industry, so looking ahead, Boels says, "The most important question is how much the construction market will recover over the next 12 to 18 months."

He adds that there is great uncertainty, and very few new projects are being launched.

"Personally, I have experienced multiple recessions," says Boels. "However, the current recession is very different from what I have experienced: it is global and everywhere at the same time."

"During other downturns, we could balance our profit and loss between countries. Currently, all countries are hit at the same time. That is unprecedented."

So while the Cramo acquisition would have afforded Boels the benefit of geographical spread in a normal recession, that advantage is negated in this situation. While the Nordic countries might have suffered less during the peak of the crisis, all countries will now be simultaneously impacted by lower market confidence.

Confidence

"When people are not confident," says Boels, "they don't build new offices and new houses. So there will be a recession and the recession will be everywhere."

However, he adds, "Very often you see stimulation projects organised by governments. You see that now in the UK – they want to put several billion pounds into infrastructure. In the Netherlands, every time there is a recession, they open the 'golden case' and put money into infrastructure. That will not happen in Italy. But I think as Boels we are active in very strong countries that have the capacity to get stimulation projects in construction."

On another positive note, Boels emphasises that recessions tend to have the effect of boosting rental penetration; "After each recession, we see a growing number of rented versus owned fleet. Rental will help contractors manage the uncertainties caused by this crisis."

He adds, "Those construction companies who already outsourced equipment had very little burden of owning equipment during the lockdown."

In the meantime, though, Boels has cut its planned capex for 2020 by 50%.

"I see the biggest risk in the fourth quarter of 2020," Boels says. "Will there be enough new construction projects?"

"When I look at my company now, we are hit hard because of our event business, where Boels was very active, but revenues have recovered in a lot of countries – it's not strong growth anymore but also not down dramatically. But the risk is now how long will the recession take?"

When growth is weak, there is no need to invest in new equipment, he says. And manufacturers who sell a lot to rental companies should be prepared for this; "When you are relying on the rental sector," Boels says, "like in the access industry, then you know you have to have an organisation that can scale down factories."

Boels also speaks of the Green Deal, which outlines the EU's strategy to become a climate neutral



Regional differences

Speaking during the Rental Awards and Market Update webinar held on 30 June and co-organised by IRN magazine and the European Rental Association (ERA), Pierre Boels explained how a recent ERA survey showed a distinct difference in how markets across Europe had been impacted by the Covid-19 pandemic.

Splitting Europe into four regions – Northern, Central and Southern Europe, and the UK – it is clear that the UK has been the hardest hit, with rental activity dropping by 40% compared to the previous year, and expected to be down 20-30% in the third quarter of 2020. As a result, UK respondents are expecting to cut 2020 investment by 40-70%.

Also badly affected is Southern Europe, where second quarter activity was down 20-40%, and third quarter activity is forecast to be 10-15% lower than the previous year. 2020 investment in this region is expected to be 40-50% lower than the year before.

Meanwhile, Central and Northern Europe have seen a relatively softer impact.

Rental activity in the second quarter was reported to be 10% lower than normal in Central Europe, and third quarter activity is expected to be just 5% below prior-year levels. Respondents from this region are, however, still expecting to cut investment by 20-50% this year.

Northern European respondents saw a 10% drop in activity in the first quarter, and are forecasting a 5-10% drop in the third quarter. Companies in the north are planning to reduce investment by just 10%.



A recording of the online event can be viewed at KHL.com

continent by 2050, saying, "Despite the challenging circumstances, the pressing issue of climate change remains and will likely affect future business."

He says, "The future of our industry may be much >

European ranking, 2019

Rank	Company	European revenue (€ million)
1	Loxam	2,203
2	Boels Rental	1,266
3	Kiloutou	737
4	Algeco Scotsman	715 (EST)
5	Sunbelt UK	560



brighter than we think, because rental is an essential part of the green recovery."

The need for the construction sector to reduce its CO₂ emissions to meet the Green Deal's targets, he says, is promising for rental because, in environmental terms, it often compares favourably with the ownership model.

So this begs the question of how the Covid-19 crisis is affecting Boels' investment plans for electric and hybrid equipment, which comes at a premium.

Boels believes it is entirely legislation-driven; "We see in a lot of countries – I see it in the Nordic countries, I see it in the Netherlands – where governments want all equipment on building sites to be electric. Otherwise they will not get a license."

He adds, "When the rules come from Brussels, we accept that and put it into our government regulations. That's the pressure."

This can be advantageous for rental because construction companies become reluctant to invest in expensive equipment, especially when the regulations are subject to change.

"I don't think rental companies are afraid of expensive stuff, but you want your money utilisation, your time utilisation," Boels adds.

On the topic of legislation, the ERA recently supported CECE's (Committee for European Construction Equipment) request to delay the Stage V transition deadlines in response to the Covid-19 pandemic. This, Boels says, is one example of how "the ERA stands up for rental companies but also, indirectly, for manufacturers."

The ERA has also played an important role in keeping the industry abreast of developments throughout the crisis; "The ERA is able to inform its affiliated rental companies and national rental associations in a swift manner by its centralised approach, reaching around 5,000 rental companies throughout Europe," Boels says.

Integration

Despite the pandemic, Boels and Cramo are still making good headway with the integration process.

"Initially, we thought the integration process would be heavily affected by Covid-19," says Boels, "but it is taking place as we speak. It is a lot of work, but so far it's running smoothly."

He adds, "We have a lot of good managers joining us now, so that's working."

However, Boels expressed his frustration at not being able to meet people in person; "You want to



The Cramo brand will remain in the Nordic countries, but will be replaced by the Boels brand in markets where operations overlap

'walk the floor and kick the tyres', but that hasn't been possible, and that's really not nice."

In terms of synergies, Boels will not share the estimated cost savings, but he says there would not need to be two head offices in the countries where the companies overlap – in Poland, the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Austria and Germany.

He adds, "There are synergies on IT systems, on marketing, on procurement, on overlapping support functions."

"In the Nordics, there are fewer synergies – that's more best practices. Of course, there will be some procurement synergies and maybe some IT synergies there, but it's not what we aim for immediately. We bought this company for the very long-term, so give us some time."

Since Cramo has a strong presence in the Nordics, it will retain its name in those countries, but in markets where operations overlap, the Boels Rental brand will be adopted.

Boels says, "Cramo is very good at doing large projects, and Boels is very good at catering for smaller contractors and having a wider range of products and a wider range of customers. If we could learn from each other, that could make it a great company."

As a result of the acquisition, Boels expects the combined company to become a leading player in 12 of the 17 countries of operation.

"Good fit"

Aside from generally being a "good fit both strategically and culturally", Boels highlights that the two companies have strong modular space businesses; "Boels is very big in site huts and Cramo is very big in site huts. There are a few major product lines for rental companies: access, earthmoving equipment and site huts. And both Boels and Cramo Germany, Cramo Nordics and Cramo Poland are very big in this product line."

According to Boels, the combined company now has 650,000 items in its rental fleet and a wide product range.

Boels also has partnerships with DIY stores, including in the Nordic countries; "It's a separate, niche business unit we have," says Boels.

The company is still not present in some key

markets, notably France and Spain. So what might the company's future expansion plans be?

"We just did a very large acquisition and we doubled our size, so give me some time to make this a great success," says Boels. "I said to myself this will be three years of exciting and hard work to make it a very great and successful merger, and in the meantime we will make our plans for the next five years. But at the moment, there are no plans to do anything else."

Growth is in the DNA

However, he adds, "But you never know. It's in the DNA of Boels that the company has to grow, and that can be in other markets or in more specialisation. It's in our DNA, so somehow that will happen."

Looking specifically at the UK, which Boels first entered in 2017 with the acquisition of tool rental firm Supply UK Group, Boels says, "I would love to make a success out of the Boels model in the biggest rental market in Europe, the UK. So we have a base now, we have a very good management team."

He mentions that Asif Latief, who became Managing Director of the company's UK operations in January 2020, is implementing some good initiatives.

Since its acquisition of Supply UK Group, Boels has subsequently bought Already Hire London in March 2018 and then Artisan Hire Centre and its sister company SAS in September 2018.

However, Boels says, "When I look at the UK, I don't have the right feeling about whether the UK is doing well. How will Brexit help the UK have better economic growth than the rest of Europe? Growth of rental companies also has to come from economic growth."

"So I can't say I have big expansion plans for the UK at the moment."

In the longer-term, though, this could be different; "The DNA of Boels is to grow, and our market share in the UK at the moment is too small."

When asked whether Boels' acquisition of Cramo might prompt other large mergers, Boels says, "There will always be consolidation. There are some rental companies who just want to grow, who want to consolidate and that will not stop."

Though, the Covid-19 crisis might have put a hold on any such M&A discussions; "I think at the moment we have to worry about recession. Everybody's a bit careful. But consolidation will happen again."

Indeed, with bankruptcies and sell-offs likely to result from the pandemic, we could well see a spate of acquisitions in the medium- to long-term, so it will be interesting to see how the market evolves and how Boels changes with it.

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Coming out on top



Despite the challenges presented by Covid-19, this year's European Rental Awards still went ahead – as an online event. *IRN* congratulates the winners

Large Rental Company of the Year (revenues over €15 million)

WINNER:

Mollo Noleggio

What the winner said:

"For our company, this award is of great value. But knowing our personalities and ambition, we will work for this recognition to be a starting point and not a finishing line." – Mauro Mollo, CEO of Mollo Noleggio

SHORTLIST: Loxam, Renta

Roberto Mollo, Vice President (left), and Mauro Mollo, CEO (right), Mollo Noleggio



A recording of this year's Rental Awards & Market Update webinar can be viewed on [KHL.com](https://www.khl.com)



For the first time ever, this year's European Rental Awards ceremony was held as an online event, the European Rental Awards & Market Update webinar, on 30 June, due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

The awards are organised by the European Rental Association and *International Rental News* magazine.

It is unfortunate that we could not celebrate the awards in person this time around, but our online event was still a great success, attracting more than 500 registered delegates. It was also a welcome opportunity to celebrate some of the successes of the industry over the past year, at rather a dark time for the sector – and indeed the world.

The webinar also included presentations from

Small Rental Company of the Year (revenues under €15 million)

WINNER:

Vatupassi

What the winner said:

"This win makes me so happy and unbelievably proud of the whole Vatupassi team. It shows that we are doing the right things and we are on the right path." – Milla Tarnanen, CEO of Vatupassi



SHORTLIST: Cross Rental Services, Drial Wynajem

Milla Tarnanen, President and CEO, Vatupassi

three industry experts: Pierre Boels, ERA President & CEO, Boels Rental; Martin Seban, Consulting Director, IHS Markit; and Chris Sleight, Managing Director, Off-Highway Research.

A recording of the online event is available on

Rental Product of the Year

WINNER:

Wacker Neuson

What the winner said:

"During our Voice of Customer sessions, a lot of rental companies, from France, the UK and Germany, together with operators from all over Europe were working on the challenge to improve safety and security for operators and the environment on jobsites while working with dumpers." – Alexander Greschner, CSO of Wacker Neuson

SHORTLIST: Atlas Copco (E-Air VSD electric compressor), Caterpillar (301.7 CR mini excavator), Consair (CAMU D2 dust extractor), Endress (Energy Storage & SmartEnergyBox), JCB (19C-1E electric mini excavator)



Alexander Greschner, Chief Sales Officer, Wacker Neuson



“ It shows that we are doing the right thing and we are on the right path. ”

Milla Tarnanen, CEO, Vatulpassi

KHL.com, and a digital supplement with summaries of the shortlisted submissions can be downloaded from www.khl.com/rentalawards and is included with the digital version of this issue.

