

The 2017 Busworld event in Europe generated mixed emotions from attendees. It continued the impact of Busworld as the most important bus and coach show in the Western world and probably even globally. This 24th edition of the biannual show featured 376 exhibitors from 36 different countries displaying their products and service in nine large halls. The pre-show count indicated that there would be 231 vehicles inside the exhibit halls and another 80 outside. A final count of attendees determined that there were 37,241 visitors from 118 countries. As usual, Busworld Europe was held at the Kortrijk Expo in Kortrijk, Belgium.

However, 70 companies were unable to participate in this year's event because Busworld simply ran out of room. In spite of the nine halls as well as a connecting Rambla, there was no more space for additional exhibits. As a result, this was the last year for the show in Kortrijk, Belgium. The next show, in 2019, will have a new venue in Brussels in order to accommodate even more exhibitors.

The pending move to Brussels in 2019 figured heavily in this event and was mentioned at several press conferences. For many of us, Busworld has been synonymous with Kortrijk for decades. Having been to the event many times, our staff has its favorite hotel and favorite restaurants in Kortrijk. Knowing that there are often problems getting taxis because of the crowds, we have been using the city buses at recent events and even they are crowded.

Busworld is so large and so important to the bus industry press that it starts with an exclusive showing for the press even before the public is admitted. This gives the major manufacturers a chance to hold press conferences prior to the public show in order to bring the bus media people up-to-date on their recent developments and what they will be showing the public. This year there were 300 members of the press representing 42 countries who joined the marathon to attend 34 press conferences in two days while racing from exhibit booth to exhibit booth inside the huge Kortrijk Expo Complex.

Why Europe?

We occasionally have readers asking why we put in this time and effort covering the European market. While I will admit that the coaches sold in the United States and Canada are easily the strongest and most durable in the world, the European bus market is something like eight to 10 times as large and concentrated in a smaller area. For several reasons including the high price of diesel fuel, concern for the environment and the acceptance of public transportation, Europe tends to lead in much of new technology and developments.



Busworld 2017 in Belgium

Article and photos by Larry Plachno

From an American standpoint, one of the more interesting coaches being introduced at Busworld was the Setra S531DT double-decker. It represented the last model in the Setra product line to be converted over to the new Setra "500" series features. Nancy Plachno from NATIONAL BUS TRADER got into the picture because she thought it was one of the most attractive buses she has ever seen.

Right now, Europe can claim to have electric transit buses in regular operation for more than three years. At least four European builders I can think of currently offer articulated Tram Buses. Several European cities have set deadlines for their transition to electric or zero emission transit buses. New technology is moving towards new developments in electric and autonomous buses. Much of this will be flowing into the United States and Canada in the years ahead.

Busworld Awards

There has always been a series of awards tied into Busworld Europe. In the past this was called European Coach Week as the judges met to inspect, drive and discuss the competing buses and coaches. This year, 20 journalists making up the International Bus and Coach Jury met in Mantorp Park, Sweden to review the buses. Winners were announced at the Busworld Awards Night.

The Coach of the Year 2018 award went to the Irizar i8. The two Grand Awards in the Busworld Awards competition went to the MAN Lion's Coach in the category coach and to the Mercedes-Benz Citaro hybrid of Daimler Buses in the category bus.

Next to the main Grand Awards, 10 Labels of Excellence were awarded by the jury. These included a Comfort Label for the Crealis of Iveco Bus and the MAN Lion's Coach; a Design Label for the Mercedes-Benz Tourismo M/2 of Daimler Buses, BMC's Neocity and the MAN's Lion's Coach; a Safety Label for Daimler Buses Tourismo M/2 and Citaro hybrid; an Energy Label for VDL's Citea SLF-120 Electric and the E12 of Yutong and last but not least, an Innovation Label for the electric Aptis of Alstom/NTL.

Trends

One of the first questions asked of us is to identify the more important trends we noted at Busworld for both the industry and the European market. Here are some of the most obvious.

Electric Transit Buses – If there is any one trend that dominated the show and the industry, it is the movement to battery-electric transit buses. Some of the bus builders have been producing battery electric transit buses for as much as three years now and are moving into a second generation. Is it just coincidence or do we note that the bus builders who have their own diesel engines have been a little slower about going electric? The larger bus builders are also now joining this movement as several European cities have vowed to move to zero emissions by 2020. In addition to conventional 12-meter (39+ feet), battery electric buses are now offered as 60-foot articulateds as well as articulated "tram buses." ZF has offered an axle with built-in electric motors for years and now both ZF and Cummins have introduced their own electric motors for direct drive electric buses.

