



# A TRIP TO CONEXPO INDIA

Managing director of UK based new and used aerial lift sales and refurbishment company International Platforms, Vicki Allen, visited the Conexpo India trade fair for the first time. Here she talks of her experiences and what to look out for when visiting a new country and a big trade show.

**In December I flew from London to Delhi to visit the bauma Conexpo India trade fair for the first time. Like many other seasoned aerial platform professionals in the UK, I have been aware for some time that India has a rapidly developing infrastructure and growing machinery market. I already have experience of selling there and wanted to improve my knowledge about the structures, rules, regulations and opportunities. I decided to visit the show to do some investigative groundwork and get a feel for the place, the people and the potential.**

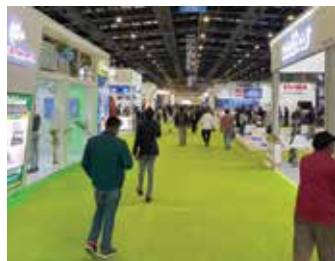


**This relatively young trade fair (now in its 7th edition) is smaller than the established bauma heavyweights in Munich and Shanghai as well as the AEM event Las Vegas. However, I returned home with an exhilarating, unique experience that left me with a sense of optimism about the future of the construction sectors in India and the wider South Asian region. With expertise, hard work and a willingness to reach out to people, there are real growth opportunities for UK businesses like mine, which specialises in buying and selling used aerial platforms all over the world.**

**It is easy to get to this four-day event in Greater Noida on the outskirts of Delhi by metro, taxi and tuk tuk. Walking round the exhibition halls, my impressions were that it was very well organised, and stands were well-structured and laid out. It was striking to see the sheer diversity of machinery and technology tailored for the Indian market. Most of the big international names in manufacturing construction equipment were**

there. At bauma in Germany the focus seems to be on technological innovation, sustainability and automation. In China it's all about massive scale and cost effectiveness. I found that in India there was a combination of the two with an added focus on the requirements of the local market with its challenging terrains, rough rural roads and dense urban environments.

Access equipment was only a small fraction of the overall exhibition and often mixed in with other products. However, I was fortunate to be invited to the Aerial Platform Association of India (APAIOI) networking event within the showground. It was extremely interesting to hear the panel of industry pioneers speak about different situations and thoughts regarding the shaping of the industry and general progression of the acceptance and growing utilisation of aerial work platforms.





At the networking event I made over 25 new connections with representatives from different companies and locations. They were interested and enthusiastic to speak with me about my involvement in the industry, my company and their own businesses and views of the 'here and now' and possibilities for the future. From them, I learned more about the nuances of local needs and positioning aerial platforms for their very specific requirements.

In India machines are usually hired with an operator which means the costs and logistics of rental are complex. Competition is also high, so pricing is very low. They are happy to buy machines from all over the world as they are not tied to any specific classification such as CE or ANSI. Sadly, this could mean that good quality

equipment at CE standards from the European market could be priced out so it will be interesting to see if regulations are developed in the years to come. I was hoping to meet more buyers in the rental market to find out more, which proved difficult without my own exhibition space, so we are considering taking a stand in the future.

From the perspective of my own business, International Platforms, which is already experienced in selling used MEWPs to the Indian market, I would say that Indian firms are increasingly open to buying pre-owned machines as long as they are affordable and durable, especially as infrastructure projects grow and the pressure to deliver quickly intensifies. In our experience, trading with Indian buyers from the UK can be complicated, slow and fiddly due to

the lack of regulations, consistency and the need to build more ongoing strong local relationships within a huge country. However, there are opportunities if you are prepared to learn and to travel, including to exciting trade exhibitions like bauma Conexpo India.

Vicki Allen is managing director of UK based new and used equipment sales company International Platforms. She was previously used equipment manager at Genie and UK rental company AJ Access. In 2023 she won the first IPAF Equality, Diversity and Inclusion award at the IAPAs and is passionate about the powered access business.



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