Due to the change in format, there were no awards for Rental Person of the Year or Lifetime Achievement on this occasion.

Competition was strong this year, with more than 80 entries, which is one of the best responses we have ever had. So I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate those who were shortlisted and, of course, those who won. **IRN**

Best Digital Innovation of the Year

WINNER:

Spartan Solutions

What the winner said:

"Innovation was always important, but now it's vital for the rental industry to recover from this pandemic and get back on its feet again quickly. A big part of that is going to be digitalisation, and we believe rental companies just can't hope to run their operations efficiently in future using paper processes." – Jim Green, CEO of Spartan Solutions

SHORTLIST: CheckMobile (AI-based damage detection software), Intrador (Used equipment valuation tool and App), Riwal (My Riwal App, VR training, augmented reality App)



Jim Green, CEO, Spartan Solutions

Wacker Neuson's DV90 Dual View dumper



Best Sustainable Rental Project of the Year

JOINT WINNERS:

GSV Materieludlejning, Volvo Construction Equipment



Dan O. Vorsholt, CEO, GSV Materieludlejning

Niklas Nillroth, Vice President, Sustainability, Volvo CE

What the winners said:

Speaking about the sustainability conference for which GSV won the award, Dan Vorsholt, the company's CEO, said he was encouraged by the positivity and good ideas shared by delegates, adding, "It's not a one-man show; we need to do this together with customers and suppliers."

Meanwhile, Johan Wollin, Global Director for Energy Management at Volvo CE, highlighted the non-energy benefits of taking a sustainable approach, saying, "We see that we can reduce a significant amount of costs due to non-energy benefits. We can reduce maintenance costs, we can even indirectly improve quality and safety by working on energy management." The financial gains of these benefits were said to be substantially greater than the reduction in energy bills.

SHORTLIST: Hoogwerkt

ERA Technical Committee Award

WINNER:

Manitou

What the winner said:

"At Manitou group, we design and manufacture machines and services with passion, dedication, expertise and innovation to meet your needs: rental expectations. So we could not have expected better recognition." – Michel Denis, President and CEO of Manitou

SHORTLIST: Haulotte, Skyjack



Manitou executives, left to right: Alain Becque, VP Global Fleet Sales; Michel Denis, President and CEO; Laurent Bonnaure, Executive VP Global Sales and Marketing

The judging panel

The judges chose all the shortlists and winners, except for the Sustainability and Technical awards, which were judged by ERA Committees.

This year's judges were:



Vincent Albasini, CEO, Avesco Rent



Pierre Boels, President, European Rental Association & CEO, Boels Rental



Jaap Fluit, General Manager, Bredenoord



Karel Huijser, General Manager & Vice President, EMEA, JLG Industries



Murray Pollok, Managing Editor, International Rental News



Non-voting chair: Michel Petitjean, Secretary General, European Rental Association

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INTRADOR

Making the transition

The pressure of environmental regulations is changing the way power is generated. Thomas Allen explores the effects on genset rental, where there are certainly challenges but also opportunities

The power rental sector, as part of the broader energy generation industry, is being profoundly affected by the current energy transition.

Rental company customers are changing the way they procure and consume energy, according to Karim Wazni, Head of Aggreko Microgrid and Storage Services, and he says the company uses the '4D' framework to think about this change.

"Three of the D's refer to Decarbonisation, Decentralisation and Digitalisation, which are major trends impacting the energy sector," says Wazni, "and the fourth D that we've added is Demographics – how the increase in the population size drives the increase in demand."

Wazni has been involved in the renewables sector for 10 years, initially working in the French solar industry before moving over to the energy storage sector in California, US, and eventually joining Aggreko four-and-a-half years ago.

He highlights Decarbonisation and Decentralisation as the two main mega-trends affecting the energy sector; "Decarbonisation and Decentralisation are driven by the climate change agenda, which is rising in priority for many companies and governments. But also, they are driven by improvements in the way that we can produce renewable energy and the cost of producing that energy."

Nowadays, customers want to be offered a competitive approach from the growing array of options, and they also need help complying with a shifting regulatory landscape. So Aggreko has been adjusting its offering to match those expectations.

For instance, contractors in developed economies are often looking for solutions that produce fewer emissions and less noise pollution; "That's where storage is probably a good choice for those customers," says Wazni.

Meanwhile, some developing economies are skipping a step by bypassing the process of building an energy grid infrastructure and instead taking a decentred approach by generating renewable

Over the past three years, Aggreko has developed about 200MW of 'hybrid' projects

energy locally.

Another factor is resilience. With the increasing frequency of major storm events, customers are looking for solutions that enable them to operate off-grid if the grid goes down; "We are seeing that trend in particular on the northeast coast of the US and in the Caribbean," says Wazni.

So decentralisation is also valued by customers on developed power grids, and batteries have an important role to play here.

Growing opportunity

When asked about the growth of this sector, Wazni says, "As a rental company, we are not essentially in the mainstream markets for renewables and storage. We're not in the business of building large solar plants or large storage plants; we're in the business of offering assets on a temporary basis."

So the rental market for renewables and storage is nascent, but Aggreko has seen its Microgrid and Energy Storage Solutions division grow since its inception four years ago, and the company is investing in its energy storage fleet.

Overall, Aggreko has about 5GW of diesel generators on rent, on average, and approximately 1.2GW of gas generators on rent. Over the past three years, the company has developed about 200MW of 'hybrid' projects.

"When I say 200MW of hybrid projects, what I mean by that is we look at the mix of the megawatts of solar that we deploy, the megawatts of batteries and the megawatts of thermal assets



Inmesol's new Rental Range of gensets are Stage V compliant



Karim Wazni, Head of Aggreko Microgrid and Storage Services



The regeneration process in Caterpillar's gensets is managed automatically



Jan Moravec, Director of Product Management and Engineering at Doosan Portable Power, EMEA

that are operating together to provide a service to customers," says Wazni.

So this gives an idea of the scale of the Microgrid and Energy Storage Solutions division, but it is growing quite quickly, according to Wazni; "We have a significant pipeline that is about 4-5 times bigger than this, that we think we will continue to grow over the next few years."

Aggreko is working on building an energy storage fleet of megawatt-scale – a fleet of the company's own Y.Cube lithium-ion battery systems.

"By the end of the year we will probably have one of the largest battery fleets in the world, of megawatt size," says Wazni.

On the topic of the energy transition, Jan Moravec, Director of Product Management and Engineering at Doosan Portable Power, EMEA, tells *IRN* there is a general movement towards more environmentally friendly solutions. This is particularly the case in countries where there are incentives to use green technology, such as the Nordic countries, the Benelux region and the UK.

However, he says, "The main difference and challenge is the need to substitute conventional systems that use a combustion engine with inherently electrical systems, and this is feasible for certain applications with lower demand but is much less applicable where there is continuous demand for higher power density sources."

Although Doosan Portable Power is exploring

hybrid systems and the option of hydrogen power, Moravec says, "Diesel engines will make huge steps forward and with Stage V provide significant emission pollution reduction."

One of the main difficulties of designing more environmentally friendly generators is the fact that they are more complex systems that often require more space; "It is a challenge for our engineering teams to package them appropriately," says Moravec.

An even bigger challenge, he says, is minimising the impact of the more complex technology on maintenance requirements and trying to keep it simple for users.

As the mobile genset market transitions from EU Stage IIIa to EU Stage V, Caterpillar also highlights the challenge of new product complexity, availability and increased costs.

EU Stage V extends the scope of regulated products to cover outputs greater than 560kW for the first-time. But Caterpillar says gaps in product availability will occur because, while OEMs are phasing in their new EU Stage V products, engine manufacturers have not yet announced certified engines available for products greater than 560kW.

The combination of technical and commercial issues will impact rental operators who must work to offset the significantly higher price of these units. As a result, in the years to come, Caterpillar expects rental rates will need to increase if rental companies are to maintain their return on investment.

Selective catalytic reduction (SCR) will be required for all units above 560kW, and for this Ad-Blue must be used, which is an additional item for power rental companies to consider. Also, Stage V will necessitate the use of diesel particulate filters (DPF).

"The need for this additional hardware, combined with a significantly greater level of complexity in the engine design, requires a fully integrated solution tested for optimal performance and usability," says Gareth Osborne, Caterpillar Product Definition for mobile generator sets.

Particulate matter

He suggests that many rental genset applications have low load factors or use oversized equipment due to limited information about the customer's load profile. This can lead to the accumulation of particulate matter within DPFs due to low exhaust temperatures.

To avoid this, the regeneration process in Caterpillar's gensets is managed automatically with the intelligent measurement of DPF soot levels, so operators do not need to get involved.

Atlas Copco has introduced four new models to its QAS 5 range of mobile diesel generators, which are EU Stage V-compliant: the QAS 5 250, 325, 450 and 660.

The company said operators can take advantage of the QAS 5 range's compact size, quiet operation, enhanced fuel economy and low total cost of ownership, and up to 660kVA power, while reducing their emissions.

This brings the total number of generators in the range up to nine, providing power from 80 to 200kVA on Stage IIIA, and from 250 to 660kVA on Stage V.

Designed with rental in mind, the new generators are built to be portable and have a sturdy frame with integrated forklift slots that can bear four times the weight of the unit without deforming.

New 1MW genset from Himoinsa

Spain-based manufacturer Himoinsa has introduced its new 1MW HRYW-1275 D5/6 dual-frequency genset.

Said to offer competitively low operating and maintenance costs, the new model consumes 184 litres of fuel per hour at 75% load.

Himoinsa became part of the Yanmar group in 2015, and this is the first heavy-duty Himoinsa genset to have a Yanmar engine. The AY40L-ET engine that powers the genset was designed collaboratively by Yanmar and Himoinsa.

Yanmar's engines, turbos and power systems are designed to work at the Best Efficiency Point (BEP) in both variable and fixed load applications; "This allows the best efficiency in fuel consumption, ensuring a lower OPEX than other options on the market," says Miguel Ángel Ruiz, Global Engineering and Development Head at Himoinsa.

The generator also has a variable speed remote cooling system that was jointly designed by the Yanmar and Himoinsa development teams.

The HRYW-1275 D5/6 genset comes in a 20ft container and has a 1,000 litre capacity fuel tank.

Designed for continuous work for long periods, the new unit offers prime rated power (PRP) of 1,278 and 1,303kVA at 50 and 60Hz respectively.

The model also incorporates a parallel control unit, which allows the genset to be connected to other generators. It has its own access door.

Ease of transport and maintenance are also key to the design of the new genset.

The container in which the genset is housed is leak-proof and certified for sea transportation. It has multiple external access points for maintenance tasks, and the unit's wide doors are located next to the main accessories and components inside. Internal LED lighting illuminates the workspace.

A coolant pre-heating system with a built-in pump, a water separator filter or an oil refill kit can also be included as optional extras.

To lengthen maintenance intervals, the unit can be fitted with an automatic crankcase oil filling system.

Remote monitoring is also available as an option.

Himoinsa's new 1MW HRYW-1275 D5/6 dual-frequency genset



These generators are suitable for use in construction, events and utility applications, helping companies improve their fleet utilisation and return on investment.