New Models – We frankly lost track of the number of new models being introduced at Busworld or making a debut at this show. Most of the new models are electric, CNG or hybrid transit buses although Yutong did introduce an electric coach. There were also some new coach models including the Setra double deck now in their 500 series. We also noted a little bit of filling out product lines with either shorter or longer coaches. In Europe, many coach models are offered in different lengths for different size groups.

Market Share and Expansion – Several of the manufacturers were either moving into new markets or trying to expand current markets. At one time in the past, most of the manufacturers were somewhat regional. VDL was connected with the Netherlands and Belgium, Volvo and Scania were strong in the Scandinavian countries and Mercedes is a German company. At this show it

became more obvious that many if not most of the manufacturers were working on expanding, either locally or into new markets. The larger companies now have buses running in dozens of countries.

Autonomous Buses – Movement to autonomous buses was not a major theme. No one was demonstrating a full-size autonomous bus although Alstom has invested in the EasyMile Company, builder

of the EZ10 that can seat as many as 12 passengers. Alstom had one on display inside the exhibit halls and did show one outside. However, we did hear that there has been some progress in what might be called off-road autonomous garage operations. This would include buses moving on their own to the wash rack or to parking spaces at the garage.

New Technology – New technology was particularly popular at this show. Noteworthy

There were several sad faces at this Busworld because it was the last to be held in Kortrijk, Belgium. We had reached a point where we had our favorite hotels and restaurants in Kortrijk and could ride the local buses. Kortrijk was very supportive of Busworld as you can see from these banners over a pedestrian shopping way not far from the railroad station and market square.



There were several advances in electric buses seen at this show. Shown here is the ZF display booth that had its own announcements. After several years of providing a bus axle with electric motors for electric buses, ZF now offers an electric motor that can be hooked into a more conventional drive line.





One of the new vehicles shown by Mercedes-Benz was this Sprinter 45 Minibus. Based on the economical Sprinter, it offers 13 seats at the rear plus room for nine standees or wheelchair space in the low-floor area.



Mercedes-Benz took advantage of this show to introduce their Citaro transit bus with new hybrid power. The Citaro is the most popular transit bus in Europe and is offered in several lengths and several power options.

were several companies offering either overnight garage plug-in systems or overhead "pantograph type" quick chargers for battery electric buses. Electric motors from both ZF and Cummins have already been mentioned. Eberspacher showed a rooftop heat pump that could heat or cool electric buses. It currently uses R134a refrigerant but will soon be available using CO₂. I might note that heating and cooling is a major problem for electric buses because of power usage. Some electric buses have fuel-fired heaters for cold days.

Moving Production – Although not something new, the trend to move production out of Western Europe continues, particularly with coaches. Both Mercedes and MAN are building coaches in Turkey. Temsa builds in Turkey and Solaris builds in Poland. Van Hool has moved some produc-

tion to Macedonia. It appears that Setra is the last coach completed in Germany although plans are to soon build the frames in the Czech Republic. Mercedes still builds transit buses in Mannheim, Germany, while VDL builds both buses and coaches in the Netherlands and Belgium.

Buses on Display

As you can appreciate, it would be difficult or impossible to try to cover all of the buses and coaches on the show floor at Busworld. As a result, we try to concentrate on the products and manufacturers that are either better known or may be of interest to our readers in the United States and Canada. We also ask your indulgence in regard to the photos. Because of the crowds and the lack of a people filter, it was not always possible

to get good photos of some of the display buses. Please bear with us if there are people in some of the photos or if we have to use photos from the manufacturers. Here is some information on what we found.

Mercedes-Benz/Setra

As usual, we found Mercedes-Benz and Setra adjacent in Hall 5. The arrangement was somewhat reversed from earlier years with Setra and its refreshment area on the north side of the building and Mercedes-Benz to the south.

There were three introductions on the Mercedes side. Their Citaro transit bus, available in several lengths and configurations, and considered to be the best selling transit bus in Europe, is now available as a hybrid in most model variants including their natural gas version. Also new is its electrohydraulic steering. Mercedes has yet to offer an electric bus although one is promised for the future.

