

# busworld newsletter



Number 13 - July 2005

This Busworld newsletter appears in January, May, July, September and November (5/year) - Afgiftekantoor 8900 Ieper 1 - P409506  
VU: BAAV - Luc Glorieux - Busworld - Kasteel van Rumbeke - Moorseelsesteenweg 2 - BE-8800 Roeselare - Tel. +32.51.22.60.60 - Fax +32.51.22.92.73

## BUSWORLD KORTRIJK KEEPS ON GROWING

You can be forgiven about not wanting to think of events in the chilly Belgian autumn when you have not enjoyed the summer season, but no one can stop the clock or the calendar!

Busworld Kortrijk will be held in the Exhibition Centre in Kortrijk from 21 to 26 October. The smallest hall has been demolished since the 2003 exhibition and replaced with a new and much larger hall, giving more space than ever before. Even so, temporary tented pavilions will be added at the front of the Exhibition Centre to cater for the unprecedented demand for stand space.

As we closed for press, Mieke Glorieux reported that all available stand space had been booked and some potential exhibitors were bound to be disappointed. Some of the largest exhibitors have asked for more floor space than previous years, because they will use Busworld Kortrijk to launch new models. The timing of Busworld Kortrijk could hardly be more perfect. Euro 4



*Busworld Kortrijk occupies an impressive and easily accessible area. In addition to the permanent halls, there are two large temporary pavilions. Further vehicles are parked outside the halls, making it the biggest bus and coach exhibition in Europe.*

engine emission limits come into effect for new models in October 2005 and for existing models by October 2006. There are likely to be record numbers of new models and many other technical, material and



commercial innovations. The organisers of Busworld Kortrijk confidently believe that, once again, the numbers of visitors will reach record levels. In 2003, 24,224 professional and trade visitors came from 105 different countries.



Marco Polo

Time marches on in our industry.

Many of the new models that were launched at Busworld Kortrijk in 2003 are now in volume production and earning revenue for their customers. Think of vehicles like the Setra ComfortClass family, the Mercedes-Benz Tourino midicoach, Neoplan's TourLiner, the Evadys high capacity coach from Irisbus and the Midys minicoach from the same stable, Temsa's new Diamond coach, Salvador Caetano's Winner coach body and VDL's Phileas advanced bus that is now running in Eindhoven.



VDL

Busworld Kortrijk 2005 promises to be a tremendous event. Demand for accommodation is filling up fast, but please look at the separate feature in this Newsletter about hotels if you have not yet made a booking.

### EUROPEAN COACH WEEK: 2005

A number of other associated events coincide with Busworld Kortrijk, including European Coach Week, the Coach or Bus Builder of the Year trophy, the European Grand Prix Award for Coach Tourism, the IRU-Eurochallenge for Public Transport, along with several seminars, workshops and conferences.

The first European Coach Week of Kortrijk was held in 1981 and edition number 12 will run from Saturday 15 to Tuesday 18 October, immediately before Busworld opens its doors.

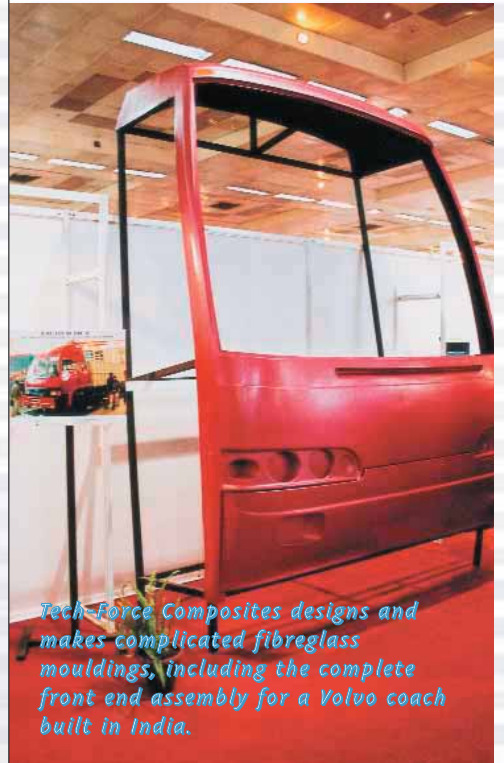
Entry is restricted to manufacturers taking part in Busworld Kortrijk and vehicle age is limited to a maximum of a single season of active touring work.

