



busworld NEWSLETTER

confident KORTRIJK

Mieke Glorieux



The Busworld Headquarters in the Kasteel von Rumbeke is a hive of activity these days. Mieke Glorieux, Director of Busworld Kortrijk, and her team are working hard on all the preparations for the biggest bus and coach exhibition in the world this year.

The global financial crisis has had less of an impact on sales of buses and coaches than other kinds of vehicles. Experience in previous downturns has demonstrated that urban and interurban buses are nearly recession-proof. People still need to travel and bus services are good value when money is tight.

People also realise that long distance coach travel is not only inexpensive, but environmentally much more friendly than aircraft. Many have grown wise to the pricing practices of the low cost airlines. Coaches do not charge extra for luggage, priority boarding, seat allocation and credit card transactions. Intercity coach fares do not start at an opening price of €10 and end up at €80!

Commenting on Busworld Kortrijk, Mieke Glorieux said: "I am delighted at the level of confidence that exhibitors have shown in the industry. We have so much more available and easily useable space in the Kortrijk



The new main entrance to Kortrijk Xpo is taking shape.

Xpo, compared to previous years. Some of our long-established exhibitors have booked their traditional locations in the various halls, but others will find themselves in new parts of the Xpo complex.

"It has been quite a challenge for us to cope with the much larger floor area of almost 50,000 square metres and to allocate all the various stands. Everyone, exhibitors and visitors alike, will be pleased that all the halls are equally accessible and that people will no longer have to wind through crowded tented pavilions. However, we still plan to retain the features that give Busworld Kortrijk its unique atmosphere.

"The management and contractors at Xpo Kortrijk are making excellent progress with the new facilities and we can now imagine how they will appear when finished. Everyone will be impressed with the new entrance hall, at one end of the Ramblas, and very easily accessible from the street outside."

The global financial crisis is by no means all bad news. Many airline fares have tumbled, making it less expensive for the thousands of



A new hall is being erected, with full provision of utilities.

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alternative DRIVES & FUELS

Although the price of oil has been volatile in the last two to three years, the long term consensus among industry experts is that the price will inevitably rise. All the main vehicle manufacturers are looking at alternative fuels and drive systems as part of their medium to longer term product development strategies. The world cannot continue in the same old way, using up fossil fuels until they run out.



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City buses are prime candidates for hybrid drive systems, which can produce savings in fuel consumption of up to 30%. Until now, the main impetus has been in the United States, where 80% of the price of a new bus is federally funded. That goes a long way towards helping with the higher initial cost, compared with a standard diesel bus.

Hybrid buses were present at Busworld Asia in China last April, also full size buses powered solely by large electric batteries, producing absolutely zero emissions. The Chinese authorities are actively encouraging the introduction of hybrid buses, and up to 1,000 could enter service this year.

European manufacturers have been busy developing hybrid vehicles, and we might well expect to see at least some of them in or around Busworld Kortrijk. It is interesting that quite a number of different solutions have been developed. Some are still at the pre-production stage, but other vehicles are running in service, enabling operators to gain first-hand experience of the new technology. Belgium is playing a leading role in running hybrid buses.

It might be helpful to give some descriptions. A hybrid vehicle is one which has two or more independent power sources, such as a diesel engine and electric motor(s). There are two main configuration systems, namely series and parallel.

On a series hybrid system there is no mechanical connection between the engine and the drive wheels. All energy produced by the engine is converted to electric power by a generator which passes current to one or more electric traction motors and also recharges the energy storage system. Because the engine is not directly connected to the wheels, it can operate at optimum speed and can be switched off temporarily for all-electric zero-emissions operations, like accelerating from a bus stop.

On a parallel hybrid system, both the engine and an electric motor have direct, independent, connections to the final drive. Either power source, or both in combination, can be used to turn the vehicle's wheels. The systems are usually designed so that the engine provides power at relatively constant speeds. The electric motor provides power during stops and at low speeds. Both power sources normally work together during acceleration.

Volvo Bus Corporation is the principal user of a parallel hybrid system, claiming that it works well not only in city conditions, but also on longer suburban routes, where the vehicle might typically stop and start fewer times. Volvo's hybrid system can also be used on local delivery trucks and construction equipment, thus sharing development costs.

Most hybrid buses use a diesel engine of 4-5 litres capacity, compared with engines up to twice that size in a standard diesel bus. The main exception is Scania, using a 9-litre ethanol-fuelled engine, giving very low CO2 emissions. That is the smallest size of engine in Scania's range.

Most manufacturers now specify lithium-ion batteries to store electrical energy. They are relatively compact and hold a high electric charge for their size. They are expensive, but some manufacturers are talking of renting them to operators, helping to reduce higher capital cost.



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1. The stylish MAN Lion's City Hybrid bus.
2. Volvo's ISAM hybrid system uses a compact 5-litre engine.
3. Mercedes-Benz has launched its Citaro FuelCELL Hybrid city bus.
4. Van Hool has orders for 79 hybrid buses from De Lijn of Belgium.
5. Solaris had delivered hybrid buses to customers in several countries.