Another introduction is the Tourismo RHD high-decker touring coach. It replaces Europe's top selling high decker in the product line and offers extended options making it suited to a wide range of different services including shuttle, scheduled routes, charters and tours. Another interesting introduction was the Sprinter City 45 minibus. Because of its longer overhang, it offers 13 seats in the rear plus room for nine standees in the low-floor area designed for wheelchairs and baby carriages.

Mercedes also made mention of advances to its Omniplus Service, its customer service arm with more than 600 service outlets in Europe. Noteworthy is the consolidation of digital services, including a driver App and remote diagnostics, under the new Omniplus On name.

On the other side of the exhibit booth, the Setra people were introducing their new S531 DT double-decker coach. It was attract-

Before the public is admitted to Busworld, the press and media people are given an opportunity to attend as many as 34 press conferences held throughout the huge complex of nine buildings and additional space. This shows part of the press activities prior to the press conference at the Volvo booth.





This small walk-in galley area was located across from the lower level restroom on the Setra S515 HD on display.

ing a great deal of attention because of its impressive appearance. For those keeping track, this was the last Setra model to be upgraded to their new "500" series coaches.

I should also mention that two other coaches on display had special features courtesy of Setra's "Kundensonderwunsch" which translates into English as the "Customer Special Wish" group. The S511 HD coach on display had the semi-circular rear lounge that we have seen on earlier coaches. The S515 HD on display had a small walk-in kitchen. It was located on the lower level, essentially across the middle entryway from



Setra's Kundensonderwunsch group (Customer Special Wish Group) built this attractive lounge area into the rear of the Setra S511 HD on display. Similar lounge areas had been available on Setra coaches coming to the United States in past years.

the restroom. While space was limited, it did contain a sink, a table work area, substantial cabinetry and room for hot beverages and a microwave.

The people we spoke with from Setra mentioned that part of the Setra frame structure would be coming from the Czech Republic in the near future although assembly would still take place at Mannheim and finishing at Neu Ulm. I could not get an answer on when the 500 series design would be coming to America, but they suggested that there had to be sufficient orders to cover the engineering costs.

For those keeping track, it was noted that Setra is the last company still building coaches in Germany although Mercedes continues to build transit buses in Mannheim.

Volvo

Most readers are probably aware that Volvo in Sweden is the parent company to Prevost in Canada. They were located in the northeast section of Hall 5, their regular display area at Busworld. Volvo launched a new and improved version of their 12-meter 7900 electric transit bus with an extended range and more charging options. Increased battery capacity gives the bus a range of up to 200 kilometers depending on typography and driving conditions. The bus can be fast charged at the route's end using the OppCharge interface or charged via cable using the European standard CSS system.

Options include Volvo's advanced steering system, Volvo Dynamic Steering (VDS), and the cycle and pedestrian detection warning that will eventually make it possible for the bus to drive itself to washing or the garage.

In their coach product lines, Volvo noted that after 45 years Busworld will be opening its doors in Kortrijk for the last time. Hence they offered a 9700 Kortrijk Edition and a 9900 Kortrijk Edition on their two coach models. These contain a unique range of interior and exterior design elements, specially designed seat upholstery, leather clad entry grab handles, automatic height control and Volvo's fuel-saving I-See system. These unique models will be only be sold from Busworld to the end of the year.

Temsa

Located in their usual position, Temsa from Turkey had seven buses lined up in the

Volvo showed off the latest version of its 12-meter 7900 electric transit bus. It now offers an extended range and more charging options. It can be charged at the end of the line with its overhead charging equipment or with a standard charging cable.





It is rare at Busworld to show a bus going to the United States, but Temsa had this 45-foot TS 45 on display because of a planned delivery ceremony.



While Irizar got the Coach of the Year award with their i8 model, their latest introduction was a new articulated 18-meter electric ie Tram bus.

north side of Hall 7, one of the newer halls in the complex. Two new models were being introduced. These included the LD SD Plus, a European school bus. Unlike American school buses, the European school buses look more like transit buses and are not painted yellow. This new model looked more like a two-door transit bus. The other new model was their MD9 coach. This is a short coach about 30 feet long with a door at the front as well as a door at the rear on the curb side.

