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On the cover:

Thousands of people lined the streets of Liverpool in July to welcome three giant marionettes (a grandmother, small girl and her dog) telling the story of the City during World War One. The logistical lifting challenge - by the French street theatre company Royal de Luxe - was helped by John Sutch Cranes.



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Atlas to close Delmenhorst, More than 1,000 Skyjacks for Speedy, Sennebogen to launch 100 tonne telescopic crawler, Manitex acquires PM/Oil&Steel, Dingli appoints new UK dealer, New Caterpillar telehandlers, Kardon takes first JLG 1850SJ, Werner acquires Youngman, Terex Utilities launches tree trimmers, 20,000th telehandler from Bobcat, Potain ships 5,000th Chinese tower crane, Low headroom mobile Palfinger, MBO at Access Hire Nationwide, Cohet takes over at Arcomet, Sany infringed Manitowoc patent, Fassi to launch HD loader crane and financials round-up.



Top 30 rental companies 17

In the 12 months since our last survey of the UK and Ireland crane, access and telehandler rental companies, business has continued to improve. Most companies are now feeling positive enough to step up the renewal and updating of their fleets, while many have started to expand. See how the top companies have fared in the Cranes & Access 2014 rental survey.



Spider cranes 31

Has the spider crane finally broken through into the mainstream European crane market? Cranes & Access takes a look at the market and tries to answer the question.



Arborists 41

The use of access equipment for tree work has increased significantly since the European Work at height regulations began to be enforced. We speak with Watmoughs Forestry to get an arborists view of whether platforms are quicker and safer than climbing, and we look at the potential problems when using cranes for tree work.



Dinolift celebrates

40 years 45

We report from Finland on Dinolift's 40th anniversary celebrations, with a brief look at its long history and principles.



Special vehicle mounted platforms 49

The truck mounted platform is almost certainly the oldest type of powered access equipment dating back to the 1920s. But for as long as they have existed there have been owners and operators looking for special machines, leading to some companies building modified units or even creating unique one-off machines. We take a look at a few suppliers and some of the more unusual products.



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In the next C&A

The next issue of Cranes & Access scheduled for mid-October will have features on mastclimbers and hoists, safety equipment, outrigger mats and heavy lifting as well as reviewing APF the major UK arborist show. If you have any contributions or suggestions, please contact our editorial team.

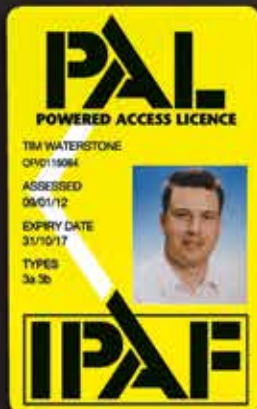
"Never pick a fight with an ugly person, they have got nothing to lose". Robin Williams 1951-2014

"Imagination is the highest kite one can fly". Lauren Bacall 1924-2014

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A more positive experience

Many of us have worked for or know a company that says how wonderful its products are and how great its customer care. Yet when truly put to the test is found wanting.

One company I worked for was doing very well getting into a new sector selling large wood grinders based on a good product and good parts and service backup. However an incident with

one machine brought all this crashing to the ground with a major chink in the customer care armour. The grinder (still under warranty) had burnt out writing the machine off. Investigations revealed a hydraulic hose near the engine had ruptured, leaving a charred mess and angry customer.

My MD said the engine was at fault and therefore the engine manufacturer should sort out the problem - refusing to even talk to the owner. The engine manufacturer investigated and concluded that the hose had been re-routed by the supplier and it was not at fault.

The owner - not at fault in any way - just wanted it sorted as he could not afford to have the machine sitting, not earning money. I was happy to 'loan' him a demonstration machine until his was sorted, but the MD refused, saying it was not our responsibility. Six months after the incident, the machine was still sitting on site, a burnt out wreck while the owner made sure that everyone in the niche sector knew that we had not stepped up to the plate and done the right thing. We never sold another grinder in my time with the company. A good product and a hard earned reputation was ruined by one incident and a company/person unwilling to do the right thing, taking the short-term view.

This sort of experience is becoming more dangerous for companies with the growing use of social media. Word of mouth is no longer limited to a few dozen local people as unhappy customers share bad experiences with thousands, leaving companies with a major firefighting job to protect their reputation.

So why not do the right thing at the start?

Yes there are good, conscientious and ethical companies, but many will cut corners and avoid dealing with an issue head on, in spite of all the management jargon about delighting customers and total customer experience etc etc...

Even in the lifting sector there are those that try and 'kick a problem into the long grass' or blame the customer, even when it is clearly not their fault. While larger companies with multiple management layers can be the worst, there are some shocking examples of smaller companies that will do anything to avoid sorting a costly problem out, as they focus on protecting short term profits.

In my experience both in the equipment industry and with consumer products, doing the right thing at the start can turn a customer's bad experience into a positive one resulting in happier and more loyal customers leading to higher profits over a longer period of time.

Mark Darwin

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