

# cranes & access



December/January 2026 Vol.27 issue 8

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**TRUCK  
MOUNTED  
CRANES**

**MAST BOOMS  
& MAST LIFTS**  
**ANNUAL RENTAL  
RATE GUIDE**  
**LOOK BACK  
AT 2025**

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The market for aluminium boomed truck mounted cranes was very busy last year, with both of the German manufacturers adding to their product ranges. We take a look at the major developments.

## UK & IRELAND ANNUAL RENTAL RATE SURVEY 25

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## MAST BOOMS AND MAST LIFTS 41

Whatever the reason, many people still get confused between a mast boom and a self-propelled mast lift. Hopefully, we can not only clarify the differences but also outline the advantages of each, while also covering the latest product launches.

## RIGGING 49

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## LOOK BACK AT 2025 53

2025 political and business news appears to have been dominated by one man - US president Donald Trump and his import tariffs. It has also been a year of ongoing wars, with attempts to negotiate quick ceasefires or peace treaties coupled with climate intensified disasters. We review some of the major news highlights that shaped last year, both within the lifting industry and the world at large.

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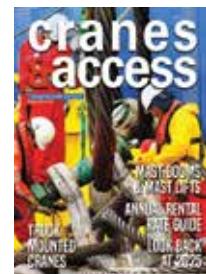
Here is your chance to vote for your favourite C&A Cover of the Year.

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## ON THE COVER

Multi-part wire rope slings being used in heavy offshore rigging... the Rigging article by Peter Verhoef on Page 49 delves into 'Why the sling D/d ratio still matters'.



## IN THE NEXT ISSUE

Scheduled for publication at the end of February, the next issue of Cranes & Access will include features on Heavy/Alternative lifting, Boom lifts, Energy/power developments, Loader cranes and a review of the UK's Executive Hire Show. If you have any contributions or suggestions to make or are interested in advertising in this issue, please contact our editorial or sales teams.

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# COMMENT

## SELLING £20 NOTES FOR £10!

For as long as I can remember, rental companies have complained about rental rates being too low. From an outsider's point of view, this might seem odd - just put up the rates! I know, I know, easier said than done, and easy for someone not faced with getting all the equipment out on a Monday morning.

The cost-plus method says that if you have a product to sell, you add up the direct and indirect costs, decide a markup/profit margin, and there's your minimum price. Too high, and business is slow. Too low and you have all the sales you can handle, but there is not enough coming in to cover your costs - a 'Busy Fool'.

There are alternative strategies, of course, buy used equipment - 'Rent a wreck' - or use end loaded finance putting off the day of reckoning, locate premises in a cheap part of town and keep overheads to the bare bones. Trouble is, we all want the business class seats for a Ryan Air price.

This year's Rental Rate Survey highlights glaring price differentials between the lowest and the highest rental rates for the same product. Take a 36ft to 48ft slab electric scissor lift, the lowest average rate is £180, and the highest is almost twice that at £350!

There are, of course, plenty of factors that affect the rate charged such as your customer base and average length of hire, a major account or one day end user rental. The volumes are different, transport costs are different, and the help and support required is in a different league. Mind you, the end user will pay a lot quicker than the big contractor.

Downward pressure on rates is traditionally caused by supply exceeding immediate demand. Companies desperate for cash flow to pay finance charges etc adopt a 'get them out at any price' strategy, which might boost utilisation, but profit

and long term viability go out the window, while fuelling a downward rate spiral.

How is it that contractors accept price increases for products such as timber, cement, paint and skilled tradesmen - which have almost doubled in price since 2020 - but will not pay a fair price to rent equipment, even though it only makes up a fraction of a project's cost and is indispensable for completing a project on time.

Far too often, rental companies will set minimum rates, only for them to be abandoned when the first customer challenges them.

It reminds me of a factual story... a man calls to rent a platform. "That will be £250," says the hire desk clerk. "But I can get it from Joe down the road for £200," responds the buyer. "Well, says the clerk, £250 is our bottom price. I suggest you take Joe up on his offer - we can't match it?" "Ah.....," says the buyer... "he doesn't have any available at that price!"

I am not making light of the current situation. Rising costs have put enormous strains on rental companies, and contractors know they can drive rental rates down. But as if that's not bad enough, a growing number of them, at least in the UK, are demanding additional features for any machine coming on site, such as more sophisticated secondary guarding, harness detection on platforms, or a minimum age for cranes, yet refuse to pay any extra, displaying a complete lack of respect for the service supplied.

Increasing rental rates is ultimately in the hands of the industry as a whole.

## Mark Darwin

Comment and feedback is most welcome via post, email or phone stating if we may publish them or not:  
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