

T O P

cranes & access

FOR UK BUYERS & USERS OF CRANES OR ACCESS

Fleet sizes and investment are all analysed as part of the C&A Top 10

Which is the biggest hire fleet in the British Isles? Does it matter? How do you measure it? We think it does matter as an analysis of the Top 10 fleets give an indication of how the industry is faring. Our tables give you a mix of infor-

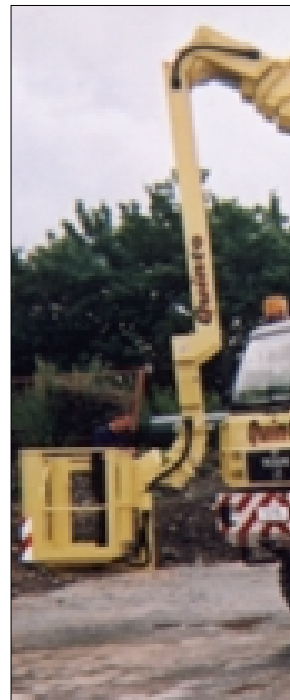
mation to let you make up your own mind and the following pages will show you the number of units in a company's fleet, the number of employees, the number of depots and the amount that has been invested by the company in recent years.

Our own preferred method of ranking the companies lets companies with lots of

C&A Top 10: Cranes	
Company	Corporate Boom (metres)
Hewden Crane Hire	25,256
Ainscough Group	24,577
Baldwins	19,200
Weldex	14,050
Ruttle Plant Hire	7000
Taylor Crane Co Ltd	5600e
John Glover	4300
William O'Brien	4000
Marsh Plant	3617
Sarens	3422

Source: The C&A Top 10, Cranes & Access Vol 3.4

small units be compared with companies that just have a few large ones. We do this by asking hire companies to calculate the height that they could reach if they could somehow combine every piece of equipment in the fleet. Thus if Hewden Crane Hire could somehow create just one crane from all the cranes in its fleet, that crane would have a phenomenally long boom, 25.25 kilometres long to be precise. This gives an average boom length for mobile cranes in the fleet of 75.16 metres (including boom extensions).



The access industry provides us with an extraordinary figure. If Nationwide could somehow combine all the equipment in its fleet, it would have a single platform with a platform height of 78.84 kilometres. This gives an average platform height of 13.46 metres.

Last year our survey was also topped by Hewden and Nationwide. Hewden reported 26.86 kilometres of boom and 382 cranes, while Nationwide came in with 45.72 kilometres of boom and 4850 platforms (excluding truck mounts). To see last year's result in full turn to Vol 2 No 4 or visit our web site: www.Vertikal.net

Our German sister magazine, *Kran & Bühne*, recently completed its second K&B Top 10 listing which revealed that Munich-based Schmidbauer is the largest

Investment in the last 12 months: Cranes

Company	No of depots	No of employees	Investment in last 12 months: £millions
Weldex	4	180	1.6
Ainscough	28	812	12
Baldwins	15	450	10
Hewden Crane Hire	14	495	6
Crane Services	1	52	4.5
Emerson Crane Hire	3	60	3
John Sutch Crane Hire	2	40	1.5
King Lifting	6	75	1.5
Marsh Plant	7	120	1.3
Taylor Crane Co Ltd	6	135	n/a

Source: The C&A Top 10, Cranes & Access Vol 3.4

TOP 10

Top 10 crane fleets

Company	No of mobile + crawler cranes
Ainscough	467
Hewden	336
Baldwins	320
Weldex	194
Taylor Crane Co Ltd	108
Marsh Plant	85
Quinto Crane	75e
Ruttle Plant Hire	60
William O'Brien	52
King Lifting	51

Source: The C&A Top 10, Cranes & Access Vol 3.4

Quinto Crane has strengthened its place in the access industry with the purchase of this Wumag WT355 truck mounted platform. The company has long operated a small fleet of access equipment, but this latest purchase is a significant expansion.



crane hire company in the German-speaking world. It has 250 cranes and 16 kilometres of boom. British-owned Zoom is by far the largest access hire company with 4262 units and 60.64 kilometres of boom. Zoom belongs to the Lavendon Group which also owns Nationwide in the UK. The full K&B Top 10 listing can be found on www.Vertikal.net

Baldwins: Costly insurance

Large is not always best and there are many small companies that are "No 1" in their particular regions or niches. The big companies also have their ups and downs and Baldwins recently told City investors that it will have to write off £1 million following the collapse of insurance company Independent Insurance Group.

Baldwins, which now has extensive operations in the US, said that the failure of the insurance company meant that it would have to allow for the cost of the new cover, interim cover, outstanding claims and the fact that the excess on the new policies was likely to be £250,000 rather than the £30,000 that it had previously arranged.

Richard Baldwin nonetheless remains bullish about future prospects: "Our UK market place has recovered in the second half as reflected by the results. The current background is more stable than at this time last year". He added that rental rates in the UK have risen by 10 per cent since the consolidation that resulted from Ainscough Group purchasing the Initial GWS fleet.