Some of the earlier hybrid buses used lead-acid and other relatively inexpensive but heavy batteries. Those manufacturers who have opted for batteries now prefer lithium-ion. There are high hopes that, as demand increases, prices will come down.

MAN and Scania have opted to use super capacitors for storing electrical energy. They are compact and are expected to last the lifetime of the bus. Super capacitors are very good at providing short bursts of electrical power, such as enabling a bus to accelerate from a standstill.

In all systems, energy that would normally be lost in braking and deceleration is recuperated and transferred to the batteries or super capacitors. Buses with a series hybrid drive system will normally accelerate solely in electrical mode. They are much more quiet than standard diesel buses, and the acceleration is stepless. People living and working near to bus stops notice the lower noise levels and the absence of emissions.

Some cities still prefer buses powered by compressed natural gas, but the emission levels are now only a little lower than the latest Euro 5 engines which become obligatory from 1 October. A fully-charged set of gas tanks adds about 1 tonne to the unladen weight of a vehicle and can therefore restrict passenger carrying capacity. Gas also requires an expensive re-fuelling infrastructure and high awareness of safety in maintenance depots.

Scania has championed the use of ethanol as an alternative fuel. It can be produced from renewable resources, like crops or timber waste. It needs an additive to aid ignition, but emission levels are well below Euro 5 limits.

Although London currently has the largest number of hybrid buses in service in Europe, they have been built by several manufacturers so that Transport for London can gain comparative knowledge.

The largest orders in Europe, so far, have been placed with Van Hool by De Lijn, the principal bus operator in Busworld's home territory of Flanders. They have ordered a total of 79 hybrid buses, of various sizes, both solo and articulated. Some will be in service by the time of Busworld Kortrijk, and the rest will be delivered over the following twelve months.

Van Hool has also delivered hybrid buses to other customers and has been carrying out a long-term trial of a fuel-cell hybrid bus, initially with De Lijn.

There is increasing interest in hybrid buses in several European countries. A number of cities are talking of carrying out trials. Most manufacturers will soon be able to make the transition from prototype and pre-production models to regular full scale production.



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BUSWORLD RUSSIA CONTRACT SIGNED

In July, Marc van den Bossche, President of BAAV and Valery Barulin, Chief Executive Officer of the Nizhny Novgorod Fair were the principal signatories to an agreement to organise Busworld Russia 2010.

Nizhny Novgorod, formerly known as Gorky, lies about 400km east of Moscow and is an important manufacturing centre. It is the headquarters of GAZ, the largest automotive group in Russia, GAZ and other member companies in the Group can provide a complete range of vehicles from minibuses to full size city buses and luxury coaches. There is a particularly strong sector for mid-sized vehicles. Production in Russia has been down quite steeply in the first four months of 2009, but the country has great oil, gas and mineral resources. That will help to stimulate demand



Signing the contract for the first Busworld Russia to be held in 2010.

for public transport, so the timing of the first Busworld Russia looks inspired. We hope to announce the exact date shortly.

talking TURKEY

The third edition of Busworld Turkey will be held from 25-28 March 2010 in the IDTM Exhibition Centre, close to Istanbul's Ataturk International Airport. Bookings will start during Busworld Kortrijk in October.



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Turkey is home to several important vehicle manufacturers and also a very strong component and accessory supply industry. The country has become a major international supplier of vehicles and components.

Mercedes-Benz has a large and very modern factory just outside Istanbul. It builds an extensive range of low floor city buses, interurban and full luxury coaches. MAN has a large factory outside the capital, Ankara, building some older high-floor models for the Turkish and neighbouring markets, but also a modern range of interurban and luxury coaches, under the MAN and Neoplan brands. Many of them are supplied to customers in Western Europe. The Turkish factory is also the sole plant building MAN's low entry bus, with a standard rear axle.

Temsa has expanded dramatically in recent years, including the opening of a new joint venture facility in Egypt, building principally for African and Middle East customers. Temsa

has expanded its range with the development of the Avenue, a city bus available in low floor and low entry versions, with the option of diesel and CNG engines.

BMC has the largest commercial vehicle factory in Turkey, making a wide range of products, including buses, outside Izmir. The company has secured large orders in its home market, including for gas-fuelled buses, and is also a prominent supplier to Bulgaria.

Otokar has expanded its activities and is regularly selling its compact midicoaches in a number of Western European markets. The company has steadily been increasing its range, with longer vehicles and lower floors. It is a similar story with Anadolu Isuzu. It is a well established player in the mid-size sector, but has also been developing into a full range supplier.

All these companies are building to high-quality international standards in modern factories.

1. Temsa can offer both diesel and gas powered versions of its new Avenue low floor city bus. Temsa will have its own new hall at Busworld Kortrijk.

2. BMC offers an extensive range of city buses and midicoaches.

3. Mercedes-Benz has delivered 250 of its Capacity buses to Istanbul.

4. Otokar had an extensive display at Kortrijk two years ago.

Concurrently, a strong supply industry has developed, capable of meeting their requirements. This has also given the suppliers the ability to win new customers and sell their products outside Turkey.