"The new generators are a welcome addition to the QAS 5 range, and have been developed in >



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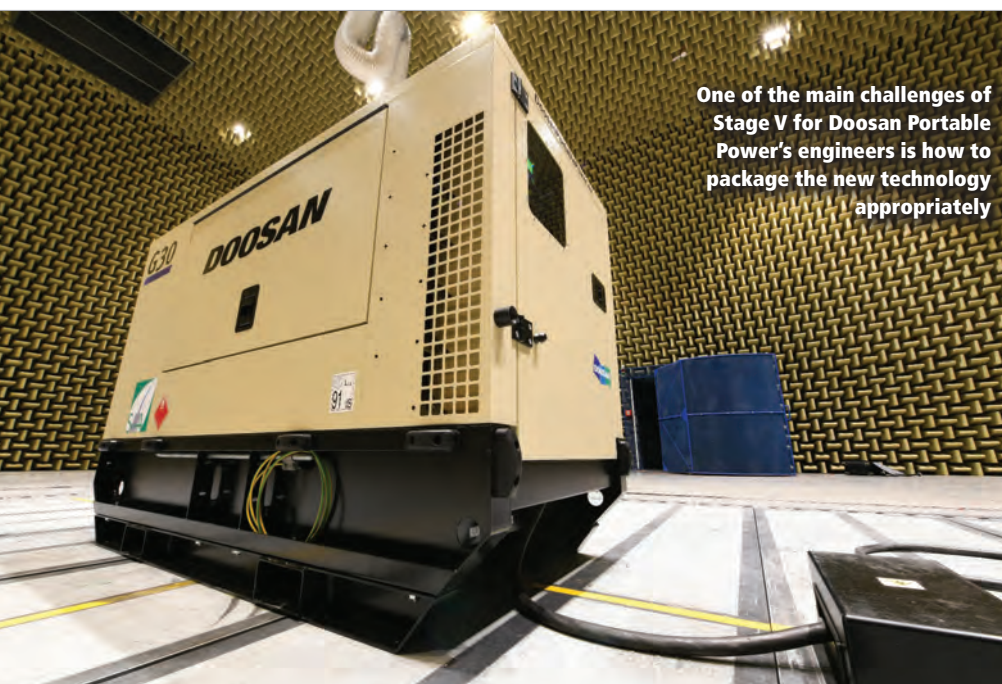
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One of the main challenges of Stage V for Doosan Portable Power's engineers is how to package the new technology appropriately

response to customer demand for larger power capacity, but with a more sustainable operation that meets legislation," said Sergio Salvador, Product Marketing Manager, Small and Medium Power Generators at Atlas Copco.

"The QAS 5 generators are proven as reliable in demanding industrial environments and are enabling customers to improve plant performance," he added.

The new generators are designed to be especially quiet in operation, with noise levels as low as 85dBA. This has been made possible, in part, by the variable speed drive (VSD) air cooling, as well as silencers and an isolated compartment for the power pack.

Paralleling

The new plug-and-play units can also be paralleled with each other to create a mobile or independent power plant. Quick paralleling is made possible by the Power Management System (PMS), which automatically starts and stops the generators in response to changes in demand. The load on each generator remains at a level that optimises fuel consumption.

The 250, 325 and 450 generators feature Scania engines, while the 660 uses a Volvo engine. All four models have Leroy Somer alternators.

As an option, the units are available with Atlas Copco's FleetLink telematics



Trime's new Solar/Battery/Hybrid gensets offer outputs ranging from 6 to 100kVA

system.

In September, Atlas Copco also plans to launch an energy storage system called ZenergiZe. It can be used as a standalone unit or in combination with generators to create a hybrid power solution.

Inmesol has also launched a new Rental Range of gensets with engines that comply with EU Stage V/US

Tier 4 and can be used with renewable fuels.

The models in the range from 12 to 110kVA are powered by Kohler engines, while the 170 to 740kVA models are powered by Volvo engines.

The Volvo engines are certified for use with hydrogenated vegetable oil.

The new gensets are available with controllers from Deep Sea, Comap and Deif, making it easy to combine the gensets with other power solutions

Inmesol has also introduced a new ISO Container genset series, which have two Volvo engine-powered gensets inside and range in power from 550 to 1,480kVA.

Whilst being able to deliver more power, they also have the flexibility to be adapted to power requirements by running either both gensets or just one.

Their standard genset controller enables up to 16 units to be connected together.

In response to growing demand for more sustainable energy, Italian firm Tekno Proget, a division of Trime Group, has begun to focus on creating a range of gensets that deliver low-emission power.

At present, the division offers two choices: Battery/Hybrid and Solar/Battery/Hybrid with power outputs from 6 to 100kVA, single-phase and a three-phase.

The Tekno Proget Solar/Battery/Hybrid sets produce electricity via a sequence of



The QAS 5 250 is one of four new Stage V gensets from Atlas Copco

The benefits of gas

As Cummins introduces its latest gas genset, Ann-Kristin deVerdier, Executive Director of Energy Management Segment at Cummins, argues that natural gas has come of age.

She cites the fact that it can provide an un-interrupted supply of fuel, offers a cleaner alternative to diesel, and a better total-cost-of-ownership, as well as being future-proof.

Cummins' latest gas genset, the 25 litre C25G, joins the HSK78G and QSK60G series, offering a wider range of integrated solutions, from 500kW to 2MW.

The company's newest gensets offer fuel flexibility since they can burn pipeline natural gas, flare gas and biogas, as well as the lowest-BTU fuels.

deVerdier says the typical fuel cost ratio for diesel versus natural gas is 6:1, meaning that gas generators can provide significant cost of ownership savings.

"We've also seen improvements in gas engine technology, pushing maintenance and overhaul limits well beyond the traditional envelope, thereby further lowering Opex costs over time," deVerdier adds.

For instance, the HSK78G has a major overhaul service cycle of 80,000 hours.

In the context of progressively stringent global emissions standards, modern gas-powered gensets are also said to offer a cleaner alternative to diesel gensets.

"Air pollutant outputs are lower," says deVerdier, "including NOx, hydrocarbons, carbon monoxide and particulate matter, allowing the machine to operate in urban environments with tight emissions regulations."

Cummins' new 25 litre C25G



solar and battery power backed-up by a small diesel engine.

They feature a fully adjustable roof-mounted solar panel that charges the unit's lithium iron phosphate batteries. The solar panel is designed to operate in most weather conditions.

Meanwhile, the Battery/Hybrid units have just an engine and a battery.

Matteo Tagliani, Tekno Proget's Sales Director, said, "This is just the start. We already have in place advanced plans to expand this range up to 200kVA. In addition, we are committed to continue exploring new techniques that will help us to build a complete line of low-emission and emission-free generators."

IRN

Lasting change

As rental companies have morphed to meet the challenges of the Covid-19 pandemic, they are finding that some adaptations could be worth holding onto beyond the crisis. Thomas Allen reports

Faced by the challenges of the Covid-19 pandemic, rental companies have had to adapt quickly. It has undoubtedly been a very challenging time, but valuable lessons have been learned and some aspects of companies' operations may even have been changed indefinitely.

Kiloutou, for example, was severely impacted at the peak of the Covid-19 crisis in Europe, having to

close all 427 depots in its home market of France in mid-March. It also had to close a number of its depots in Italy and Spain, though for a shorter period.

The company's CEO, Olivier Colleau, tells *IRN* this was done to ensure the safety of Kiloutou's staff, and it gave the company the chance to take stock and prepare protocols for the safe reopening of the network.

"We started reopening the branches in France in early April, with these new safety protocols," says Colleau. "And we progressively opened all the branches until the third week of May, with new ways of working." These included no-contact pick-up and return, and the double cleaning of all equipment, before delivery and after return."

Also, with customers whose construction sites had been shut down, Kiloutou agreed to pause rental payments and only start charging again once activity was resumed.

"This was important to us and to the customers as well, to behave as partners in this situation because we are in a network with rental companies, customers, and distributors," says Colleau. "We had to, as far as possible, ensure that we were all sharing the same issues and demonstrating solidarity so that we can all get out of this crisis together."

Returning to a new normal

Since May, the situation has changed and the safety protocols have been relaxed to an extent, with customers now able to enter depots – though procedures are not fully back to normal.

In fact, some aspects of business will never return to normal.



Naruhito Konuma, Executive Managing Director, Sales Division, Aktio Corporation



For instance, many employees had to work from home during lockdown, and Colleau says, "This was a real-time, real-life experiment, and I know this will have an impact. At Kiloutou, we're not going to completely shift and have all the office workers working from home, but it's likely that we will have people working from home for one or two days a week."

Kiloutou also saw a significant proportion of customer activity shift online.

"We saw an increase in traffic on the website," says Colleau. "The number of bookings made online increased by 20% in April and May, compared to last year. And we also saw an increase in online enquiries on the website by 40 to 50%. So, for sure, this situation gave a boost to the digital activity of Kiloutou."

Colleau expects there to be a lasting effect from this, since customers and employees have now become accustomed to paperless processes; "Not only Kiloutou but the whole rental industry – and indeed the world – will come out of the crisis with more digital and less paper, which I think is very good news."

One other lasting effect highlighted by Colleau is a social one; "This crisis will show up the difference between companies that take care of their staff and the wider community, and those that don't. And I think after the crisis, it will reinforce the feeling of pride of belonging to companies who did take care."

Over in the US, Sunbelt Rentals also expects some of the operational changes prompted by Covid-19 to be adopted permanently.

For instance, curbside pickup of rented equipment, which was implemented at the onset



SkyShield enables social distancing in the confined space of a basket

Nationwide shields workers

UK-based access rental specialist Nationwide Platforms has introduced SkyShield, designed to protect people working in truck-mounted platforms from the spread of Covid-19.

Developed by the company's research and development division, BlueSky Solutions, SkyShield is a lightweight screen that provides a physical barrier across a basket.

It ensures that the MEWP operator and occupants in the platform basket do not cross-contaminate. The screen is transparent to maximise operator visibility and communication.

This allows workers to carry out tasks at height safely when they are unable to maintain a 2m distance within the confined space of the basket.

Alexis Potter, Director of Specialist Vehicles and Tracked Booms at Nationwide Platforms, said, "This is just one of many safety measures we are offering our customers to help protect them from the risks of Covid-19."

"Ensuring workers maintain two metre distancing when it comes to using MEWPs can be very challenging – especially when the majority of platform baskets measure less than two metres."

"The use of SkyShield when using our truck mounts is the perfect solution to this problem and once installed the customer is free and, importantly, safe to carry out the job at hand."

Curbside pickup of rented equipment is set to become a permanent fixture for Sunbelt Rentals in the US



of the pandemic, is now intended to remain as an offering beyond the Covid-19 crisis.

Said to be a good option for small tools and equipment, and towable items, customers will be able to opt for this contactless method when they make reservations online or by phone.

Curbside service

Katy Lovering, Senior Director of Strategic Initiatives at Sunbelt Rentals, says, "We are heavily focused on our point of sale experience, especially with an eye to 'curbside service', and are working on improved digital tools including e-signature, digital pay, and providing our team members the ability to transact wherever our customers need us to be – whether it's behind our rental counter, out in the rental yard, or on a customer jobsite."

The company has also seen a shift towards online ordering, which has prompted the company to put a renewed focus on its digital channels.

"While renting equipment online may not be the normal course of business for some, especially prior to Covid-19, we've seen record numbers of online orders over the last several months," Lovering says.

"This means that we need to continue to evolve and provide an omni-channel experience to our customers, for today and for the future."

She adds, "Because our customer touchpoints happen along the lifecycle of the transaction, we are also focused on making digital improvements in the areas of logistics and field service. We want to ensure that our customers have transparency regarding actions Sunbelt is taking – like responding to a service call – in real-time."

Other new practices include the introduction of stringent guidelines – as directed by the CDC (Centre for Disease Control and Prevention) – for cleaning, sanitising and handling equipment in order to reduce the risk of contagion.

