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# It takes two to Tango



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## The Hire Exchange

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# STIMULATING THE BIG TRUCK MOUNTS

Sales of larger truck mounted lifts have, on the whole, been somewhat subdued over the past couple of years. But can the launch of new models or a new entrant help stimulate or shake up the market? We take a look at some of the latest developments.

**In the Cranes & Access Truck Mounted lift feature last year we asked if the launch of Ruthmann's 100 metre T1000 HF would help kick-start the top end of the market? Would it encourage rental companies to take a fresh look at their largest platforms in preparation for future growth in demand, perhaps replace ageing models or expand their fleets in preparation for more wind turbine installations and maintenance work... not to mention growing interest in using them for working on harbour cranes, overhead power lines and taller buildings.**

The answer is... possibly. Yes, there has certainly been an uptick in interest for truck mounted platforms over 70 metres, but not at the very top end. Ruthmann's 100 metre T1000 HF launched last October was the biggest new truck mounted platform for three years. And while there have been a few more sales lifts of 90 metres or more, the current sweet spot appears to be units of between 70 and 75 metres.

## THE BAUMA EFFECT

We have mentioned the 'Bauma effect' before, the big show is such an important global shop window that most international equipment manufacturers gear product development programmes towards an unveiling at the big event in Munich. The incredibly high cost of exhibiting also encourages manufacturers to have a launch product ready that will make an impact and wow visitors.

This year was no different, so it was no surprise to see a number of big new truck mount launches. However, no one expected or anticipated a 72 metre platform from a new market entrant in the form of Altec Teupen with its first ever big platform, the TE720.

This category - 70 to 75 metres - appears to be the new battlefield for the leading truck mounted lift manufacturers... and Altec Teupen appears to have fired a very good warning shot across all of their bows.

## ALTEC TAKES TEUPEN

Altec's acquisition of Teupen Maschinenbau from owner Marin Borutta in April 2024 followed on from an open ended contract Altec signed with Teupen for the initial supply of 100 insulated spider lifts. Borutta - who acquired a majority stake in Teupen in 2017 - remains on board to manage the business and it is he who has masterminded their entrance into the big truck mounted market with the development of this new model. Not only did he spot a gap in the market, but he also jumped at the opportunity created when Palfinger closed its Krefeld facility and several highly experienced truck mounted lift designers and production staff decided not to relocate to the Palfinger plant in Löbau, 760km away.

Teupen had no previous experience of designing big truck mounts, but its new recruits - perhaps eager for a little revenge - have plenty. Teupen does, however, have some experience producing truck mounted lifts on 3.5 tonne chassis - such as the 25 metre Euro B25T from the early 2000s until about 2012.

Parent company Altec is heavily involved in the tree care, utility and telecommunications markets, particularly where the two overlap - i.e. trimming tree limbs away from overhead power lines, etc - but its truck mounted platforms are all under 45 metres.

A statement from Altec at the time said: "This acquisition expands the footprint for Altec worldwide and provides a complement to our robust line of products and services designed for the utility, telecommunications, tree care and lights and signage markets." In spite of this a







Altec Teupen TE720

big new truck mount was the last thing anyone expected. When the acquisition was being negotiated, the ex-Palfinger employees were already hard at work on Borutta's new project. The new team apparently designed and built the unit for Bauma in just over 14 months.

At Bauma the TE720 - mounted on a 32 tonne four axle Scania P 500, although it can also be mounted on a MAN or Volvo chassis - features a five section lower boom, three section upper boom and a jib with 220 degrees of articulation. This provides a maximum working height of 71.6 metres with 320kg in the platform, while the 600kg maximum platform capacity is available at up to 66.8 metres. Outreach is 32 metres with 600kg, 37 metres with 320kg and 42 metres with 100kg. These outreach figures are available with the boom in any position and not just over the front or rear of the chassis or over the top of one outrigger jack. The maximum up & over clearance height is 46 metres, and the machine has a below ground level reach of 17 metres.

