

# DRIVING BUSINESS

This year's resurgent Commercial Vehicle Show (NEC, Birmingham, 29 April to 1 May) is a barometer of growing activity in the transport industry. John Challen picks out some highlights

## Mercedes-Benz and Fuso

After last year's focus on its Euro 6 range of HGVs, this year's Mercedes-Benz stand features more of a presence for its lighter end commercial vehicles. You'll see the full range of LCVs, from the Vito to the Citan and on to the Sprinter. Mercedes-Benz has plenty to say about developments in its vans business.

However, beyond its latest trucks and vans, look out for the latest results from Mercedes-Benz's partnership with Rossetts and Coolertech in the form of a fridge-bodied version of the new Fuso Canter Eco Hybrid.

This new vehicle is powered by a 150bhp diesel engine working in parallel with a 54bhp electric motor. Carrying capacity has been enhanced by

Coolertech's chiller body, which is claimed to combine light weight, strength and durability – ensuring that it withstands the rigours of multi-drop operations.

There's also a demonstration of Mercedes-Benz's Fleetboard telematics system and staff are on hand to talk about Driver CPC alongside the German giant's driver-training Actros vehicle.

## SHOWSTOPPER Euro 6 debut from Isuzu

Waiting for visitors on the Isuzu stand is a quartet of new Euro 6 trucks. First up are two versions of the N75.150 Urban 4x2 rigid, which now has an extra powertrain option. All previous Isuzu 7.5-tonners only had one engine (the four-cylinder, 5.2-litre, 190bhp unit), but the replacement model now also offers a turbocharged four-cylinder, 3-litre 150bhp engine.

Isuzu's Urban is more than 200kg lighter than the new Euro 6 N75.190 Forward truck. So while the Forward remains the probable choice for operations that involve more arduous, longer and faster average speed journeys, Isuzu says its Urban truck is ideal for "payload-critical, stop-start, local distribution operations".

Alongside these two 7.5-tonners will be the latest Euro 6 version of Isuzu's popular N75.190 4x2 Forward rigid, specified with a tipper body. Both 150bhp Urban and 190bhp Forward models can have either manual or Isuzu's Easyshift transmissions – you'll see examples of both options.

And completing Isuzu's four-vehicle line-up is an 11-tonne Euro 6 Isuzu Forward F110.210, fitted with a curtainsided body.



## One third extra payload

More clever trailer technology can be found at SOMI Trailers' stand. Nine years in the making, and with operators such as Tesco interested in trialling it, the trailer's design enables the area between the rear wheels and front legs to be used, giving operators a claimed 31% extra payload.

The company is suggesting payback within 18 months, along with a reduction in costs associated with extra trailers, workforce and paperwork. Using conventional loading docks, the trailers also reduce CO<sub>2</sub> output per unit by up to 400 tonnes a year, according to the company.

## Hendrickson highlights

Hendrickson is displaying its mid-lift axle (MLA2) but is already talking about its upcoming MLA3, expected to offer further weight and performance benefits.

MLA2 lifter pusher axles and suspensions bring what Hendrickson describes as a systems approach to tractor units and rigidids. They have also been designed with weight and

operating cost reductions in mind, compared to traditional twin steer configurations.

From the user's perspective, those translate to greater payload potential and reduced maintenance – the latter because steering links and ball joints have been eliminated. However, the firm also says you can expect good alignment retention and reduced tyre wear (another benefit of factory pre-set toe and camber settings). It's less obvious, but you also get unitised wheel ends and premium shocks, with maintenance-free bushings and pivot connections.

### Pumps and prizes at Air1

As a means of showcasing its air-powered IBC (intermediate bulk container) pump technology, Air1 has brought in a Volvo FH. Just one of its claimed benefits is an ability to operate at sites without an electrical supply.

As well as powering the air pump, the Volvo FH is the place to go for Air1's daily competition. Air1 model tankers (1:50 scale) and a child's Volvo pedal truck are up for grabs.

### Chargers and battery packs

An expanded range of Accusmart electronic battery chargers and Ceteor SOS booster packs is on show at Ceteor's CV stand. Its Accusmart battery chargers now feature five units with outputs from 1–7A, to handle battery sizes up to 250Ah.

Ceteor says it has listened to the requests of owners of its high-output portable 12/24V units, most of whom say that, while the quality and power are great, they don't enjoy carrying them long distances to use them.