For customers who enter depots, Sunbelt asks that they adhere to social distancing guidelines, including wearing a face covering. In addition, the company has installed signs requesting that customers do not enter if they have been exposed to the virus.

Regarding its internal operations, Sunbelt has taken special measures to safeguard its employees and keep them informed. This includes the creation of an internal task force that serves as a central hub for communications, procedure and process changes. Also, leadership teams are in regular

Association action

Rental associations across the board have been making a concerted effort to support their members through the pandemic. Here are some examples of the work being done.

ARA

The American Rental Association (ARA) released a Healthy Work Practices Guide for construction equipment rental companies.

Based on expertise from the US Centres for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the World Health Organisation (WHO), it provides members with consistent, practical guidance on measures to minimise exposure to Covid-19 for customers, staff, vendors and guests.

Among other things, the guide offers general information on microbes and viruses, personal protective equipment (PPE), cleaning supplies, equipment needed for social distancing, and how to prepare a facility, vehicles and employees for work.

The guide is part of the ARA's new 'Clean. Safe. Essential' programme designed to help members provide a safe service to customers throughout the pandemic and beyond.

Another aspect of the 'Clean. Safe. Essential' programme was recently launched: an online cleanliness training course. Available through the association's online platform RentalU, the course includes a range of learning modules to help members ensure the safety of their rental operations.



ERA

Aside from launching an information page on its website, which includes updates from rental associations, general construction sector updates and European policy updates, the European Rental Association (ERA) has also been promoting the benefits of rental during the crisis.

Given the uncertainty about future construction activity, the ERA has suggested that rental could provide a solution to contractors who are reluctant to invest in owned equipment. The association has created a video to publicise its Total Cost of Ownership (TCO) Calculator.

The calculator is available on the *IRN* website.



The ERA has been promoting its TCO Calculator

ASEAMAC

Spanish rental association ASEAMAC is preparing a Covid-19 protocol that will outline a common set of criteria for all companies in the sector to minimise the risk of spreading Covid-19 through equipment rental activities.

This will enable rental firms to certify that they have taken a series of measures to minimise the risks of contagion during the delivery, return and maintenance of rental equipment.

The guidance will take into account different types of rental machinery and the protocols set by the Spanish government's Ministry of Health, grouping them according to each type of rental activity.

HRIA

Australian rental association HRIA has also published guidance to help its members ensure their operations are safe.

The COVIDSafe Guide is based on a set of National Covid-19 Safe Work Principles agreed by government bodies across Australia.

The guide is designed to assist those reopening premises following closure as well as those who have remained open throughout the crisis.

The scope of the guide is broad, so users are required to develop or revise the COVIDSafe plans that apply to their particular situation, and to tailor the guidance to comply with any local requirements.

The guidance is being updated as new government information becomes available.

communication, and an online resource centre has been created for employees.

Lovering said, "Throughout this pandemic, it is critical that we keep our doors open and our employees and customers safe."

Guidelines in Japan

Meanwhile, in Japan there was no government-enforced lockdown, but guidelines were issued, according to Naruhito Konuma, Executive Managing Director of the Sales Division at Japan-based Aktio Corporation.

"Based on these guidelines, the company's Novel Coronavirus Response team took the decision to implement measures to prevent infection," he said.

These include the installation of protective screens and the disinfecting of rental equipment upon return.

He also said online meetings have become commonplace, which has reduced time and money spent on travel.

Aktio already had an online order system in place, but it is planning to increase the speed of its electronic processes as a result of the pandemic, according to Konuma.

The company expects construction sites in the country to continue operating, though with restrictions in place, and it has been making efforts to provide information and updates to customers through its website.

IRN

Prevention is better than cure

Carl Bartlett of the Hire Association Europe looks at safety on site, with a focus on rented earthmoving equipment and how rental companies can come together to mitigate risk

Thankfully, most construction projects are completed without serious injury, due to careful health and safety planning in advance of the start of a project, coupled with the ongoing vigilance, cooperation and professionalism of workers during the build. Hazard recognition plays a key role in preventing accidents and some hazards are obvious, like the requirements for people working at height, but other hazards such as the safe operation of rented earthmoving equipment could be less so.

The latest annual figures from the Health & Safety Executive (HSE) reveal that there is at least one accident involving a digger or dumper each week on sites in the UK, with the majority caused by unstable ground or unsafe working practices – an industry challenge that must be met head on by all stakeholders if the frequency of incidents is to be reduced.

Although the UK consistently has one of the lowest rates of work-related fatal injuries across the European Union, HSE statistics also show that 30 people were killed on construction sites between April 2018 and March 2019, and construction continues to account for more workplace deaths than any sector other than farming. These tragic incidents are often swiftly followed by costly court proceedings and hefty fines for the companies found to be culpable.

In terms of legislation, those companies or persons implicated in such a court case could be prosecuted on numerous grounds. Firstly, under the Health and Safety at Work Act because employers have a duty of care to maintain a safe working environment,

and furthermore, depending on the circumstances, in the event of a fatality they could also be found personally liable under the Corporate Manslaughter and Corporate Homicide Act. A whole raft of associated legislation can also be drawn upon in the event of rental equipment-related incidents, such as The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations, or even the Road Traffic Act in relation to earthmoving vehicles.

It also pays to remember that incidents involving rented equipment can have grave consequences across the board. The knock-on effects can be far reaching in terms of the mental health of family and co-workers and the damage done to the reputation of the implicated firm is very difficult to undo.

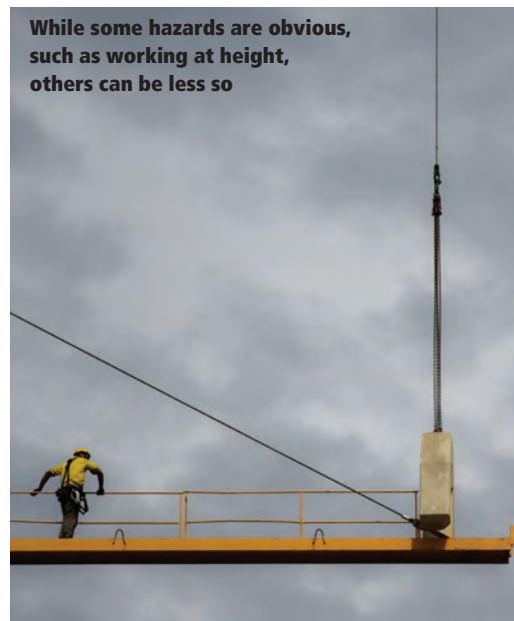
Businesses of all sizes

Many companies are proactively investing in health and safety training and reviewing their policies and processes in order to avoid accidents and even potential criminal proceedings against them. It would be easy to believe that safety improvement activity in the construction supply chain is driven solely by bigger and better financed companies. But in fact, small to medium-sized independent firms account for 62% of the total turnover for the UK construction industry. Clearly, if the level of safe working is to be improved, businesses of all sizes need to address health and safety matters as part of their core business strategy and policy.

Construction sites are inherently dangerous places to work, but prevention is always better than cure, and putting pre-emptive measures in place rather than waiting for an incident to occur can save rental companies time, money and ultimately lives. Key plant manufacturers coming together across the board and agreeing on improvements to the safety standards of earthmoving rental equipment and working practices could lead to a significant reduction in incidents. The HSE statistics clearly demonstrate that we cannot afford to become complacent in the equipment rental industry in preventing injury, ill health and death at work.

A tragic accident involving a dumper truck in 2018 proved the catalyst for the formation of such an initiative between HAE member rental companies. The Digger and Dumper Operational Safety Group brought together by Hire Association Europe (HAE), consists of likeminded rental companies

While some hazards are obvious, such as working at height, others can be less so



and equipment manufacturers. The group's focus involves improving the recording of incidents, reviewing standards, engaging with manufacturers and making the sector aware of potential issues.

By working together to gather and analyse reliable data, companies can agree a framework, including training and education, that will further improve safety standards by ensuring that their operators are fully competent in handling earthmoving machinery and are aware of the risks associated with their actions.

Because of the wide range of contributory factors leading to digger and dumper related incidents, rather than taking a scatter-gun approach, the



About the author

Carl Bartlett is the Executive Director of Certification

Services at Hire Association Europe, responsible for overseeing HAE's SafeHire scheme, a business improvement programme providing safety certification to tool and machine rental companies.

Bartlett can be contacted at carl.bartlett@hae.org.uk, and you can find more information about the SafeHire scheme at www.safehire.org.uk



group aims to analyse the data gathered in a way that leads to action being taken to address the root causes, be they equipment design, poor training or other related factors. For example, one of the group's goals is to determine any trends related to specific types of equipment. This may then help to determine the root causes and relevant factors leading to the incidents. This information can thus be used as a basis on which to develop a meaningful dialogue with the manufacturers of this type of equipment in order to agree a way forward for future products.

Long-term view

Engaging with the broader sphere of health and safety in this structured, in-depth way means that the whole process takes a long-term view and is not simply based on maintaining the status quo or merely making retrospective improvements to existing machinery.

Similarly, there may be risk factors that involve specific staff or customer issues, for example, a rental company may be adhering to exemplary health and safety standards, but perhaps the customer renting earthmoving equipment may have refused to accept the familiarisation briefing on offer. Again, if such factors can be systematically recorded and analysed by rental companies working together to collate information, industry standards can be agreed upon to try and eliminate as many of these risks as possible.

Despite initiatives such as these, getting tool and machine rental companies on board with more robust safety measures can still be a challenge.



Agreed standards can be put in place, but ensuring staff compliance presents its own set of issues. Some may view making such changes as an additional strain on resources and may feel that they lack the manpower, time or budget to implement further training or maintain compliance checks. However, health and safety compliance extends to far more than just the work done on-site. Ensuring adequate staff training is vital, and the way in which health and safety is communicated as a whole needs to be conveyed in a manner that resonates with staff, encouraging them to remain engaged and boosting a positive company morale.

As a means of incentivising positive change and overcoming these barriers, HAE researched and created the SafeHire Certification Scheme which

The SafeHire Certification Scheme, created by the HAE, has been formalised into a private standard by the British Standards Institute

Personal protective equipment (PPE) plays an important role in keeping works safe

was formalised into a private standard by the British Standards Institute. The HAE scheme is a mandatory requirement to maintain membership and HAE is now working to raise awareness of the SafeHire scheme at local and national governmental levels.

In order for rental firms to achieve certification, participation in the SafeHire scheme requires that businesses are inspected annually and everything, from paperwork, day-to-day operations and maintenance, to staff training and environment, is checked for continued compliance with the scheme's rigorous standards.

Formal certification

Having formal certification in place, such as SafeHire enables customers to approach tool and machine rental companies with confidence, as it proves a firm's competence in upholding high standards in health, safety, environment and quality of equipment as well as a well-trained workforce to support customers as fully as possible. Furthermore, in the unfortunate event of an incident escalating to litigation, the benefits of being part of a nationally accredited health and safety scheme cannot be underestimated. Evidence demonstrating health and safety compliance can be easily drawn upon if needed and there is also the increased credibility that formal accreditation adds to a rental company's reputation and profile. Being part of a wider scheme or professional body may also provide access to an independent arbitrator should that be necessary.

Countering any concerns about the burden on resources, schemes such as the Digger and Dumper Operational Safety Group and SafeHire certification demonstrate that accurate, vigorously researched and credible options are available to the tool and machine rental sector that not only mitigate the risk of future incidents, but also bolster customer confidence and ultimately help the bottom line.

IRN

Health & Safety Executive figures show that there is at least one accident involving a digger or dumper each week on sites in the UK



Moving earth, removing risk

As the market for compact loaders morphs and demand shifts from one type of equipment to another, the need for ever-improving safety remains constant.

