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## MANITOU 160 AJ+

TYPE	BOOM
YEAR	2017
LIFTING	400KG
OUTREACH	8.94M
POWER	DIESEL
HEIGHT	16.25M



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# Genie steps up to the challenges

C&A

Genie

The market for self-propelled aerial lifts is becoming increasingly competitive and challenging as a variety of new manufacturers around the world look to muscle in on a sector that they believe has enormous expansion potential. C&A attended Genie's new product launch in Oklahoma last month. While the new products on display were not 'game changers', being a roll out of the new XC specification to further models, the event clearly highlighted significant changes occurring throughout the company.

The biggest threat to established manufacturers probably comes from China, where the largest players are learning and improving at an incredibly rapid pace. They are also highly pragmatic in their approach, ready to adapt at a pace that the average western manufacturer can only marvel at. Add this to the lower costs of production and government encouragement or incentives and it is easy to see why the big four or five western manufacturers might be concerned.

While Chinese companies like Dingli, Mantall and Sinoboom have dramatically improved their product designs and quality to overcome initial western rejections, they have now run into an issue that has stalled many a good manufacturer - marketing, distribution and product/customer support skills - or the lack of them. This issue has frustrated many manufacturers. Japan's Aichi is a prime example. The company builds



Matt Fearon

what many claim are the best boom lifts on the market and yet has failed miserably in its clearly stated plan to become global market leader. The Chinese companies though are a different. Having largely overcome the first hurdle they are busy tackling the brand awareness/confidence and distribution issue. And rather than wait to build it organically, they are using well-known western brands as partners such as JCB, Magni, PB and MEC in a variety of different deals.



The new Genie S-85XC with on board generator



Genie launched more XC models

At the event at the Terex crane and access plant in Oklahoma City, Genie president Matt Fearon highlighted these challenges and talked of what Genie is doing and plans to do, in order not only to keep ahead of pack, but also to open up a lead.

## Establishment advantages

While Fearon was quick to highlight that Genie does not underestimate the competition for a second, he is clearly tuned into the potential advantages that Genie and other well established major players have over the new entrants into the market. And the company is now looking to leverage those advantages in order to not only remain a top two market leader, but to also increase market share. These advantages include a large working population of machines, products that are well-known and much appreciated, a strong network of customers, dealers and partners, a large team of knowledgeable, customer facing staff and a depth of aerial lift engineering experience honed over 50 years. All this, and perhaps most importantly of all, a brand that is instantly recognisable all over the world - going forward expect to see a little less Terex AWP and a bit more Genie. The benefit of long-term engineering experience cannot be underestimated. Companies such as Genie, JLG, Skyjack, Haulotte, Niftylift and others have a huge pool of knowledge, gained from the thousands of mistakes and wrong turns they would have made over the years as they worked to perfect their products.



Genie Z-45 XC Articulated Boom

## Back on track

Genie has been accused of having almost lost its way a couple of times over the years, as a result of a misguided corporate policy or two, being handed down from on high. It has also occasionally shifted from designing what the customer - and more importantly the 'user' - wanted, to designing something what was perhaps more convenient for production. But on the few occasions that it has done so, it has been able to spot the issue and had the strength to address it and pull through the difficulty. A recent example might be the decision to put the extra-wide chassis designed for the 180ft SX-180 under the popular 135ft Z-135/70. It is hard to imagine how making a machine almost 1.3 metres wider, without a decent trade-off for the customer - such as lower weight - looked like a good move from a user's point of view? However the company not only took the issue on board, coming back with the new and improved narrower chassis under the ZX-135/70, but also used the chassis as the base for a new range of large SX telescopic boom lifts that now runs from 105 to 150ft.



The 'more compact' 135ft 'ZX-135/70'

New models join the XC range.



The new models unveiled at the event included more new XC - Extra Capacity - boom lifts, including the North American version of the 45ft Z-45XC articulated telescopic boom, along with the S-60/65XC and SX-80/85XC mid-range telescopic. All XC models feature automatic dual platform capacities of 300kg unrestricted and 450kg with working envelope restrictions. The system features Genie's Zero-Load field calibration overload system, with an integrated load sense cell that continuously checks the weight in the platform and adjusts the working envelope accordingly. While structural changes have

been made to cope with the higher capacities, each XC model retains the same overall performance as its predecessor. Having said this, numerous smaller improvements, including smoother controls, new on-board diagnostics and the new 'Lift Guard' secondary guarding system have also been incorporated into the new models along with the latest technology.

#### Other innovations unveiled

The company also discussed a number of other innovations including improved on-board generators - mostly aimed at the North American market, and a prototype hand held diagnostics tool - the Tech Pro Link - which will allow technicians to monitor a



Genie builds its North American telehandlers in Oklahoma

machine's sensors, including engine temperature, oil pressure, fuel levels and battery voltage, as well as calibrate the machine, make speed adjustments during pre-operation inspection, receive fault code information and much more. The unit is currently a plug-in device, but a wireless connection is planned before it goes into production.

#### Oklahoma City plant

Terex has spent around \$40 million on the Oklahoma City plant, which produces Genie's North American telehandlers, Terex Rough Terrain, truck and crawler cranes, while

being the new home of the Genie refurbishment centre for which there is clearly a good deal of demand. Genie 6K and 10K telehandler production was moved to the site from the Moses Lake plant in Washington state, freeing up more space for Genie boom lift production. The company also said that with a high percentage of these telehandlers going into the oil & gas industry, Oklahoma is a more logical location to build them.

It is plain to see that positive and exciting developments and changes are occurring at Genie. Expect the renewed customer focused spirit to gather pace in the New Year and be prepared for some exciting new product launches and service/training developments.

The Tech Pro Link diagnostic tool.



Dozens of new telehandlers waiting to ship



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