The firm's answer: a 12/24V portable trolley designed to accommodate all Ceteor 12/24V portable devices to help make moving the booster much easier.

### Test equipment

Bowmonk's stand features several of the company's brake testing products designed, says the firm, to keep vehicles in optimum, safe condition.

Equipment on show includes its BrakeCheck, a DVSA portable electronic decelerometer, aimed at testing service, hand and secondary brakes on any vehicle braking system. The unit also



shows which side of the vehicle has brake problems by immediately indicating left/right pull.

There is also the SensorCheck diagnostic tool, which takes just 15

seconds to test for the six most common causes of EBS/ABS faults on trucks, trailers and buses. It checks: correct Ohms resistance; open circuit; short circuit; pole ring tooth damage; pole ring misalignment; and sensor gap measurement.

### Safety campaign

Celebrating its 40th year of supplying the logistics industry with safety and security solutions, Maple has brought more innovations to the CV Show – most notably in the form of its safe trailer coupling solution, dubbed SafeConnect.

Since its launch last year, the product has already claimed the 2013 Motor Transport Innovation Award and has found favour among a number of operators.

Working closely with health and safety experts, and having conducted research into the issues around coupling safety, Maple says it is critical to improve awareness of safe coupling practices. As such, the company is launching a

## SHOWSTOPPER Cartwright's trailer technology

A new trailer design is the big news on the Cartwright stand. Its new unit includes a fully galvanised chassis, Magnelis bearers and side rails claimed to be up to 10 times more resistant to corrosion than a traditional galvanised bearer.

Another feature of Cartwright's hi-tech trailer is its 30mm phenolic non-slip ply hardwood floor, which is laid in sections on top of the trailer I-beams. That creates a flush surface and a stronger, more robust chassis and floor, rated to ISO1496.

It's worth asking staff about the EN 1246XL trailer construction standard as well, and the company's roof-suspended load restraint system which is now in operation with several of Cartwright's major customers.



trailer safety campaign. Find out more at [www.TrailerSafetyRevolution.co.uk](http://www.TrailerSafetyRevolution.co.uk).

### New calibration kit

As well as its well-known commercial vehicle laser wheel alignment kit, Haweka is showcasing its new calibration tool for ACC (adaptive cruise control) and EBA (emergency brake assist) systems coming into the UK.

Haweka's Axis 200 takes less than 10 minutes to accurately measure every angle on a truck in the as-driven position, with no need to lift the vehicle. With its magnetic feet (and grab arms for alloy hubs), the system is also simple and safe to use, and works on single steers, twin steers, rigids, semi-trailers as well as buses.

Haweka also makes the point that modern ACC and EBA radar sensors must be set accurately for these systems to work properly – and that is based on correct alignment of wheels and axles.

Its new system has already been endorsed by MAN, and more are likely to follow.

### Goodyear show

Tyre manufacturer Goodyear is giving visitors to the CV Show probably their first opportunity to see its latest products – the Kmax and Fuelmax tyres, designed, it says, for best mileage performance and efficiency respectively.

With many fleet operators mindful of keeping costs low, Goodyear acknowledges that fuel-efficient tyres are very much in demand and believes its FuelMax tyre in particular will prove itself by resulting in substantial operational fleet savings.

### No more blind spots

Brigade Electronics recently launched a low-cost, intelligent camera monitor system that provides the driver with a 360° view around the vehicle, making it the first to offer the choice of two such systems.

Brigade's range of Backeye 360 systems provides a bird's-eye view in a single image, making it easier and quicker for drivers to assess possible hazards and take corrective action, if required.

The system uses four ultra-wide-angle camera lenses mounted on the



vehicle to fill in all blind spots. Simultaneous digital images from the cameras are processed and 'video

stitched', resulting in a clear, real-time view of the surroundings.

### Ready for new Hankook rubber?

Hankook is showcasing several commercial vehicle tyre ranges, including the environmentally conscious bead-to-bead retread truck tyre, its Alphatread. This range is designed for medium haul purposes and includes sizes for the drive axle together with corresponding trailer tyres.

Alphatread aims to meet demands for reducing fleet running costs by providing a 'cradle to grave' tyre solution. Hankook says it does so as a result of its wide outline and special compound, which together provide "excellent wet and dry performance, driving stability and long lasting wear".