Thomas Allen **reports**

The compact loader market has become more fragmented in recent times, according to Jaroslav Fiser, product line director for Doosan Bobcat's loader range in the EMEA region, but the central importance of health and safety remains unchanged.

In addition to skid steer loaders and tracked loaders, "there are now a number of other concepts in the market such as small wheel loaders. Each concept has its advantages," Fiser says.

The company has seen an increase in demand for compact tracked loaders (CTLs), which Fiser attributes to their stability, load capacity and versatility; "Rental companies also appreciate the attachment versatility of CTLs."

He expects the European market to follow North America, where the compact loader market is dominated by tracked loaders.

Health and safety is a top priority for Bobcat; "We follow the key requirements regarding 'accidentology' for equipment manufacturers set out by the European Rental Association," says Fiser.

The manufacturer is constantly working to improve operator visibility, and customers can now choose to add a rear-view camera, linked to the operator's display panel.

Bobcat recently launched new Stage V compliant versions of its M-Series T450 (pictured) and T590 compact tracked loaders



Jaroslav Fiser, product line director for Doosan Bobcat's loader range in the EMEA region

Fiser also highlights the safety of attachments; "When equipped with the Bobcat Attachment Control Kit, which is standard on our high-flow models, our loaders can recognise the type of the attachment and adjust all settings automatically without the need for the operator's involvement. In addition, if all appropriate conditions are not met, the machine ensures safety by not allowing the operator to use the attachment."

On the topic of alternative power sources, Fiser says demand will grow in future, in line with the introduction of new environmental restrictions. Bobcat is currently testing concept electric loaders.

"Rental is a good provider of alternative power solutions for end users due to the higher pricing on these machines," says Fiser, "and there is a market for machines like this, that customers need only occasionally."

Bobcat recently launched new Stage V compliant versions of its M-Series T450 and T590 compact tracked loaders.

The T450 weighs just under 3 tonnes and has radial lift, whereas the T590 weighs just over 3.6 tonnes and has vertical lift.

Safety was important to the design of Liebherr's new L 509 Tele, which is the

company's first telescopic wheeled loader. It is available globally.

Liebherr has equipped the Stage V and Tier 4 Final compliant L 509 Tele with an overload warning system as standard.

This consists of a load torque limit and a load torque indicator on the display to keep the operator constantly informed about the machine's load and its stability.

Remaining stable

Before the stability limit is reached, the overload warning system freezes the hydraulics and the telescopic lift arm can then only be used to improve the stability of the machine.

As an additional aid, the machine operator receives an acoustic signal and a visual warning on the display if the maximum load is exceeded.

The L 509 Tele also has a reduced articulation angle of 30° due to the stereo steering. As a result, the centre of gravity remains in the centre of the machine when transporting large loads, which improves its stability.

The damped articulated pendulum joint, as with Liebherr's regular L 509 Stereoloader, compensates for uneven ground and ensures that the loader remains stable when travelling over uneven terrain.

Case's new B-Series compact tracked loaders boast 360° visibility



The 920 is one of three new compact wheeled loaders from Cat



Meanwhile, the operator's cab has a sunroof window to enhance visibility of materials being handled.

The 7 tonne L 509 Tele can reach a top speed of 38km/h and its telescopic arm can lift to a height of 4.8m.

Enhanced visibility is a key feature on Case Construction Equipment's (CE) recently launched B-Series CTLs and skid steers, which comprise five CTL and nine skid steer models.

These units boast 360° visibility, enhanced by a new reversing camera and a cab-wide rear-view mirror that is standard across the range.

The cab's low entry threshold and large front window provide good visibility to the front of the machine and down to the attachments, while large side windows and a curved rear window allow for good sightlines to the sides and rear of the machine.

Rear visibility is further aided by low sloping rear hoods and a low-profile



Boels adds 50 Tobroco skid steers

Boels Rental is in the process of adding 50 Tobroco Giant SK252D skid steer loaders to its fleet, in response to growing demand for mini skid steer loaders.

The skid steers are initially being distributed across the Benelux region and Germany since this is where Boels is seeing the greatest demand for these machines.

The first units were handed over at the beginning of May, and the remainder will be delivered in phases throughout 2020.

Sander Mulders, Tactical Buyer at Boels Rental, said, "The machines are incredibly versatile, so the growing demand makes sense. As a rental company we want to meet our customers' needs as much as possible and have therefore decided to expand our fleet with this mini skid steer."

He added, "Total cost of ownership is very important to us. The Giant SK252D is a well-developed machine. It requires little maintenance and what needs to be maintained is easy to do."

He also highlighted the fact that the machine is compact and manoeuvrable, and offers the operator good visibility for safe operation.

The SK252D has an operating weight of 810kg and is equipped with an 18.6kW diesel engine from Kubota. It has a tipping load of 434kg.



Sander Mulders, Tactical Buyer at Boels Rental, (left) receives the keys from Luuk van Kessel, Account Manager at Tobroco Giant (right)

H-Link on vertical-lift models.

The new machines feature a redesigned operator interface, including new left- and right-hand posts, combined with simple ignition, push-button start, and intuitive switches for core machine functions.

New 8" LCD multi-function display with a reversing camera comes with all electro-hydraulic models and serves as the command centre for the machine.

The reversing camera, which is operational in both forward and reverse, is visible in a split screen display with machine data.

Important to safe operation is operator comfort. For this reason, Case has provided a spacious cab, and the joysticks on electro-hydraulic models have been designed with a narrower, more comfortable grip, closer switch layout and a smaller head size for easier operation.

Mechanically controlled versions of the SR210B and larger models also feature servo-assisted joysticks for easier operation and reduced operator fatigue.

Japanese manufacturer Kubota recently announced it is putting two new wheeled loader models into production, the 4.5 tonne R070 and the 5 tonne R090.

While built for comfort, the machines, according to Kubota, have also been built for safe and simple operation, even by operators with no loader experience.

Complete redesign

Both models are the result of complete redesigns inside and out, and feature fully enclosed glass cabs for improved visibility, as well as a more ergonomic control layout than former models.

On the left side of the cab a full glass door has been installed and there is a wide opening window to the right of the operator, making for better visibility. The rear window was also said to offer an unobstructed view when reversing.

A new Delta lift arm design has been added to both new models, allowing the operator to easily see the hydraulic quick-coupler pins and the hydraulic piping has been rerouted to improve visibility of the toe during pallet fork operations. ➤

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Liebherr's new L 509 Tele wheeled loader

Changing demand

The total global market for the various types of construction loader used around the world was some 120,000 units last year, according to specialist consultant Off-Highway Research. This was split between skid-steer loaders, compact tracked loaders and small wheeled loaders from about 30-80hp.

In addition to these, there is a vast world of smaller agricultural machines and small loaders for building and light construction, often with either a stand-up or walk-behind operating position.

Whereas true construction machines are traditionally diesel powered (although all-electric options are becoming available), smaller machines may also be gasoline or battery powered.

Compact tracked loaders have emerged as the machine of choice in North America over the last decade and now comfortably out-sell the traditional wheeled variant, the skid-steer loader. Compact tracked loaders offer comparable travel speeds to skid-steer loaders, but have the advantage that their tracks give them lower bearing pressures so they can work in soft conditions and are less likely to damage the ground.

In Europe, the preference tends to be more for compact wheeled loaders, particularly in Germany, although skid steer loaders are relatively popular in Southern Europe, and Italy is also beginning to adopt the compact tracked loader.

Japan meanwhile is purely a wheeled loader market. While there are one or two skid-steer loader makers in Japan, the products are almost entirely built for export and the concept has never been popularised in the country.



Both machines are said to have longer maintenance intervals than their predecessors.

The smaller R070 has a lifting capacity of 1,880kg and the larger R090 can lift 2,160kg. Both have a maximum arm height reach of 3,230mm.

Caterpillar recently added three new models to its M Series compact wheeled loader range: the 910, 914, and 920 – the latter replacing the 918M.

All the new models are available in a high-lift configuration, and the 914 and 920 are available in an aggregate-handling configuration.

Among the design changes is a new engine for all three models; the Cat C3.6 replaces the C4.4, and with the new engine, all models get a power boost.

The new engine, specifically designed for Cat products, has the same torque performance as

the previous Cat 4.4, and also provides a modest increase in rated gross power, increasing from 74 to 82kW for the 910 and 914, and from 86 to 90kW for the 920.

Caterpillar estimates up to 5% gains in fuel efficiency with the new engine, and the C3.6 meets EU Stage V and US EPA Tier 4 Final emissions standards. Also, fuel tank capacity is increased by 11 litres for the new loaders, allowing extended work cycles.

Kramer-Werke has introduced two new Stage V-ready compact wheeled loaders, the 5035 and 5040, for tight working conditions.

They have been fitted with a new cab that has a wider entry with additional steps, making for more comfortable and safer entry and exit.



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Always room for improvement

John Deere is constantly looking to improve the safety of its equipment, according to Grant Van Tine, Solutions Marketing Manager at John Deere. He tells *IRN* that numerous features have been integrated into John Deere's skid steer loaders, compact tracked loaders and compact wheeled loaders to enhance operator comfort and safety.

"For example, John Deere 244L, 324L, and 344L compact wheel loaders feature a larger cab than previous models with improved visibility and updated hydraulic controls that integrate more functions into the joystick control."

He adds, "One trend in particular to note is the growing demand for rear cameras. These have been available on larger construction equipment for years, and are now becoming more common on compact machines in certain parts of the world."

Speaking about the global market for compact construction equipment, Van Tine says it is continuing to grow, with strong demand for skid steer loaders, compact tracked loaders and compact wheeled loaders.

"Already widely popular in North America, compact track loaders (CTLs) continue to see additional demand and new requests from customers, such as the integration of technology like grade control," he says.

John Deere recently announced 333G SmartGrade, which is a grade control system that makes grading tasks more efficient by automating them.

While compact tracked loaders are common in North America, there is significantly less demand in other parts of the world, although it is growing; "Skid steer loaders are more common than CTLs in South America, Europe, Asia, and Oceania," Van Tine says, "but skid steers are still predominantly a North American machine. Compact wheel loaders are the preferred machine in Europe and some other markets."

Grant Van Tine, Solutions Marketing Manager at John Deere



John Deere's skid steer compact tracked loaders are enhanced for greater operator comfort and safety

A tilt-adjusting steering column is available as an optional extra, again to make access easier and safer, but also to make the driving experience more comfortable for the operator.

Large glass areas in combination with newly designed viewing channels help to ensure optimal visibility of the attachment and maximise all-round visibility.

Each model measures 1.26m in width, and they both have low transport weights, making it possible to transport them on a car trailer.

Easy change-over

The two loaders also come with a quick coupler system as standard, to make it quick and easy to change attachments. And the Z-kinematics visual position display for attachments is particularly helpful for inexperienced operators, which is an important concern for rental companies.

The 5035, with an operating weight of 1,920kg, is powered by an 18.5kW Yanmar engine and offers a bucket tipping load of 1,140kg.

Meanwhile, the 5040 model, weighing 2,070kg,

Tobroco-Giant's new G2700 range includes the G2700 HD+

has a 28.5kW Yanmar engine and a bucket tipping load of 1,400kg. Its exhaust aftertreatment uses a DOC (diesel oxidation catalyst) and DPF (diesel particulate filter).

Earlier this year, Tobroco-Giant revealed its new G2700 range of wheeled loaders, which comprises the G2700 HD, G2700 X-TRA HD, G2700 HD+ and



The 5040 is one of two new Stage-V compact loaders from Kramer-Werke

the G2700 X-TRA HD+ models.

