While everyone is looking forward to the summer, preparations for Busworld Europe are in full swing. The exhibition will run from 20 to 25 October and will be the last to be held in Kortrijk Xpo Centre. There is a full programme of events just before and during Busworld so the team is already very busy.

Looking at European bus and coach markets, registrations of new vehicles are continuing to climb gradually in most countries and that is an encouraging sign for all the exhibitors. Some have already said that they plan to launch new models at Busworld. They recognise it is the ideal opportunity for maximum impact, with around 35,000 visitors expected from all over the world.

Mercedes-Benz has announced the latest edition of the very popular Tourismo, built in its modern factory near Istanbul. The company has released an artist’s impression that shows little detail but indicates that the new Tourismo looks rather like the current model but with a more aerodynamic shape and new styling details. The design is completely new and extremely aerodynamic. This will contribute significantly to reductions in fuel consumption.

The new Tourismo will be available in four models, with three different lengths from just under 12 metres to 14 metres. The range has been cleverly designed to cover many applications including shuttle, excursion, express and high comfort touring. There will be engine and power options and we can expect a full set of safety features.

MAN has said that it will launch the latest generation of the popular Lion’s Coach at Busworld. The structure has been completely re-
designed to comply with the more strict ECE R66.02 roll-over standard and is therefore stiffer. The photograph shows that the new model has been re-designed all round with new LED headlights, side and rear lights. A distinctive feature is a strip-form daytime running light.

MAN has also refreshed the interior and more details are likely to be released before Busworld Europe. The new Lion’s Coach benefits from MAN’s EfficientCruise control and a hoist of safety features. Important changes have been made to enhance ride comfort, improve handling and provide higher safety reserves. Some of this has been achieved by optimal chassis tuning and a new generation of shock absorbers.

We expect many other new model launches and hope to bring you more information in future editions of the Busworld Times.

Since the last edition of Busworld in Kortrijk, there has been a dramatic increase in interest in vehicles powered by alternative fuels. It is partly driven by political pressure to reduce noise and emissions in urban centres. Although buses and coaches are only a tiny percentage of overall new vehicle registrations, many of them work long hours in cities centres and are therefore targets for replacement by lower or zero emission vehicles.

Several major cities have announced ambitious plans to replace their existing diesel buses with new generation products. For instance, Paris wants 80% of its fleet to be zero emission by 2025. There are already large numbers of hybrid buses in service in London and routes are steadily being converted from diesel to lower emission buses. Transport for London has announced ambitious plans to invest in fuel cell buses in collaboration with the cities of Aberdeen, Dundee and Birmingham. Their hope is that volume orders will bring down the price of fuel cells and achieve attractive whole life running costs.

The Chinese have led the way in developing battery powered buses which have the benefit of zero emissions, but a number of European builders have followed. There are various different solutions. Manufacturers like BYD have promoted buses that have batteries capable of a full day’s operation without any intermediate recharging. The main drawback is the weight of the batteries, but the technology is improving and BYD is optimistic of achieving the current range with lower weight.

The alternative is smaller batteries which require intermediate recharging, typically for four or five minutes at each end of a route. The weight of batteries is much less, therefore greater numbers of passengers can be carried. These buses can be recharged either from overhead gantries or from plates laid into the surface of roads at convenient points on routes.

Critics say that intermediate charging can be a problem if buses are delayed on route by congestion. The need to recharge means that they have little or no recovery time in their schedules. There is also the cost of the recharging systems and the need to install them in pull-off areas outside the main traffic flow. This is probably acceptable in towns and smaller cities but is not a solution for larger cities.

The influential research organisation, IDTechEx, based in Cambridge in the United Kingdom recently predicted that there would be a market for medium and large hybrid and pure electric buses valued at over USD165 billion by 2027. That is only ten years ahead!

They published a report, “Electric Buses 2017-2027”, which appraised well over 100 hybrid and pure electric bus manufacturers. Their report was based on extensive interviews and also took a detailed look at fuel cell buses. It suggested that further delays in development of fuel cell buses risks them being overtaken by more efficient pure electric buses.

Some manufacturers and markets are putting their faith in buses fuelled by compressed natural gas or biogas. Engines are noticeably more quiet and emissions are lower, but gas
requires expensive infrastructure at depots and heavy tanks on the vehicle. Gas might well be an interim solution until electric vehicles become even more efficient.

Diesel is by no means dead. It will remain the standard fuel for suburban and interurban buses, and for coaches, for many years to come. The latest Euro VI engines have absolutely minimal emissions and are proving to be very economical on fuel. There is likely to be pressure to remove buses and coaches with older engines from urban centres, but that should stimulate sales of the latest new vehicles.