Visitors to the show can also see Hankook's Smartflex all season range of truck tyres, claimed to be capable of

## SHOWSTOPPER Cut fuel consumption

A new service aimed at helping truck, bus and coach fleets to reduce fuel consumption is making its CV Show debut on Michelin Solutions' stand. Dubbed Efffuel, it involves Michelin's fuel analysts working with partners from organisations such as Accenture, Worldline and TyreCheck to assess what's best for operators.

Paul Davey, commercial director of Michelin Solutions, says the service includes driver training, on-board telematics and outsourced tyre management, describing it as "an entirely new approach" to fuel efficiency.

"If the joint fuel consumption saving goal is met, the two companies share the gains. If it is not, Michelin Solutions will reimburse a portion of the expenses incurred, on a pro rata basis," he says.



dealing with a wide range of weather-related road conditions throughout the year. The Smartflex line-up has been designed for medium- to long-haul purposes and includes sizes for steer and drive axles.

**Wheel alignment**

Tecalemit's main display is its new commercial vehicle wheel aligner, built using the company's Trackalign laser technology. Its CV aligner is said to be suitable for all truck and bus wheels, and can be used with twin wheel and super single configurations.

Also launched is the new GTR 440 four-wheel alignment system for light commercials and cars. This equipment links wirelessly to a laptop or PC and carries the latest vehicle database, against which live readings from the vehicle are referenced.

Beyond these, Tecalemit is exhibiting products such as its Finkbeiner cable-free hydraulic mobile column lifts. These have a global standing as one of the benchmarks in quality and performance.

**Bridgestone's new tyre touch app**

Bridgestone is launching its Toolbox Touch – a digital fleet management system based on Windows 8 for tablets, and delivered as three distinct 'Monitor', 'Manage' and 'Maintain' packages.

Bridgestone product and marketing manager Andy Mathias explains that tyre data is accumulated and registered on the Toolbox, which then provides user-friendly analysis and reports covering monthly expenses, pressures, removal causes, retreadability, tyre life, cost per kilometre, inventory control, etc.

"The app represents a big advance in both technology and efficiency," comments Mathias. "It records inspection of tyres on vehicles and quickly generates reports for fleet consulting services."

Fleets visiting the stand have a chance to win a one-year Monitor Package free of charge, he says – including the provision of a tyre and maintenance package tailor-made to their fleet requirements. **TE**

**SHOW SHORTS**

**Millers Oil** is offering visitors 100 litres of oil free when they purchase 1,000 litres. Its oils are claimed to help reduce emissions and maintenance, while boosting fuel economy by cutting friction and wear.

**BlitzRotary's** stand features the Hydro Lift S2 6.2-tonne and 8.2-tonne capacity wireless mobile column lifts. Hydrolift S2s add a further dimension to its already comprehensive range of commercial lifting equipment.

Wheel security expert Bob Hope is on **Disc-Lock Europe's** stand, ready and willing to discuss the common causes of wheel detachment from commercial vehicles – and how they can be avoided.

**Descartes** is demonstrating how users can set the frequency of licence checks with DVLA based on its drivers' risk profile, using SmartLicence. Users can subscribe to reports and alerts, and have the results emailed to them.

**Merridale** is showing a range of depot fuelling solutions. Its presentations cover: FuelWorks, the web-based fuel management service; tank gauging; and security upgrades for existing installations.

**Jost** is showing equipment from its four main brands – Jost, Rockinger, Tridac and Edbro – including the latest addition, the fuel-saving SDR Roof Diffusor. Products include fifth-wheel couplings, telescopic landing legs, towing hitches, mechanical and hydraulic steering systems.

New at the CV Show is **Town and Country Covers'** minibus seat cover range, tailored to fit the Vauxhall Movano 17-seater. These are manufactured using polyester, with a waterproof polyurethane lining, giving durability and protection. Other covers include some for the Renault Master minibus, Mercedes-Benz Actros and the new Transit Custom.

**SHOWSTOPPER Bodybuilder back-up**

Bodybuilder Bevan Group and vehicle repair and refurbishment specialist A&R Vehicle Services are promoting their 24-hour back-up at their joint stand. The two Black Country companies have been tied since Bevan acquired a stake in A&R last summer.

Bevan is best known as a builder of dry freight curtainside and box bodies, although it also offers insulated bodies for temperature-controlled applications in partnership with Schmitz Cargobull. However, the company also looks after some 2,400 vehicles on R&M or pay-as-you-go contracts – a side of the business that has grown 45% in the last year alone, not least because of the DEL tail-lift service contract.