They all feature a Stage V-compliant three-cylinder Kubota engine and are powered by a hydrostatic all-wheel drive with automotive steering.

The wheeled loaders have maximum lifting capacities of between 1,875kg and 2,350kg, and feature lifting heights of between 2.4 and 2.9m.

The models, which come with a ROPS/FOPS safety roof, double-acting hydraulic function on the lift arm and a suspension seat as standard, are also available with optional extras. These include road approval, a larger cab and the X-TRA variant lifting arm with a lower front frame, which was designed for heavy applications in the construction and earthmoving industries.

With the addition of its new WL110 and updated WL34 wheeled loaders, Wacker Neuson now offers 14 wheeled loader models, with operating weights from 2.2 to 12.1 tonnes.

The new WL110 is designed for heavy material handling and is powered by a 116kW engine. It offers a tipping load of 7 tonnes and bucket capacity of 1.8m³.

The loader also has an articulated joint and an oscillating axle in the rear, meaning that it is not only manoeuvrable and compact, but also offers good traction.

To enhance safety and efficiency, the WL110 has a large cabin to give a good view of the attachment and its surroundings. And a 7" digital display gives the most important machine information at a glance.

Meanwhile, the updated WL34 has an increased tipping load of up to 2.7 tonnes while maintaining



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JCB has updated its 407 and 409 (pictured) wheeled loaders to meet Stage V standards

colour screen with rear-view camera. Also as standard, it has proportional auxiliary switches that give operators precise control of the machine's movements.

Updates have also been made to JCB's 407 and 409 wheeled loaders so that they meet the latest Stage V emissions standards. Both loaders will retain the JCB Diesel by Kohler engine from the previous generation, however the installation will require a DPF to meet the new emission level.

While power outputs remain unchanged, JCB is offering an automatic engine shut-down feature, pre-set by the factory, to improve engine efficiency. This can be changed by the customer.

The 407 also has a new 'whisper-quiet' Rexroth hydraulic pump, to reduce overall noise. In addition, an Eco Drive Mode has been incorporated, delivering up to a 16% fuel saving in high-speed travel, according to JCB.

JCB is to introduce a second engine option for the 403 loader. While the current 26kW model will remain in production, the company will also offer a 19kW Smart Power model, for even greater fuel



the same compact dimensions – it offers a clearance height of less than 2.2m.

Meanwhile, Japanese manufacturer Takeuchi has launched a redesigned loader, the TL8R-2.

With an operating weight of 4,165kg, the tracked loader offers a tipping load of 2,740kg due to its radial lift design.

The TL8R-2 is equipped with a 54.6kW turbocharged engine that complies with EU Stage V/EPA Final Tier 4 emissions regulations. The loader's Diesel Oxidation Catalyst (DOC) and Diesel Particulate Filter (DPF) help to minimise emissions.

An optional creep mode function is available on the new model. This allows operators to match

the forward speed of the loader to a particular attachment without having to constantly monitor the speedometer. This was said to be suitable for attachments that require a consistent travel speed, such as cold planers and trenchers.

The operator's control panel features a 5.7"

economy.

JCB will also make a folding ROPS frame available as an option on the 403 for the first time. Designed to work in low height applications, the folding frame reduces the overall height of the machine from 2,235mm to 1,845mm.

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The Covid-19 pandemic has accelerated the adoption of digital processes as rental companies look for ways to continue operating with a minimum of contact. Thomas Allen reports on how this has given a boost to rental software providers

With the Covid-19 crisis forcing rental companies to seek contactless alternatives to conducting their operations, the benefits of going digital have become all the more apparent. And rental management software providers have been seizing this as an opportunity.

For instance, the pandemic has prompted US-based rental software company Point of Rental to think differently about the products it offers to customers.

"Instead of thinking about our ERP [enterprise resource planning] products as being the product we

sell," says Wayne Harris, the company's CEO, "we realise we have lots of technologies built into our products that can be sold by themselves."

Harris became CEO of the company in 2011, and it has since grown to serve customers in 80 countries, employ more than 200 people, and offer five products.

"We have a lot of knowledge about the rental industry and we get a lot of feedback from our customers," Harris says. "So I think we're going to be separating out more products as stand-alone products that can help a customer accomplish their job, instead of going to customers and saying we'll need to replace their entire ERP system just because they want electronic signatures, for instance."

In order to help the rental industry continue operating while observing social distancing rules, at the peak of the pandemic Point of Rental decided to separate out its eSign electronic signature programme, which had been embedded in its ERP software for a number of years, and offer it for free for 90 days.

"We have hundreds of customers across the world that have signed up for it – not using our ERP products but using e-Sign as a stand-alone," says Harris.

However, it turned out that customers were also faced with the problem of taking payment without social contact. So Point of Rental went on to do the same thing with its electronic payment programme; "You can take an electronic payment via e-mail, and we also added the ability to text payments. Totally touchless, totally paperless."

He adds, "Those are the kinds of things that make the difference between being able to operate your business during this time and not being able to."

Although the rental industry has generally been slow to incorporate digital technologies into business processes, Harris suggests the pandemic has had the effect of accelerating adoption.

Seizing the



ZTR's factory programme has grown by 50% over the past year, increasing the prevalence of its telematics systems

"We're seeing a number of companies go to a paperless system because they have to," he says. "Even though there have been ways that they've been able to accomplish that for years, they just hadn't embraced that, but now they are."

In this sense, the pandemic has been good for business for Point of Rental.

Remote working

Harris also expects remote working to become a more permanent feature of rental operations. In connection with this, the company has prioritised the development of its POR One App, which Harris described as "the foundation of a mobile product that can be used by anyone."

POR One will have various functions built into it, for instance messaging; "Someone at the depot counter will be able to send a message directly to a driver through the POR One App and the driver can then message back. If there's an issue in the field, the driver can take a photo of whatever's broken and send it directly to a mechanic and then the mechanic can answer directly," says Harris.

It is intended to simplify communications and better enable remote working.

Point of Rental recently announced a long-term partnership with telematics company Trackunit to build software together.

The intention is to reduce equipment downtime, allow rental companies to enhance customer service, and give customers greater visibility of their rentals.

Point of Rental's Expert and Elite products will share data with the Trackunit Manager system and Trackunit Go application. This connection will make them the second and third Point of Rental products, following the UK-based Syrinx product, to integrate



Listen to the full podcast interview with Wayne Harris, CEO of Point of Rental, on KHL.com



CBL recently adopted MCS Transport Mobile for equipment delivery and collection

opportunity



with Trackunit.

Point of Rental sees statuses of on- and off-rent equipment, when equipment is delivered, when it is called off rent, and when it is ready for delivery. That will pair with Trackunit's ability to see that information in real time and provide it to rental customers online via a portal.

Billing information will also be integrated to improve invoicing accuracy and reduce manual entries.

In early May, 2020, the Ahern Family of Companies opted for Trackunit as its telematics provider.

The group of companies includes US-based rental firm Ahern Rentals, the OEMs Snorkel and Xtreme Manufacturing, and a global distribution network that extends across the US, Canada, Argentina, Chile, Australia, Japan, Germany, Ireland and Spain.

Don Ahern, CEO of Ahern Companies, says, "Our requirements are expansive since we encompass rental, manufacturing and distribution, and we resolved that Trackunit was the best-suited to the needs of our customers."

Roll-out in the rental fleet has begun with immediate effect and is expected to be completed within the next three years.

New Xtreme and Snorkel lifts will be assembled with a Trackunit compatible connection for customers who wish to install the telematics.

This will become available in late 2020 and rolled out across the global manufacturing footprint by model type with OEM branded dashboards.

The latest product launched by rental management software provider inspHire is a cloud-based application called OnRent.

Designed to be particularly simple to set up and offered with a flexible monthly subscription plan, OnRent is initially aimed at start-ups or companies with a relatively simple set of rental requirements.

Martin Bestwick, Sales Director at inspHire, says, "We have a suite of solutions that cater for all types

of rental organisation, and over time OnRent will develop to suit the needs of the complex rental organisation."

The pay-as-you-go software has a responsive design and integrates with Sage Business Cloud.

OnRent's features range from flexible charging for all products and services, to the built-in collection of documents and reports.

It also has built-in CRM (customer relationship management), rental order processing, and services, repairs and lost items can be managed through it.

UK-based equipment rental company CBL recently adopted the Transport Mobile solution from MCS Rental Software. It enhances the firm's delivery and collection processes by ensuring equipment is in good condition and any damage is recorded accurately and efficiently.

Photographic evidence

MCS Transport Mobile makes it possible to record photographic evidence at point of delivery and collection. CBL is now able to record information and store relevant images in the right place in its rental system.

David Butler, CBL's Finance Manager, says, "Any evidence over the condition of machines and fuel levels are now easily collected and stored digitally. This was important to us as it prevented disputes over any issues with returned equipment by providing a more honest platform to have sensible discussions with customers over any issues associated with returned assets."

The new system has also significantly reduced the amount of paperwork required.

As rental companies consider ways to reduce touch on machines, telematics provider ZTR has been partnering with customers to help them make business process changes and adopt digital transformation initiatives that enable them to leverage data from a distance, control equipment remotely and implement the necessary safety protocols.

ZTR's factory programme has grown by 50% over the past year, increasing the prevalence of OEM

Trackunit shifts focus of Downtime Index

Trackunit said its Downtime Index has served its purpose as an aid to the industry during the pandemic crisis and it will now focus on a new "co-creation phase with cross-industry partners" to define how the Index can be developed in the future.

The index was launched in early May and showed machine utilisation based on data from 150,000 machines in Europe and North America. KHL Group had been publishing the results as media partner.

Historical Index data will no longer be publicly available, although the graphs and articles that appeared on KHL.com and on Trackunit's website will be kept on the sites.

Mathias Frost, Director of Software Products at Trackunit, writing on the company's blog, said, "The Downtime Index was developed rapidly by our data science team as a sprint response to the pandemic and what we perceived to be an urgent need for relevant and time-critical openly available data... it has been a source of hard facts in a situation where all people at every station of construction were in need of clarity."

Frost added that the project had shown how data can be a "positive disruptor" but that the pilot study had run its course; "The story doesn't end there. We have reached a juncture where we and our collaborators will transfer what we have learned from the initial launch of the Downtime Index into the next stage of development."

equipment that is pre-fitted with ZTR telematics.

So rental companies are using a range of ZTR solutions across multiple machine types, and ZTR is coordinating and managing the engineering and integration details related to each unique machine application. One recent example is a factory installation that ZTR has been working on with Sunbelt Rentals in the US.

Also, ZTR expanded its portfolio earlier this year with five new products: a new Data Brokerage service; the ZTR M7 advanced telematics solution; T-series tags; Access Management; and the new ONE i3 interactive dashboard.

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The Ahern Family of Companies has opted for Trackunit as its telematics provider



The new RTEX breakers from Atlas Copco are suitable for splitting concrete

Developments in battery technology are filtering through to power tools. This is illustrated by Makita's latest range of cordless XGT 40V Max tools, which have lithium-ion batteries.

Standing alongside the company's existing LXT range, the new line-up offers increased output.

Kevin Brannigan, Marketing Manager at Makita,

Husqvarna weathers peak of pandemic

Swedish manufacturer Husqvarna has reported a solid second quarter of 2020, despite the impact of Covid-19.

The company's President and CEO Henric Andersson said, "We have delivered a very good quarter. After a challenging start, given the Covid-19 situation, demand accelerated quickly as markets gradually reopened and consumers showed a high interest in lawn and garden products."