Busworld Europe is bound to have the largest selection of new buses and coaches on display and there will be many other innovations. You can already go on-line at www.busworldeurope.org to see the list of exhibitors and the floor plan for Busworld.

October is not so far away and you might like to think about making travel plans, especially hotel accommodation.

We look forward to meeting you at Busworld Europe.

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New at Busworld Europe: awards night

For the forthcoming last edition of Busworld Europe in Kortrijk, from 19 to 25 October, before moving to Brussels in 2019, Busworld decided to start a new tradition and organise a special Awards Night on the eve of the exhibition.

During this event, the Busworld Awards 2017 will be presented as well as the "Coach of the Year 2018" and the "Sustainable Bus Awards 2018".

The Awards Night will take place on the evening of Thursday 19 October in Kortrijk Xpo, right after the Opening Ceremony in the theatre of Kortrijk and the VIP tour in the exhibition. The traditional walking dinner will have an extra dimension with this entertaining show.

Busworld Awards

Busworld recently changed the name of the awards competition ECW (European Coach and Bus Week) to Busworld Awards. The new name speaks for itself. The goal of these awards is to guide visitors in the exhibition – and readers of all the articles that will subsequently be published all around the world – towards the specialities presented in the exhibition.

The general organisation for the Busworld Awards is left unchanged. Like the previous ECW tests, during one test day on Saturday 14 October, a combination of road and stationary tests will be performed in Kortrijk. Dedicated teams of international and Belgian experts will each focus on their speciality, all using a carefully prepared check list. In total, more than 180 aspects of the vehicles will be evaluated.

The different jury groups are Driving Test, Driver Comfort, Passenger Comfort, Guide Comfort (for coaches only), Ecology and Maintenance, Emissions, Safety, and last but not least, Design.

All the jury groups will make their evaluations on Saturday, except the Design jury which will wait until the following Thursday. The Design jury is allowed to take into consideration all vehicles that are present in the exhibition. Busworld Europe exhibitors can register for participation until the end of June.

The Busworld Awards consist of two overall prizes for the vehicles, the Grand Award Coach and the Grand Award Bus. In addition to these Grand Awards vehicles can also be awarded one of the following Labels when they excel in a certain field, ie an Ecology Label, a Safety Label, a Comfort Label and a Design Label.

Since Busworld is not only about vehicles, the same Busworld Awards jury grants Innovation Labels to accessories, parts and service companies present in the exhibition. In this way, visitors are informed about the "must see" innovations in the Busworld exhibitions.

Coach of the Year

Traditionally, starting in 1989, the prestigious "Coach of the Year" award is announced at Busworld Europe shows. Busworld has been a loyal sponsor and supporter of this award from the beginning.

The jury consists of professional journalists from 21 bus and coach magazines coming from 21 different countries and recently joined by a new 22nd candidate magazine from the
The participants for the “Coach of the Year 2018” award are already known. They are the Carrozzeria Barri Galileo HD, the Irizar i8, the Iveco Bus Evadys, the Mercedes-Benz Tourismo, the Neoplan Tourliner, the Scania Interlink HD and the VDL Futura FDD2.

Who do you think will win this time? Come to Busworld Europe and find out when the trophy is handed over to the winner.

**Sustainable Bus Awards**

A third and fairly new award will be presented at Busworld’s Awards Night: The Sustainable Bus Awards. These awards were born in 2016 and focus on the sustainable aspects of buses and coaches. The prizes aim to play a role in promoting a new mobility culture, not only encouraging the use of the most advanced technologies in terms of low environmental impact but also taking into account safety of vehicles, ie the capability of the vehicle to reduce the danger for passengers, pedestrians and drivers. Sustainability also means establishing a positive image of the vehicles in the eyes of the general public. Hence, several aspects come into play, such as noise, recyclability of components and the general environmental commitment of the manufacturer.

The Italian magazine, “Autobus” initiated this award and developed a sustainability index, Mobility Revolution, together with LifeGate and with the help of Professor Giulio Ceppi of the Politecnico University, Milan. At the moment, the jury consists of four professional bus and coach magazines. They will award a Sustainable Urban Bus 2018, a Sustainable Intercity Bus 2018 and a Sustainable Coach 2018.

This prestigious Awards Night will bring an added value to the already very busy Busworld Europe events programme.

Manufacturers who would like to know more about these awards should contact the following people:

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Busworld Academy congress in Medellin

Following the success of the first Busworld Latin America in Medellin, Colombia, in December last year the second event will be held from 5 to 7 December this year. We will tell you more about that event in future editions of the Busworld Times.

Concurrently, the Busworld Academy is working with RISE Research Institutes of Sweden to organise a safety session during Busworld Latin America. The partners are looking for speakers with fresh, innovative, cutting-edge ideas, concepts, case studies and best practices. They are calling for submission of abstracts by 15 June.