The standard 950mm deep platform extends from 2.4 to 3.8 metres, with 440 degrees of rotation. It also includes a built-in wind speed monitor, anti-collision protection and a folding seat. The overall machine length is 11.8 metres, being under 12 metres, it does not need a special travel permit. The overall width is 2.48 metres and overall height 3.96 metres. When fully extended, the infinitely variable outriggers have a 12.2 by nine metre footprint and can be set from the remote controller. Two boom mounted cameras provide views of the platform and the chassis on



Multitel MJE 710

two large colour displays in the platform and at the rear of the vehicle. The stowed boom design enables a sleeper cab to be specified.

Options include a hydraulic generator, LED work lights under platform collision protection, and an intercom system. Four large outrigger mats with stowage are included.

## MULTITEL'S NEW 71 METRE

Another new model in this size range launched at Bauma was the 71 metre Multitel MJE 710 mounted on a 32 tonne Volvo chassis. The MJE 710 has a five section lower boom, three section upper boom and articulating jib for a maximum working height of 70.6 metres, 28.5 metres of outreach with 600kg in the platform 33.7 metres with 280kg and 37 metres with 100kg.

The first unit has just been delivered to Italian rental company Ciemme Noleggio. Sales manager Tiziano Marcassola said: "This delivery has a special meaning for me as Ciemme bought this machine before it existed on paper. A sign of trust and an indication of the deep partnership that goes back decades."

Multitel also introduced a new gravity lowering system on the new machine developed in collaboration with Flodraulic Motion Systems. A high precision proportional valve keeps the rod side of the cylinder filled with oil, as the barrel side empties, preventing cavitation or shocks during descent. Giovanni Vaccari of Flodraulic said: "In simple terms, we control gravity. Normally, the cylinder must push to counteract the weight, but in this case the descent is intelligently regulated using gravity itself. It's a more efficient, smoother, and safer system."

## HYBRIDS AND ALL-ELECTRIC

Developing a hybrid or all-electric version of a platform that has an overall weight of 32 tonnes or more is both difficult and expensive. That doesn't mean that it isn't possible, as Multitel with its 70 metre MJ700 Hybrid, Ruthmann with its 57 metre T 570 HF Hybrid and Bronto with its S56XR all-electric have shown.



The MJ 700 Hybrid has a six section boom, three section jib/top boom and articulated jib

The first 70 metre Multitel MJ 700 Hybrid was purchased by Dutch crane and aerial lift rental company Boer. The new lift, mounted on a five axle, 10x4 Volvo FM500 chassis, employs a new hybrid power pack with twin 80V/210Ah lithium battery packs driving an 80V/20KW electric motor, coupled to a hydraulic pump. The machine has enough battery power to fully extend the boom from its stowed position to the full 70 metres at least four times. When connected to a 400 volt network, a full recharge takes four hours, or five hours with the on-board diesel generator. The platform can also be operated while on charge or operate as a normal diesel machine. The modes can be selected from either the ground controls or those in the basket. A hybrid system diagnostic screen can be used to check the battery charge, current usage in real time, the battery operating temperature and inverter along with other parameters.

Performance wise it has a maximum working height of 70.2 metres and up to 36 metres of outreach with 120kg in the platform. With the maximum 600kg platform capacity an outreach of 28.5 metres is possible. The unit also features variable outrigger set up and monitoring.

## BRONTO NEXT GENERATION XTS

Bronto launched a whole new XT Generation at Bauma, starting with the 70 metre S70XT1-J CE, versions of which should be ready to ship in spring 2026, with the first two units being ordered by Dutch/Finnish aerial lift rental company JaloBMS. Units for the rest of the world will follow later in the year.