Other buses on display included their Avenue Electron, Temsa's battery electric transit bus. Displaying buses for the American market is usual at Busworld, but Temsa showed a TS45 going to A-Z Bus in the United States that would have a delivery ceremony at the Temsa stand. Other buses on display included their Maraton coach, HD model and MD7.

Comments indicated that Temsa had the largest market share in Turkey. They currently have a staff of 1,650 and have buses running in 66 countries. They also said that Temsa now has a nine percent market share in the United States. Introduced at Busworld was the new Fleetics system in conjunction with STM. Fleetics uses artificial intelligence and optimization techniques to analyze and interpret all the collected data. The thematic smart transportation products developed make it possible to guide business processes. It was mentioned that Temsa would celebrate its 50th anniversary in 2018.

Irizar

Headquartered in Spain, Irizar has been selling an Americanized version of their popular i6 coach on this side of the Atlantic. They were in their usual display area on the east side of Hall 4, the largest building in the Expo

complex. They do have several factories and currently produce about 3,000 buses annually of which about 500 are integral. Because of introductions and a major award, excitement was continuous in their exhibit booth area. Back in 2009, Irizar elected to move in new directions with integral coaches and a complete product line. They are now reaping the benefits of those decisions.

Originally introduced in 2015, their new high-tech i8 coach was named Coach of the Year 2018. This prestigious award pleased the Irizar staff and their customers. Irizar already had a low-floor battery electric bus in their product line known as their i2e. It has been available for three years now. However, adding to the excitement at this show was Irizar's introduction of their new ie Tram, an 18-meter (59-foot) articulated electric tram version bus. This 100 percent electric bus offers the new tram design that is increasingly popular in Europe for Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) operations and heavier routes.

In addition, Irizar announced their new company known as Irizar e-mobility. Combining components and technology from Irizar's subsidiaries with Irizar's bus building skills, this company is constructing a new factory south of San Sebastian, Spain that will be exclusively devoted to building electric buses. This is certainly the first time that your editor has heard of a traditional bus builder constructing a factory that will be devoted to electric buses. Finally, last but probably not least, Irizar announced that their i4, i6 and i8 coach models would now be available with hybrid as well as straight diesel power trains. While hybrid coaches are not new, it is remarkable that a coach builder would provide this across-the-board option on all of their coach models.

Van Hool

The Van Hool display was located in its usual space on the south side of Hall 6. In addition to their traditional semicircle of buses and coaches, Van Hool also provides

While Van Hool had several buses on display, there was an unveiling at their press conference. Introduced was this Exquicity hybrid tram bus for Belfast. The service will be known as the Glider and is reportedly the first Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) service in the U.K.





VDL has been a leader in electric buses in Western Europe and won two Busworld awards for their electric buses. Shown here is one of their low-floor articulated electric buses.



VDL has offered a double-deck version of their Futura coach for the past two years. That worked so well that they are now offering a double-deck version of their Citea transit bus.

a restaurant/refreshment area with tables and chairs.

The biggest excitement at the Van Hool stand was the unveiling of one of the new Exquicity tram buses for Belfast. Built with diesel electric hybrid drive, these articulated buses will provide a new Bus Rapid Transit service for Belfast. Operating for Translink, the buses have been named the Glider. This is reportedly the first Bus Rapid Transit service in the U.K.

This year's display noted the 70th anniversary of Van Hool. The company was originally founded in 1947 following World War II to rebuild public transportation in Belgium. While the headquarters and original location of the company is in Belgium,

an expansion was announced at their new facility in Macedonia. Due to increased orders, this plan is being expanded from four production lines to eight. It was also noted that Van Hool is working with Proterra to introduce a 100 percent electric coach in 2019.

VDL Bus and Coach

Based in the Netherlands and Belgium, VDL was put together from several smaller bus and coach builders and then reorganized into a state-of-the-art transit bus and coach builder. They were in their usual spot in the northwest corner of Hall 4. VDL did win two awards. Their 2018 Citea SLfa Electric transit bus won the Sustainable Urban Bus 2018 award while their Citea SLF-120 Electric received an ecology label.

The Neoplan Skyliner double-deck is still popular and doing well in Europe. This one on display in the MAN stand had a special interior with a lounge, tables and a kitchen on the lower level. The Skyliner was celebrating its 50th anniversary of production.



VDL has been a leader in electric buses. We have seen the numbers and they show VDL to be the market leader in electric buses in Western Europe. Current products include their Citea electric that is available in a 9.9-meter low entry model, a 12-meter low-floor and an 18-meter articulated bus with various options. VDL is also now offering their Citea transit as a double-deck model.