Topics will include Mobility as a Service and Passenger Comfort, including bus design, integrated ticketing systems, modular and high capacity bus design and first and last mile solutions. This is particularly apt in Latin America where there are many dedicated high capacity busways.

Another topic will include contributed technologies towards even more sustainable buses and coaches, technologies and business models for implementation of zero emission bus transport. A third theme will concentrate on improving passenger and driver safety, technologies, training methods, including road safety, also measures to combat criminality, aggression and terror.

In what promises to be a wide ranging and very interesting conference, there will also be market analysis covering city transport, transport on demand, long distance services, and coach tourism.

Busworld Turkey has a new home

The popular Busworld Turkey exhibition will move to a new home in the city of Izmir when it is held from 19 to 21 April next year.

Busworld and its Turkish partners, HKF Trade Fairs, are very impressed with the exhibition facilities in the Aegean city which has a population of around 2.8 million and has invested heavily in modern public transport systems.

Turkey has been seriously developing new roads and infrastructure. An impressive six lane suspension bridge, with a main span of 1,550 metres has been built over the eastern end of the Sea of Marmara. It is the most important part of the 409km highway, linking Izmir and Istanbul. It cuts the journey time between the two cities from eight to four hours!

The highway passes near to Bursa which is a major automotive centre in Turkey and home to a number of bus and minibus builders, also component suppliers.

Izmir has some excellent hotels and the climate in April is normally very pleasant. We will carry more news about Busworld Turkey in future editions of the Busworld Times.

“Integrate + connect”

That is the title of a two day conference (23-24 October) which is being jointly organised by Busworld and UITP during Busworld Europe at the Kortrijk Xpo Centre.

The strategic partnership combines more than 40 years experience of the industry by Busworld with UITP’s global knowledge base. The partners are working on the conference which will highlight major trends and developments affecting the bus industry, from connected and autonomous buses to the roll-out of clean electric bus fleets.

Topics will include achieving full electric operations, the introduction of driverless technology, the support for modular and high capacity vehicles, digitalisation, and cost efficiency.

This important conference comes at a time when electric buses are moving rapidly up the political agenda. For example, the environment ministers of Germany’s federal states have announced Faktor 100, a programme to deploy more electric buses in public transport. The name reflects their belief that one electric bus can save emissions equivalent to 100 cars. Their plan requests €50m from the Government in 2018, and €100m in each of the following years. If successful, it could mean 250 zero emission buses entering service in Germany in 2018 and 500 per annum from 2019.

There is also growing interest in autonomous vehicles and visitors will have the opportunity to try out the driverless French Navya vehicle at Kortrijk Xpo. From 20 to 22 October it will be driving between the North and South Entrances. Then, from 23 to 25 October it will run between the South Entrance and the Kinepolis where the UITP Congress will be held. The Navya autonomous bus can be used by all Busworld Europe visitors.
Busworld keeps you informed

Busworld regularly expands and updates communications for everyone involved in the bus and coach industry in the widest sense.

For example, log onto www.busworld.org and our YouTube channel where you can watch some of the latest topical videos.

There is also Industry News, a daily newssfeed of bus and coach industry news, especially new product developments. These cover a number of topics including innovations in a wide range of components that are being introduced for electric vehicles. There are estimated to be more than 5,000 outstanding patents worldwide for technology related to electric vehicles. A patent application today is likely to be a product on the market within the next five years.

TELL US YOUR NEWS

We will be publishing further editions of the Busworld Times in the months leading up to Busworld Europe in Kortrijk.

Subject to the availability of space, we will welcome any news of new products that you plan to promote in Kortrijk. This a free service and information should be sent to inge@busworld.org along with a suitable photograph or two. Please be sure to let us know if there is an embargo date on any information that you send us. There is usually a short period of a few days between closing for publication and completion of each edition.

Join the Busworld community on Twitter (@Busworld), Facebook (page: BusworldInternational) and LinkedIn (group: Busworld Academy).

Receive the latest bus and coach industry news via our bi-weekly Busworld BUSiness. Register at our website www.busworld.org.

Busy Busworld diary

Busworlds are a little bit like buses. There has not been one since December last year, but suddenly they are coming along like a convoy. You might like to note the following events in your diary:

- Busworld Latin America in Medellin, Colombia, from 5 to 7 December 2017.
- Busworld Turkey in Izmir from 19 to 21 April 2018.
- Busworld India in Bengaluru from 28 to 30 August 2018.
- Busworld Russia in Moscow from 23 to 25 October 2018.

Further information on all these events will be carried in future editions of the Busworld Times.

The busworld times online

The Busworld Times is now available on-line at www.busworld.org. Alternatively, we can arrange to send it to you by e-mail.

Please make your request to inge.buytaert@busworld.org.