Baldwin's financial results for the year ended 31 March 2001 showed a 27 per cent rise in turnover to £76.5 million. Operating profit was up 2 per cent to £11.4 million. Baldwins bought 115 new mobile cranes during the financial year. Sales manager Grant Mitchell said that it planned to open more UK depots and renew the fleet during the coming year. Delta Tower Cranes, which belongs to Baldwins, increased its fleet by about 20 cranes to a total of 117 during the same period.



Nationwide's new S-125 boom is pictured working at a Premier League football ground.

Ainscough + GWS =

Ainscough Group has announced a multi-million pound order for twelve new AT cranes from Liebherr. The cranes are all in the 80 and 100 tonne capacity class and will be based at depots throughout the nationwide network.

Ray Ledger, who was appointed Ainscough Group managing director earlier this year, said that the order was the culmination of the integration plan formed after Ainscough bought GWS Crane Hire at the end of last year. The purchase doubled the size of the Wigan based business and "has regrettably necessitated significant redundancies which were necessary in order to maximise from the synergies that were available when merging the depot operations of GWS and Ainscough, together with the resultant closure of various head office functions".

Ledger added that the current structure placed the Group in a unique position from which to lead the UK crane sector.

Biggest capacity cranes

Company	Crane model	Capacity (t)
Sarens	Demag PC9600	2000
Baldwins	Gottwald AK912	1200
Ainscough Group	Demag AC2000	800
Hewden Crane Hire	Demag AC2000	800
Weldex	Demag CC2800 + S'lift	800
Crane Services	Liebherr LTM1500	500
John Glover	Krupp	500
Emerson Crane Hire	Demag AC615	200
John Sutch Crane Hire	Grove	200
King Lifting	Demag AC395	120

Source: The C&A Top 10, Cranes & Access Vol 3.4

Investment in last 12 months: Access

Company	No of depots	No of employees	Investment in last 12 months: £millions
Nationwide	51	593	35.8
Hewden Instant Access	20	166	8
Universal	4	102	6
PTP	17	230	3.5
Easi Uplifts	6	100	2.75
Facelift	6	55	2
Meek Group	6	85	2
A-Plant	16	85	n/a
Independent Access	9	50	n/a
SGB	20	90	n/a

Source: The C&A Top 10, Cranes & Access Vol 3.4

◀ Ainscough meanwhile pulled out of the access market by selling its access fleet to PTP.

Lavendon warning

Lavendon Group plc, owner of Nationwide Access and Zoom (which operates in continental Europe), issued a profit warning based on softening demand in "certain sectors" in the UK and Germany. The warning sent the company's share price tumbling in late June.

Results for the six months ending 30 June 2001 were due to be announced on September 5, but the company predicted that second quarter revenue growth would be around 33 per cent as



A-Plant is presenting a range of hire services targeted at the railway industry in the UK and Ireland during the forthcoming Infrarail 2000. The show takes place at the Wembley Exhibition Hall from 18th - 20th September.

compared to 39 per cent in the first quarter. The company attributed the six per cent slow down in growth rates to a "softening" in the manufacturing, construction and telecommunications industries.

Lavendon Group said that it would be "reviewing levels of capital expenditure until demand growth becomes more robust". It added that "we remain confident that Lavendon will achieve strong revenue growth this year although clearly below previous expectations".

Visit www.Vertikal.net for news of Lavendon's six monthly results on September 5.

Thank-you

Our thanks go to all the companies that took the time to send back our questionnaires – we know that it took some effort. Many thanks also to those companies that sent in

the information but did not make it into the Top 10. (NB "e" indicates that we have made an estimate.)

We will be expanding our listing to 20 companies next year – if you think you would qualify, please contact us now for a "C&A Top 20" questionnaire. If you think your company should have been included this year – please contact us now so that we can put an update in the next issue.

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● Full details of this year's Top 10, and last year's, can be found on www.Vertikal.net

Top 10 Access Fleets

Company	Total units (excluding truck mounts)
Nationwide	5856
SGB	2400
A Plant	2150
Hewden Instant Access	1960
PTP	1500
Universal	1500
Independent Access Supplies	1200
Easi Uplifts	938
Meek Group	900
Panther	400

Source: The C&A Top 10, Cranes & Access Vol 3.4

Truck mount fleets

Company	Total units (excluding truck mounts)
Nationwide	151
PTP	80
Universal	55
Facelift	50
Easi Uplifts	12

Source: The C&A Top 10, Cranes & Access Vol 3.4

C&A Top 10: Access

Company	Total platform height (m)
Nationwide Access	40,000
A Plant	33,000e
Hewden Instant Access	28,870
Universal Aerial Platforms	23,105
PTP	20,000
SGB	13,200e
Easi Uplifts	11,613
Independent Access Supplies	11,000e
Meek Group	5800e
Facelift	2875
Rapid Platforms	700

Source: The C&A Top 10, Cranes & Access Vol 3.4

Tallest Single Platform

Company	Model	Height (m)
Nationwide	Bronto 572HLA	72
Facelift	Bronto	62
PTP	Bronto	62
Universal	Bronto	62
Meek	Snorkel Pro 126	38.4
Easi Uplifts	Genis S125	38.1
Hewden Instant Access	Genie S125	38.1

Source: The C&A Top 10, Cranes & Access Vol 3.4