A series of tests are carried out by several juries, looking at technical, aesthetic, ecological, safety and comfort features on coaches. Facilities for drivers, tour guides and passengers on coach tours are all judged in depth, including extensive road tests.

In 2003, for the first time, there was a separate category for midicoaches and this will continue in 2005. The results of the European Coach Week will be announced on the opening day of Busworld Kortrijk.

### BUSWORLD INDIA REVIEWS

"MotorIndia", the leading Indian industry trade magazine and the only official publication for Busworld India, wrote a lengthy review of the first Busworld India exhibition in its April edition.



Tech-Force Composites designs and makes complicated fibreglass mouldings, including the complete front end assembly for a Volvo coach built in India.

The magazine interviewed around 15 exhibitors who were pleased that they had taken stands and were encouraged by the level of enquiries received. For instance, Mr M Sankar, Area Manager (Marketing) of Indiaan Coach said that his company had received good international exposure and enquires from 150 clients. His company was



Taba and the Automotive Corporation of Goa showed this new city bus with much of the floor only two steps above the ground.

very keen to participate in future events.

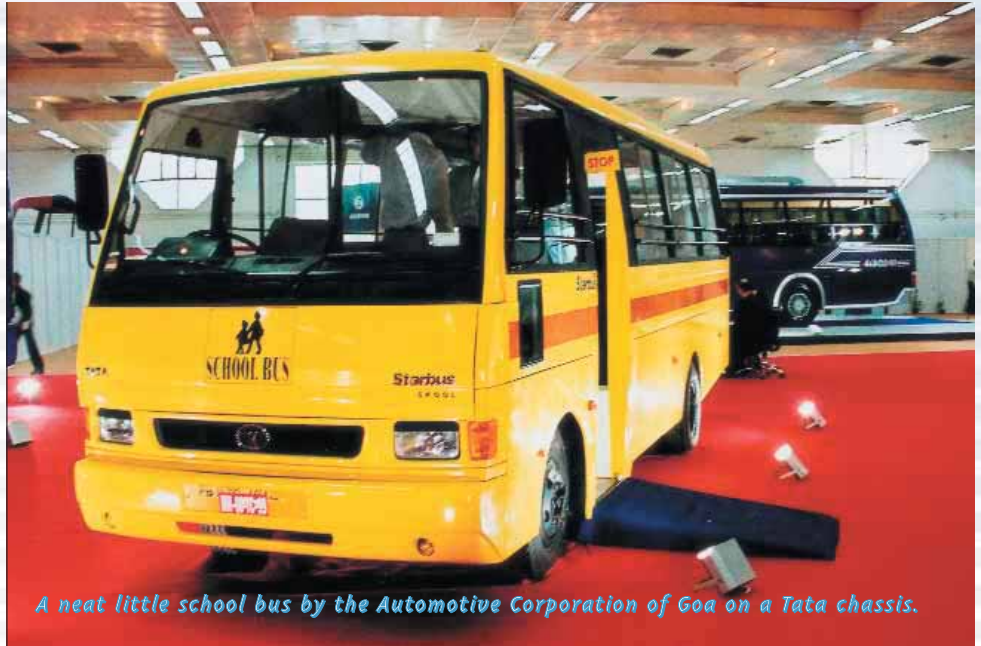
Mr Steve Colquhoun, General Manager of Hanover Displays Ltd of the United Kingdom, said that the show had rich potential, like the Chinese Busworld, which started in a small way (and has grown enormously). There was ready acceptance of his company's products from private operators.

Mr Hanumantha B Rao, Marketing Manager of VR Coatings Pvt, said that the "response for his company's products was overwhelming indeed".

Mr U K Verma, General Manager – Works, of Sietz Technologies India Pvt, said that the overall response to his company was excellent. "Being a North-based seat manufacturer, we received more than 400 visitors from the related field".