He added, "We have experienced an extreme volatility during the quarter, from quickly deteriorating demand to a surge in demand. We have also taken decisive steps to mitigate the financial impact by applying temporary cost avoidance measures which were instrumental to deliver the second quarter result."

"We will now gradually increase our investments in some of the earlier paused strategic initiatives to support future profitable growth."

When adjusted for the exit of Husqvarna's Consumer Brands business and changes in exchange rates, net sales increased by 3% to SEK13.5 billion (€1.3 billion).

Andersson said, "The market situation for the Construction Division strengthened during the latter part of the quarter, but in total sales declined by 18%."

The company's operating income in the second quarter came to SEK2.2 billion (€211 million.)

Instrumental

Since power tools are in constant use on construction sites, it is important that they are comfortable and efficient to use. Thomas Allen reports on some of the latest developments

said, "With XGT, you can experience the same high power associated with corded and petrol machines, but with the increased flexibility of cordless – making XGT the ideal solution for high demand, industrial applications."

"The complete solution of our existing LXT 18V system and the new XGT 40V platform offers even more battery-powered solutions for a truly cordless job site."

When a higher voltage battery is used, there is a trade-off between power and run-time. So in this instance, Makita's research and development team has kept the voltage the same but improved the design of the tools, incorporating technologies that optimise their performance.

The tools have also been engineered with durable design features to minimise damage and withstand tough environments.

They have a heavy-duty outer casting and cell holder, and the shock-absorbent housing protects the battery if the tool is dropped.

Each battery is also IPX4 rated, which means that it is splash and shower proof, and water ingress is limited. The design also prevents damage from dust.

To optimise battery performance and charge times, the XGT range features Makita's smart system technology. This in-built programme allows digital communication between the battery and the charger, as well as the battery and the tool, to provide protection against issues such as over discharge and overheating.

So, for example, if the battery has overheated, the charger will cool it down before charging begins, to speed up the charging process.

Fast charging

To charge the batteries, Makita has launched the DC40RA 40V Max fast charger.

The XGT range includes combi drills, grinders, rotary hammers, impact drivers, circular saws and reciprocating saws.

Atlas Copco has added two new models to its RTEX pneumatic

The Multi-Pro XA post driver from Rhino Tools



breaker range.

These are the RTEX 15, weighing 17kg and a variant of RTEX 25 that enables working with a shorter chisel.

The manufacturer says the RTEX 15 is an advanced breaker that covers the entire functionality of TEX 150PE and TEX 190PE 15 to 25kg light pneumatic breakers.

The air consumption of RTEX 15 is reduced from 26 litres per second to 15.4 litres per second and has a weight reduction of 25% compared to the heaviest in class.

RTEX 25 is a powerful breaker that can replace functionality of medium breakers between 25 to 37kg. Air consumption in RTEX 25 is halved to 18 litres per second and weight is reduced by up to 30%. More variants are planned.

RTEX breakers are used to demolish and fragment concrete and are employed on civil construction sites by civil contractors and equipment rental companies.

The Multi-Pro XA post driver from US-based

Makita's new XGT 40V Max range of battery-powered tools



Norton's new 3mm lightweight grinding discs

manufacturer Rhino Tools offers a safer way to drive posts into the ground, and it is now available in Europe.

The unit contains a hammer and anvil system that strikes the post at approximately 1,750 beats per minute.

The compact, portable tool is powered by a 1.3hp Honda GX35 4-stroke petrol engine and is suitable for a range of posts, making it a versatile piece of equipment.

Cleaner engine

Being powered by a 4-stroke rather than 2-stroke engine makes it cleaner, and its vibration-reducing handles help to make it more comfortable to use.

EuroGate International recently partnered with Rhino Tool to acquire the necessary CE-approval for the post driver and serve as its distributor in Europe.

Pieter Jansen, Director of EuroGate, said, "We have worked with Rhino Tool Company to develop custom adapters to fit the post dimensions specific to the European market. The Multi-Pro XA has adapters that can be changed to install all kinds of metal and wood posts."

Extension handles can be added to the Multi-Pro XA to enable the user to drive posts up to 3m without needing to climb a ladder.

US-based Norton has introduced a range of



light comfort grinding (LCG) discs for multiple applications.

Said to be faster, smoother and more precise than their 7mm counterparts, these 3mm lightweight discs offer easier access to tight spaces and better visibility when in use.

The new grinding discs remove light welds, burrs and excess material quickly and effectively, according to Norton, while the user experience is made more comfortable by the reduced vibration.

Due to their enhanced performance, less pressure needs to be applied during use, meaning operator fatigue is minimised and product lifespan is increased.

When used on a cordless angle grinder, Quantum3 LCG discs can remove up to 40% more material than traditional 7mm aluminium oxide grinding discs during one battery charge, says Norton. **IRN**

Keeping tools safe

Since tools are easily portable, they are particularly vulnerable to theft. According to UK-based Metal and Modular, the cost of tool theft in the UK is estimated at almost £95 million each year.

For this reason, the company offers tool vaults for keeping tools safe on site, when not in use.

The tool vaults come in three sizes – small, medium and large – and are made of heavy-duty steel.

The small model is available with two keyed-alike sunken brass padlocks or two stainless steel 6-pin ultra-secure cylinder locks, while the medium and large versions feature a five-lever deadlock.

They are all fitted with fixed and castor wheels, a foot brake and forklift slots for easy manoeuvring.

The lids have gas springs to ensure they don't drop down when the unit is open, avoiding the risk of fingers getting trapped.

The units also have an opening for cables so that tools and mobile phones can be charged securely while the vault is locked.

The lids have gas springs to keep them from dropping



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Rental holds the key

Rental is to play a valuable role in Sany Europe's efforts to drive acceptance of its equipment in the European market. Ronald Ziegler, Sales Director of Sany Europe's Construction Machinery division, tells Thomas Allen about the opening of its first rental depot

Rental could be the key to unlocking Sany's potential in Europe.

The company is described as an "unknown sleeping giant in Europe" by Ronald Ziegler, Sales Director Construction Machinery at Sany Europe, and in order to push the brand on the continent Sany Europe is launching a rental business, as well as supporting dealers in the development of their own rental operations.

"It will help to push business, it will help to make the brand better known in the market, because rental machines are a nice advertisement, of course," Ziegler says. "It helps to improve market share and it helps to get the acceptance of customers."

After 30 years in the construction equipment industry, having gained experience at ONK Mining and Construction, Terex and CNH Industrial, Ziegler joined Sany Europe in 2017. He was enrolled to help "build up something completely new" as Sany changed its approach to the European market.

Sany originally entered Europe in 2009 and invested more than €100 million in the creation of a headquarters at Bedburg, near Cologne in Germany. At the time, the focus was on concrete pumps.

"They bought land, built up production halls, a hotel, administration buildings, everything," says Ziegler.

In 2016, the company started to explore the idea of selling construction equipment to the European market. This was initially driven by parent company Sany Heavy Industries' Chinese management, but it was soon figured that "Europe belongs to the Europeans", according to Ziegler.

So, Sany Europe was given greater independence and the management team was restructured, with Martin Knoetgen joining as the new CEO. He is also the CEO of Putzmeister nowadays – a company acquired by Sany in 2012.

Over the past four years, Sany Europe's construction product portfolio has grown significantly; "At Bauma 2016, Sany had six models of construction machines, and they were only crawler excavators from 6 to 26 tonnes. At Bauma 2019, we had 12 models of crawler excavator, we introduced a wheeled excavator and we introduced the first wheeled loader," says Ziegler.

He adds, "This year we will have 17 crawler excavator models, one wheeled excavator, two large wheeled loaders and hopefully four smaller wheeled loaders."

The number of units sold is relatively small though, even if the figure has been doubling annually over the past three years.

"When I started in 2017, we were at 250 units,"



Ronald Ziegler, Sales Director Construction Machinery at Sany Europe

says Ziegler. "We doubled and we doubled, and now we are at about 1,000. And our target was to double again in 2020 – though, at the moment, we are a little bit reluctant on that one because of coronavirus."

Driving acceptance

For this reason, Sany is keen to drive acceptance of the brand in Europe and this is where rental comes in, as a lower-risk option than buying when customers want to try out the equipment.

It was at Bauma 2019 that the idea to start a rental business was first conceived.

"Then we started to look at the whole business and did some rough calculations and pre-studies," Ziegler says. "At the end of March, 2020, we

employed the first people, to set up the business."

This is a testament to the speed with which Sany can move, owing to the fact that it is a privately owned company.

While Ziegler is responsible for the rental business, he stresses the importance of keeping it independent of Sany Europe's sales business; "It is important, if you want to run a successful rental company, it needs to be independent and you don't want to mix it up with sales, because otherwise sales people will always pull out machines from the rental organisation or suggest that machines for sale can be rented."

Despite the current situation with Covid-19, the company is forging ahead with its plans and the first of Sany Europe's rental depots is due to be opened at the Bedburg headquarters in July of this year.

"That's a nice thing with the Chinese people because they are thinking long-term," says Ziegler. "We are even employing people right now – we are looking for more people, while most other companies have stopped."

The Bedburg depot manager has already begun work – at the start of May – and the branch will eventually have six members of staff.

Initially, the depot will have a small rental fleet of between 40 and 50 units, all of which will be crawler excavators. In time, this will be broadened to include other Sany models, such as wheeled excavators and wheeled loaders.

Small 'Mom and Pop' customers will not be the target audience; "We want to be more on the industrial customer side, and also on the long-term rental," says Ziegler. "We will have smaller machines as well, but we will also have bigger machines."

When asked about the possibility of including other brands in the fleet, Ziegler says, "There was a long discussion because it helps to have a one-stop-shop, but we don't want to advertise other companies – that's not our focus. Also, it might be difficult to provide the customer with a good service for product support when renting other brands."

Once the Bedburg depot is fully up-and-running,





Sany Europe plans to replicate the business model at other sites across Germany.

"There may be a bit of a delay with coronavirus," says Ziegler, "but the idea was to open the next one six months later, so towards the end of the year, but then three months after another one, then three months after another one, and so on, across Germany."

Further openings

After Bedburg, Stuttgart would be next, most likely followed by Munich. Big cities will be the focus.

Ziegler estimates that each depot will require an investment of approximately €3.5-4 million. Since Sany Europe will be renting facilities rather than buying them, that investment is primarily for machines, people, attachments and computer systems.

"So, in total, for the next two-and-a-half to three years, we need to be up to 10-12 locations, so that's an investment we plan for the next three years of around about €40-45 million," says Ziegler.

That's just in Germany. The rental operations would then potentially be expanded into other countries after three years.

"With Putzmeister as our sister company," Ziegler adds, "there might also be opportunities to combine locations with them, because Putzmeister has its own distribution networks in Germany. So at the moment we are looking at whether it makes sense to combine locations and outlets. But it's not decided yet."

Is there a risk that, by having its own rental operations, Sany Europe could end up competing with the rental operations of its own dealers, though?

Ziegler says the company has an opportunity to work in collaboration with its dealers in this respect, rather than compete against them; "We want to develop the dealers and help them to get into the rental business in a better way. So what we are doing in parallel is, if a dealer is working together with us, we don't need to open a rental store in the same area."

He adds, "We are willing to run the rental business, but if we have good, strong dealers then they could take over the rental stores in future."

The development of its dealer network in Europe is an important part of Sany Europe's strategy moving forwards. Again, as a relatively new brand, the challenge has been to gain trust and secure good dealers, but Sany Europe is now present in every country in Europe.

"Nowadays, strong dealers are interested in Sany and I think that's a very good sign," says Ziegler.