Istanbul is one of the great cities of the world and an international trading hub. It is the logical place to hoist Busworld Turkey and to attract many international visitors.

europaean COACH & BUS WEEK



Traditionally, the European Coach Week has been held immediately before Busworld Kortrijk. The latest coach models are put through a series of tests to access features like ride and handling, acceleration, active safety, driver, courier and passenger comfort, and so on.

A working group decided to review and revise European Coach Week, to reflect the changing nature of the industry, in the widest sense. For the first time, city and interurban buses will be able to take part, therefore ECW will now become the European Coach and Bus Week. The bus with the highest overall score for innovation will receive the Kortrijk Bus Grand Award.

The general ranking for coaches will still continue. The vehicle with the highest overall score will receive the Kortrijk Coach Grand Award.

Everyone is becoming more aware of the environment. ECW will recognise this with the presentation of the Kortrijk Busworld Bus/Coach Environment Award to the vehicle with the highest score for innovation relative to the environment.

Innovation will be an important theme and members of the jury will pay particular attention to innovation in the areas of safety, the environment, comfort, technology, design and accessibility.

Another change to previous ECW events is the "Idea Plaza". The intention is that all bus designers put their heads together to present all developments involving new technology, ranging from vehicles with alternative drive systems to unique ideas which capitalise on the constantly changing needs of the industry. The vehicle with the highest score in this area will win the Kortrijk Busworld Innovation Award.

Immediately after the end of the trials, all the vehicles enter their respective halls in Xpo Kortrijk. The winners of the various awards will be able to display them prominently during the exhibition.



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1. The teams of judges are very thorough.
2. Testing a Van Hool Astron in 2007.
3. FAST entered one of its Syter coaches which are widely used in France.
4. A Setra TopClass going through its paces in 2007.
5. The multi-purpose Temsa Tourmalin is very popular in France.
6. Neoplan regularly participates in the trials.

COACH OF THE YEAR 2010

An international jury of highly respected journalists has already carried out its tests to select the winner of the prestigious "International Coach of the Year 2010" award. It is believed that five top European designs took part in the competition including, unusually, two with right hand drive.

The award will be presented to the winner on the opening day of Busworld Kortrijk, by the Chairman of the Jury, Stuart Jones.



Stuart Jones (left) hands over the Bus of the Year 2009 trophy to Werner Staib, Head of Setra, centre, and Harald Landmann, Head of Daimler Buses, who has since retired, right.

international visitors who come to Busworld Kortrijk every two years. Hoteliers have also had to cut their rack rates, although those in the immediate vicinity of Busworld Kortrijk will make hay while the sun shines.

Busworld Kortrijk has become established as the most international event for the bus and coach industry. We will be welcoming 350 exhibitors from 29 countries. Busworld Kortrijk will run from 16 to 21 October, preceded by two press and trade days. In the next issue, immediately before Busworld Kortrijk, we hope to bring you news of innovations at the exhibition.

Xpo Kortrijk can also be reached easily from the Belgian motorway network. There will be a number of designated parking areas near the Xpo centre, with free shuttle buses. Directions to Kortrijk and the locations of the parking areas can be found on our website, www.busworld.org under the directory for Busworld Kortrijk.



1. Van Hool celebrated its 60th anniversary at Kortrijk in 2007.
 2. VDL launched the low floor Citea city bus at Kortrijk in 2007.
 3. Scania launched the OmniExpress at Kortrijk two years ago.
 4. Exhibitors come to Kortrijk from many countries.

SIXTH EUROPEAN BUS AND COACH FORUM

Busworld enjoys an excellent relationship with the International Road Transport Union (IRU) with its headquarters in Geneva. IRU represents the road transport industry worldwide, with a network of 180 members in 74 countries.

On Friday 16 October, IRU is organising a conference: "Boosting European Coach Tourism & Travel Through Business-Friendly Rules". It will be held in the Gruzenberg Centre at the Kortrijk Xpo from 09.30 to 13.30. The working languages will be Dutch, English, French, German and Russian. You can register now on line at www.iru.org/index, then go into the events 2009 file.

HOTELS AT BUSWORLD

We have made arrangements to help visitors to Busworld Kortrijk to find hotel accommodation. Those in the city of Kortrijk are probably already fully booked, but there is accommodation available in nearby cities like Lille, Bruges and Ghent.

Log on to www.busworld.org, then into the directory for Busworld Kortrijk. Look for "visitors" and "how to find hotels". toerisme@kortrijk.be can also help with logies and restaurants.

INDUSTRY NEWS

If you need to keep up with what is happening in the fast-changing world of buses and coaches, including manufacturers, component suppliers and services, then log on regularly to www.busworld.org. On the menu page, there is a facility called NEWS. The latest information is gathered from around the world and summarised in brief informative articles. It takes only a few minutes of your time each week, but it will keep you right on top of what is happening in the global industry and in areas where your company is active.

NEWSLETTER ON LINE

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