Mr Rajan Sharma, Managing Director Inter Ads Ltd, Busworld's partner in India, was delighted by the response by Indian manufacturers and customers to the first Busworld India and, together with Busworld, hopes to make it a regular biennial event.

He was particularly pleased with the level of support from the Government and from industry-related organisations, including the



*A neat little school bus by the Automotive Corporation of Goa on a Tata chassis.*

Vice-President of India, the Minister of State for Heavy Industries and Public Enterprises, the Ministry of Shipping, Road Transport and Highways, the Automotive Research Association of India, the Automobile Association of India, the Central Institute of Road Transport (representing the State Road Transport Undertakings), and the Indian Association of Tour Operators.

That confirmed that buses are on the political agenda in India!

## LILLE HOTEL SHUTTLE

Finding accommodation can be a challenge for visitors to Busworld Kortrijk, especially with growing numbers and many people coming from other countries. Busworld has made block bookings at five hotels in Lille and will be running a regular shuttle service between them and the Exhibition Halls in Kortrijk. Door-to-door journey times are less than half-an-hour and Lille is a hospitable city with a fine selection of restaurants.

Bookings should be made direct to the hotels by the email addresses listed below, but you must mention Busworld in order to obtain one or more of the block-booked rooms.

The hotels are:

[www.hotelhermitagegantois.com](http://www.hotelhermitagegantois.com)  
[www.lille-crowneplaza.com](http://www.lille-crowneplaza.com)  
[www.grandhotelbellevue.com](http://www.grandhotelbellevue.com)  
[www.hotelartdecoromarin.com](http://www.hotelartdecoromarin.com)  
[www.hoteldelatreille.com](http://www.hoteldelatreille.com)

Details of the shuttle bus service will be confirmed before Busworld Kortrijk, but please book soon. Rooms are available on a first-come, first-served basis.

If you leave it too late, try

[www.hotelboeken.be](http://www.hotelboeken.be) or  
[www.kortrijk.be/logies](http://www.kortrijk.be/logies) for hotels in the Kortrijk region.



*Traffic conditions in Delhi are chaotic. Note the lady riding side saddle on a scooter and the goat being carried in one of the small three-wheel shared taxis that are everywhere in the city.*

# REFLECTIONS ON BUSWORLD SHANGHAI

With the experience built up at five Busworld Shanghai exhibitions, we are sometimes asked if Chinese manufacturers will come to Europe – and when.

It is not an easy question to answer. The signals coming from some of the main players in the Chinese industry are mixed. It was noticeable at the last Busworld Shanghai that some of the leading manufacturers had recruited bright young graduates, mainly female, who are fluent in English. They have been taken on to help develop export activities.

Their employers believe it is easier to take someone who has acquired proficiency in a foreign language and give them the necessary levels of commercial and technical training, rather than expecting some of their technical people to come up to speed in foreign languages. There are now more pupils learning English in China than there are in the United Kingdom!



*Since last summer, China has permitted rigid vehicles up to 13.7 metre long. Several manufacturers entered longer vehicles for the awards, including Dandong Huanghai Automotive Co.*

The Chinese have also watched how European, Japanese and Korean bus and coach builders have approached the Chinese market, working with their joint venture partners. They have established parts and service networks in the main cities and will expand those networks with the

growing numbers of their vehicles in circulation. They have emphasised the importance of regular servicing, at agreed intervals, and of using genuine parts.

While some of the leading Chinese manufacturers recognise the importance of this strategy, others have tended to sell their products and forget them. Their vehicles are simple and unsophisticated, therefore repairs can be carried out by customers and workshops all across the country. That is part of the problem of recognising Chinese export activities. The range of products that they produce for their domestic market vary from very simple truck-derived buses with high floors to relatively sophisticated vehicles that would not be out of place in Western European markets. Of Western European manufacturers, probably only Mercedes-Benz can offer such a wide range, but their low-cost products are built in countries like Brazil, with Turkey offering mid-priced premium vehicles and, at the top end, the factories in Germany offering buses and coaches at quality and price levels rarely seen in China.