Sany equipment can be rented through many of the dealers but, while some of the dealers have independent rental operations, it is more often the case that they take a rent-to-buy approach; "In Germany, for instance, it's standard that they rent out machines to a customer and then after six months they convert the rental to a sale. It's a rent-to-buy philosophy," says Ziegler.

Ziegler goes on to say, "Because rental is important, here we said okay we want to improve the rental businesses of our dealers, so we are helping the dealers."

That help comes in the form of financial support, for instance by offering special conditions and payment terms, so that they can build up their rental fleets.

"Some of the dealers don't have the financial power so we also help them to gain financial resources," says Ziegler.

He adds, "In some cases, we are considering joint ventures with some of the dealers. It depends on the strength of the dealer. So, if you have a dealer who is not able to get the financial support from his own bank, we can consider a joint venture. But if we do that, it is always time-limited to between three and five years."

Ziegler ends by saying, "I think rental will become more and more important in this industry." And Sany Europe is seizing the opportunity that it presents.

IRN

Sany launched its first wheeled loader onto the European market at Bauma 2019

Ever onwards

While the Covid-19 pandemic has significantly dampened demand in Europe, Ziegler suggests it will do little to stop Sany progressing with its plans on the continent.

"Looking at the industry, it slowed down dramatically in March and April, but business picked up in May and June. In June, the order intake for Sany Europe was very good because dealers were also more optimistic and they ordered what was maybe delayed before," says Ziegler. "Although we don't know what is going to happen, the good news is that we don't really rely on Europe. We have a very financially strong mother company in China, and China is going well again."

So the company is going ahead with its spending plans; "For sure we need to adjust our targets and goals here in Europe because coronavirus will have an impact, but it is not an impact, let's say, on the expense," says Ziegler.

Adding that Sany achieved a nice profit last year, he says, "We have enough resources to maintain our development."

Sany aims to be as strong in Europe as it is in China.

In 2019, Sany Heavy Industries achieved total revenues of €9.9 billion. The Construction division – Sany's largest division – made a revenue of €3.5 billion. Within that, the company's global excavator business increased by 40% compared to the previous year, with growth coming mainly from China where Sany's market share was 23% in 2019, according to Ziegler.

All of Sany's production is in China, and although Covid-19 certainly had a significant impact on the factories there in the first two months of 2020, Ziegler says they are now running at full speed again.

"With China, from the production side, it's different than in Europe," he says. "The people and the factories are very flexible over there. It's impossible over here in Europe – if you want to increase your production by 20%, people will tell you it's impossible... In China, it's much more flexible."

He adds, "We ordered machines for Europe in advance and here we don't have any problems – the machines are coming in continuously."

Sany's global excavator business increased by 40% in 2019



Sany Europe's headquarters in Bedburg, Germany



Rising from the ashes

UK and southern Europe hardest hit by Covid-19, but the rental industry has a “bright future”



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About the ERA

The European Rental Association was created in 2006 to represent national rental associations and equipment rental companies in Europe. Today, the membership includes more than 5,000 rental companies, either directly or through 14 rental associations. The ERA is active through its committees in the fields of Promotion, Sustainability, Statistics and Technical, and through its Future Group.

Extensive information on the ERA's activities, reports and publications is available at www.erarental.org

The UK rental industry has been hit hardest by Covid-19, followed by southern Europe, central Europe and northern Europe, according to a survey by the ERA presented at the European Rental Awards & Market Update webinar on 30 June.

The survey, which was presented by ERA President and CEO of Boels Rental, Pierre Boels, showed that the rental market size in Q2 (compared to Q2 2019) in the UK and southern Europe was down 40% and 20-40%, respectively. This trend is expected to continue in Q3, with a 20-30% reduction in UK market size and a 10-15% drop in southern Europe.

The impact on rental companies in central and northern Europe has been less severe, with market reductions of up to 10% in Q2 and 0-5% (central Europe) and 5-10% (northern Europe) expected in Q3.

This picture also follows for investments in 2020, with rental companies in the UK (-40 to -70%), southern Europe (-40 to -50%), central Europe (-20 to -50%) and northern Europe (-10%) all foreseeing reductions, albeit to different extents.

The survey also looked at trends in the rental industry emerging from the pandemic. These include accelerated digitalisation, more homeworking due to health and safety concerns, and increased use of drive-in rental stores, e-learning and rental platforms.

'Green recovery' indicates bright future for equipment rental

However, despite these setbacks, the future outlook may be positive for the rental industry. In light of the present and future economic and environmental challenges, equipment rental is well placed to help equipment stakeholders emerge from the current crisis and adapt to the requirements of decarbonisation and the green transition.

Mr Boels said, "The most important question is how much the construction market will recover over the next 12 to 18 months. However, the future of our industry may be much better than we think because rental is an essential part of the green recovery. This sustainable 'green' recovery indicates a bright future for the equipment rental industry as renting

Congratulations to European Rental Awards winners

Due to the pandemic, the European Rental Awards ceremony took place virtually for the first time since its inception in 2008. Co-organised by the ERA and International Rental News, the awards received more than 80 submissions and 22 entries were shortlisted.

We would like to congratulate the following seven winners for their excellence, innovation and outstanding performance:

- Vatulpassi (Finland) – Small Rental Company of the Year (<€15 million revenues)
- Mollo Nolleio (Italy) – Large Rental Company of the Year (>€15 million revenues)
- Wacker Neuson (Dual View dumpers) – Rental Product of the Year
- Spartan Solutions (PHALANX digital operations platform) – Best Digital Innovation of the Year
- Manitou (France) – ERA Technical Committee Award
- Volvo Construction Equipment (Sweden) and GSV Materieludlejning A/S (Denmark) – Best Sustainable Rental Project of the Year from the ERA Sustainability Committee



is often the best option from both an economic and environmental perspective."

Discussing the shock and uncertainty rental companies have had to overcome, he continued: "Many of us have had to make decisions that we had never been confronted with in less time than it takes to say it, and the future is still uncertain. However, we have learned a lot. Let's use this and make a better future for the equipment rental industry."

For more about how equipment rental can reduce carbon emissions in the construction sector, please visit the ERA website: www.erarental.org/en.

To find out the total cost of operating and owning equipment, please see the ERA TCO Calculator: www.equipmentcalculator.org/en. **IRN**

Survey of European Rental Markets – June 2020

Definitions	Northern Europe	Central Europe	Southern Europe	UK
Market Sizing & Forecast				
Q2 2020 vs Q2 2019	-10%	0 to -10%	-20 to -40%	-40%
Q3 2020 vs Q3 2019	-5 to -10%	0 to -5%	-10 to -15%	-20 to -30%
Investment 2020	-10%	-20 to -50%	-40 to -50%	-40 to -70%

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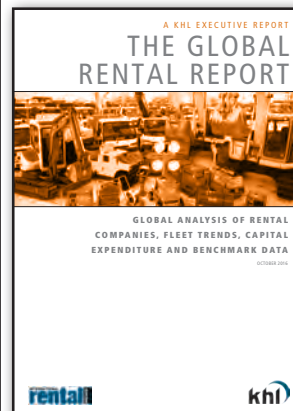
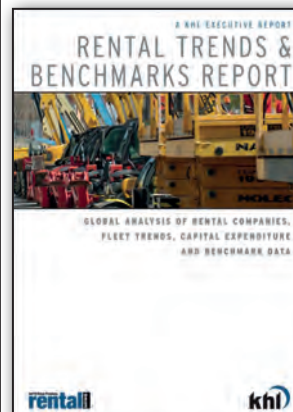
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Decontamination light from Lind Equipment

Canada-based lighting manufacturer Lind Equipment has introduced a new product in response to the Covid-19 pandemic: the Apollo UV-C LED light. It uses a type of ultraviolet light called

UV-C to kill bacteria and viruses.

Brian Astl, President of Lind Equipment, said, "Demand has essentially gone from zero before the pandemic to very high."

"End-users are seeing this as a way to make shared infrastructure (tools, equipment, vehicles, areas) safe for use, and as a way to reassure employees, visitors and customers that they are creating a safe environment."

According to the company, a

leading North American rental firm has added Apollo UV-C LED lights to its fleet.

The rental company is renting the units out to clients as standalone lights for decontamination, as well as retrofitting existing decontamination containers with the lights.

The Apollo UV-C LED light



Trime's X-Mist

Trime launches sanitising tunnel

Italy-based manufacturer Trime has introduced a new X-Mist sanitising access control tunnel to help combat the spread of Covid-19 on construction sites.

Two versions – the 1m long ST100 OZ and the 3m long ST300 OZ – are available across Europe. They are due to be officially launched to UK rental companies at the end of July. Trime's Northern Ireland distributor Glendun Plant Sales is currently distributing them to rental companies in Ireland.

The ST100 costs £8,950, while the ST300 is priced at £13,980.

Trime said its suggested weekly rental rates will give a return on investment in less than 20 weeks, and the unit's capacity to combat viruses other than Covid-19 will extend demand for them beyond the Covid-19 pandemic.

The tunnels use a Stabilised Aqueous Ozone (SAO) system provided by Canadian company Tersano to spray a nebulised solution to sanitise people when they enter a unit.

The ST100 OZ can spray 200-300 people per hour, while the ST300 OZ can spray 750-1,200 per hour.

Kubota introduces sustainable mini excavator

Japan-based equipment manufacturer Kubota launched its new KX042-4α mini excavator to coincide with World Environment Day.

Described by the company as the most environmentally friendly excavator in its class, the KX042-4α is an update to the existing KX042-4 model, with improvements that reduce emissions



and enhance operator comfort.

Glen Hampson, Business Development Manager for Construction at Kubota UK, said, "Our focus at Kubota is to help our customers overcome many of the barriers they face in today's complicated industry."

"The KX042-4α will do just this, with a powerful and reliable engine and the versatility you need for every job on the worksite."

"What's more, the Stage-V compliant engine and improved DPF [diesel particulate filter] will reduce emissions and increase the overall sustainability of the machine, which is a key priority across the industry."

The KX042-4α is an updated version of the KX042-4

Takeuchi dumper replacement

Takeuchi has introduced a new rear-tipping tracked dumper, available in Europe and Oceania.

The 6.5 tonne TCR50-2 replaces the company's original TCR50 tracked dumper.

The new model has a skip that can rotate left to right 180°, reducing the amount of manoeuvring the machine has to do on site.

The skip has a 65° dump angle and a maximum payload of 3,700kg, and the machine's hydraulic joystick controls can be used for both travel and dump functions.

The TCR50-2 also has a spacious cab that offers all-round visibility, supplemented by the rear-view camera function that comes as standard on the operator's 5.7" colour display panel.

Mecalac: two machines in one



The 8MCR is one of three new models from Mecalac

Mecalac's new line of crawler skid excavators are designed for improved speed, productivity and compact operation compared with traditional mini excavators.

The MCR Series includes three models – the 6MCR, 8MCR and 10MCR – intended to provide the swiftness of a skid steer with the 360° rotation of an excavator.

"One of the main goals of every Mecalac design is reducing congestion on the jobsite by providing one machine that can take the place of several," says Peter Bigwood, General Manager for Mecalac North America. "The MCR Series is truly multifunctional, acting as a skid steer, excavator or rough-terrain forklift, depending on the attachment."

MCR models feature a hydrostatic transmission and drive motors powered by a dedicated pump to allow them to go faster than traditional compact equipment. Each of the three machines is capable of travel speeds up to 10km/h.

The cab also has an adjustable suspension seat, air conditioning, a radio with a USB port, and a large cup holder, to ensure operator comfort and minimise fatigue.

Routine and daily servicing has been made easier by the wide-opening maintenance cover, which offers good access to the engine and routine inspection points.

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