A key feature on the S70XT1-J is the new boom

The Bronto S70XT1-J to be launched in April for shipment in 2026



Multitel's new MJE710 truck mount sold to Italian rental company Ciemme Noleggio



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design, which is said to significantly increase rigidity, while improving performance. The new platform features a five section main boom, a three section upper boom topped by Bronto's jib with around 175 degrees of articulation, providing a realistic maximum outreach of 39 metres with 120kg in the platform or 33.2 metres with the maximum platform capacity of 600kg. Maximum up & over clearance is 46 metres with an outreach of around 32 metres. Below ground reach is almost 18 metres.

Other features include a new, more accurate and robust platform overload system, new outrigger sensors integrated into hydraulic jack cylinders while other sensors have been re-located for added protection and reliability. The well proven Bronto+ control system is retained.

A new modular 1.1 metre deep by 2.4 to 3.7 metre long/wide extending platform design offers a range of five entry points and guardrail configurations, all of which are designed to be easy to repair. Platform rotation is 440 degrees - 220 degrees in either direction. The first units will be mounted on a 32 tonne GVW four axle Volvo FM 460 HP 8x4 chassis. Overall length is just less than 12 metres, with an overall height of 3.97 metres. Standard outrigger operating widths are 3.3, 5.8 and 8.3 metres.

Product manager Arne Denks said: "We are combining the best parts of our XDT and XR ranges, incorporating improvements built on decades of product development and close collaboration with our customers."



*The 100th Bronto in 1976*

### 8,000 BRONTOS

Bronto builds the largest truck mounted lift of them all, the 112 metre S112 HLA which was unveiled at Bauma 2010 with first units shipping a year or two later. The company developed its first truck mounted lifts in 1972 and at the end of last year delivered its 8,000th unit - a 90 metre (295ft) S295HLA destined for North America.

Production in the early years was slow - it took four years before it built its 100th unit and another five years to reach 500. The 1,000th Bronto followed in 1994, the 5,000th in 2005 and its 8,000th last December.

Bronto Skylift is based in Tampere, Finland, and initially focused on developing aerial work platforms for fire and rescue services. Over the years, it has expanded its range to include platforms for a variety of industries and today employs 467 across 120 countries with manufacturing facilities in Tampere and Pori,



*One of the first Bronto platforms in the early 1970s*



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*The Bronto S70XT1-J*



Finland as well as a service centre in Pirkkala. It also owns subsidiaries in Germany, Sweden, Switzerland and the USA and has been part of Japan's Morita group since 2016.

While sales of the 112 metre are few, Bronto's 104 metre S104HLA sells in higher volumes, two of the more recent deliveries include one to Clear View Services in the UK and one to Chi Deh Crane Engineering in Taiwan.

Ian James of Bronto said: "We are seeing sales growth in the larger HLA models as turbines go ever higher, when such big units are available to rent, opportunities arise in other market sectors."

#### **A CLEAR VIEW**

Clear View's Bronto S104HLA made an appearance at the entrance to this year's Vertikal Days, it is largest aerial work platform in the UK of any type. Mounted on a six axle Volvo 12x8 chassis the 104 metre platform has a maximum outreach of 33 metres at an up & over height of 17 metres, or 25 metres outreach at an up & over height of 63 metres. Maximum capacity is 700kg.

Based in Leeds, Clear View focuses on telecommunications and wind power industries as well as building maintenance, television and film work. The new Bronto has been added to the fleet in order to satisfy growing demand for larger platforms in the wind turbine market.

Managing director Jonathan Hawksworth said: "Wind power is a growing sector in the UK, as elsewhere, and requires a stable work platform for those working at great height, no matter what the weather. We believe the Bronto product is the market leader for both stability and reliability for turbine work at extreme heights."

#### **TAIWAN 104**

Taiwanese rental company Chi Deh Crane Engineering had its S104HLA mounted on a six axle Scania chassis. It will be used in the city of Hsinchu



*The 5,000th Bronto  
manufactured in  
2005*

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*An S104HLA mounted on a standard six axle chassis*

for applications, in the petrochemical, wind energy and on large civil engineering projects.