Most export sales from China have fallen into one of two similar categories with the same expectations. Either they have been



*CBC Iveco won a contract to supply 50 low floor articulated vehicles for the first Bus Rapid Transit system in Beijing.*

made to neighbouring territories, for instance, Siberian Russia, where many customers are closer to Chinese suppliers than the factories of the Russian bus industry, or they are to customers in developing countries, where initial price is the most important factor.

The leading Chinese builders now recognise that, if they are to be successful in mature and developed markets like those in Western Europe, they will have to invest heavily in parts and service support. They can mitigate that to some extent by using some Western European content, but that will push up their prices and take away some of their competitive advantage.

Engines will have to meet European emissions legislation, but customers will also expect other Western European components in the driveline.

The Xiamen King Long United Automotive Industry Co has made the most progress in Europe so far. Nearly 80 buses, built to an overall length of 11 metres, have been supplied to customers in Malta as



*Zhongtong Bus Holding is starting to build the Bova Magiq in China.*

part of the Government's plans to modernise the local bus fleets. Malta was renowned for its very elderly and colourful buses, but they were hardly user friendly.

The King Long vehicles have a low floor from the front entrance to a point shortly ahead of the rear axle.

Power is provided by a Cummins engine mounted vertically in line at the rear, driving through a ZF fully automatic gearbox to a conventional rear axle. Other features include full air suspension.

It is relatively easy to support a fleet of buses on an island, because they



*Jinhua Neoplan, also known as Youngman, is an authorised licensee of Neoplan and showed this very attractive coach, with the driver and courier accommodated in a low driving position.*

never stray far from the depot. It is a totally different story with touring coaches. However, at the beginning of June, after several months of rumours, a British importer finally unveiled the first right hand drive King Long luxury coach. It received favourable reviews in the trade press. The appearance was quite European, with a styling feature on each side inspired by Setra's La Linea, and a rear aspect with a strong hint of Irizar's PB range.

The King Long coach was priced competitively, but not aggressively. Coach customers have to think not only in terms of initial purchase price, but also residual value. If they want to trade in a coach for a new model four or five years in the future, what will that vehicle be worth?



*An attractive small coach by Xiamen Golden Dragon won a prize for the quality of its interior.*

explained, King Long built a tilt table in two days!

That demonstrates their capability as engineers, but they are also sensible and pragmatic business people. There is such booming demand for their products in their

## SEND US YOUR NEWS

Another edition of the Busworld Newsletter will be published before Busworld Kortrijk in October. We would like it to contain information about new products, especially those that will be launched for the first time at Busworld Kortrijk. The more news we can provide, the greater the number of visitors likely to attend.

If your company has any news and would like it reported free of charge, please contact us at [sonja.vandewiele@busworld.org](mailto:sonja.vandewiele@busworld.org) no later than Friday 9 September



*Two Chinese exhibitors presented very passable interpretations of the new Neoplan Starliner, first launched at Hanover last September.*

Coaching is almost a fashion business. For some customers, the purchase of a new coach is a statement of style. The King Long coach does not have the "WOW" factor that makes it stand out from the European crowd. Indeed, it is almost the opposite, because it can merge quite easily with many modern European coaches.

It is unlikely that there will be a rush of Chinese vehicles into Europe. The cost of compliance with our regulations is high, and many new skills have to be learned. The King Long coach for the British market had to comply with the stability, or tilt, test. Evidently, when that was

domestic market that they can afford to take time to build up export trade. European manufacturers would be unwise to dismiss the threat of Chinese bus and coach builders. Their products have improved dramatically in the last ten years and fierce competition in their domestic market will continue to drive up standards at a rapid pace.

There was so much news in the previous edition of the Busworld Newsletter that we held over this selection of photographs from the last Busworld Shanghai. They show the rapid advances being made by Chinese manufacturers.



## NEW ADDRESS

### BUSWORLD HEADQUARTERS

*Kasteel van Rumbeke  
Moorseelsesteenweg 2  
B-8800 Roeselare  
Belgium-Europe*

## NEXT

# BUSWORLD KORTRIJK

*(21.10.05 > 26.10.05)*