In another development, Bronto has overcome the challenge of making its 104 metre S104HLA platform road legal in Australia. The first unit is due to be delivered to telecommunications company Quantum Comms in early 2026.

To make it happen, Bronto, its representative in Australia & New Zealand GFS/Bronto Skylift AuNZ and Quantum teamed up with Offroad Trucks Australia and Tatra Trucks to find a solution to Australia's tough and varying road regulations by adapting an eight axle Tatra T158 16 x 16 customised chassis to take the S104HLA without compromising performance on the road or on site. Axle loads will be 10 tonnes or less, helping make it road legal across the country.

Changes included modifying the chassis cab with a cut out for the boom, while each axle will be equipped with extra wide 445mm tyres. Five of the axles are permanently driven, while three can be engaged from the cab for all wheel drive. All of them include differential locks. Five axle steering will provide a tighter turning radius, critical on such a long vehicle.

### WORLD'S TALLEST ELECTRIC

Bronto also showed the world's highest reaching all-electric truck mounted lift, the S56XR, at Bauma. Developed in partnership with lead customer Rohr and Designwerk Technologies, it is mounted on a custom made 500kWh MC500E 8x2R electric chassis from Designwerk Technologies. The platform's software has been



*Bronto's 56 metre S56XR all electric truck mounted platform*

modified to fit an electric PTO to save energy during operation and enable longer working periods.

### UNDER THE RADAR

One truck mounted platform manufacturer that is often overlooked in some markets is Italy's Socage. A few months ago, it acquired a majority stake in fellow Italian truck mounted lift manufacturer CTE, one of its main competitors. The acquisition should boost the Socage 'group' revenues next year to somewhere in the region of €190 million.

Both companies are, perhaps, better known for their 3.5 tonne truck mounted lifts, however both offer larger truck mounts - CTE has the B-Lift range from 39 to almost 62 metres, while Socage's ForSte range runs from 35 metres to its largest model, the 100 metre ForSte 100TJJ.

Sales of the larger Socage truck mounts have been thin on the ground, particularly in western Europe, however, this may be changing. Earlier



*Orion Access in the UK has purchased a 75m Socage 75TJJ*

this month, Orion Access in the UK purchased a 75 metre Socage 75TJJ truck mounted platform, its new flagship platform, from UK distributor IAS. Mounted on 32 tonne four axle Scania chassis, the Socage 75TJJ features a five section boom plus a four section upper boom and a short articulating jib for an outreach of 40 metres, and a platform capacity of 600kg. The new platform was purchased with a 1,500kg winch and Socage's aluminium convertible platform that can be hydraulically extended from 2.3 to 3.5 metres wide.



*Ruthmann launched the T 570 HF Hybrid at Bauma*



*A Bronto S104HLA going through its paces*

### MARKET CONDITIONS

For many years the markets in the UK and Ireland have been among the largest in Europe taking more than its fair share of 70 metre plus models and dominated by just three manufacturers - Palfinger, Bronto and Ruthmann.

Palfinger Platforms is currently distributed in the UK by CPL - part of the Klubb group - however this will change in the New Year when Access Platform Sales (APS) will take over. It is fair to say that the larger Palfinger truck mounts have not been selling well in recent years, as Bronto and Ruthmann scooped most of the orders. However there is possibly a change in the air. Ruthmann is now part of the Time Versalift group and distributed by Versalift UK, which focuses mostly on Versalift van mounts and small truck mounted lifts. Ruthmann's latest model, the T 570 HF Hybrid, has a working height of 57 metres, an outreach of 41 metres and a maximum platform capacity of 600kg. Ruthmann has also announced that it is developing Hybrid models ranging from the T 510 HF to the 75 metre T 750 HF.

Christian Roß of Ruthmann said: "With this new generation, we will offer our customers a powerful and sustainable alternative solution." ■