With their coach product line, VDL mentioned that they have now been offering a double-deck version of their Futura for two years. It is available in different lengths and configurations including a 13.5-meter two-axle coach and a short 10.6 meter coach for smaller groups.

Noteworthy is the fact that VDL recently opened a new subsidiary in Madrid to spread into the Spanish market. Included is an after-sales and parts operation. Recent growth in the Spanish bus market makes it the fourth largest transit bus market in Europe following the UK, Germany and France. It is also the second-largest coach market in Europe following Germany.

MAN and Neoplan

MAN and Neoplan displayed in their usual location in Hall 2. MAN (originally Maschinenfabrik Augsburg-Nürnberg) is an old, established German manufacturing company that has built various types of machinery over the years, including printing presses, and built early diesel engines with Rudolph Diesel. Today, their biggest bus facility is in Turkey and they have both transit buses and coaches. Neoplan, another German company that had an affiliated factory in the United States for many years, was acquired by MAN and continues to offer intercity coaches.

MAN did very well with awards this year for their Lion's Coach. It received the Coach Grand Award, the Comfort Label and a Design Label. A highlight of this year's event



Scania showed off their Interlink LD (low decker) transit. It is available in different lengths form 12 to 15 meters and in a multitude of power options.



Otokar from Turkey took advantage of this Busworld to introduce their new Ulyso T, a 10-meter midicoach that offers big coach features in a short coach.

was the introduction of the new two-axle 13-meter (42.6 feet) Lion coach. A major advantage of this longer coach is that it can seat six more passengers than the equivalent 12-meter coach. It offers several new safety features including LED headlights and the ability to absorb 50 percent more impact energy.

Much of our attention was directed across the way to the Neoplan area where a special event was taking place. Neoplan was not only celebrating the 50th anniversary of their double-deck Skyliner coach model but was also planning to hand over the 5,000th new Skyliner to its new owners at Busworld. The bus on display was impressive because it had some special modifications from the MAN Bus Modification Center. These included a lounge on the lower level with four tables and a modern, L-shaped kitchen,

an infotainment system and a vacuum toilet similar to that found on an airplane.

In addition, Neoplan took advantage of this Busworld to introduce a new coach model known as the Tourliner. This is directed at the upscale coach market and incorporates additional travel comfort, modern technology and an aerodynamic design. The display coach had an interior with 2+1 VIP seating and a capacity of only 30 passengers. Other features included a rear-view and driver's perspective cameras. Additional safety is provided by a smoke-detection system in the luggage compartment.

Solaris Bus and Coach

Solaris was located in their favorite spot, the southeast corner of Hall 4. Headquartered in Poland, Solaris has developed an enviable

reputation, particularly for its Urbino transit bus product line and for substantial experience with electric buses. Solaris introduced three new models at Busworld.

The largest of these was the debut of the fourth generation of their Urbino 18 electric. This 18-meter (59-foot) articulated was first introduced in 2014 with diesel power. It is now available as a battery electric with a capacity of 140 passengers. Some are already in service including a delivery to Krakow. Solaris also introduced a hybrid power version of their popular 12-meter (39.3 feet) Urbino transit bus. The diesel engine shuts off while stopping or standing to save fuel. The third introduction was the 10.5-meter (34.4-foot) version of the Urbino transit bus that is particularly maneuverable for use on many narrow European streets.

Another bus builder doing well with electric buses is Solaris in Poland. Shown here is the fourth generation of their low-floor Urbino articulated 18-meter electric bus. It has a capacity of 140 passengers and some of these units are already in service.



Scania

This well-known Swedish company is best known for their engines, chassis and trucks. In 2016 they produced more than 73,000 trucks and more than 8,000 buses, although many of the buses are body-on-chassis. They are also building buses in Finland. Solaris showed several new models at Busworld at their usual place on the north side of Hall 6.

Noteworthy was the availability of the Scania Interlink LD (low-decker) transit with a wide range of power including diesel, biodiesel, HVO, CNG/CBG, ethanol and now a hybrid option. This model is available in a wide range of options with lengths from 12 to 15 meters. I might note that 15 meters is 49.2 feet, a length that you will find in the Scandinavian countries. It compliments the Scania Citywide Low Entry Suburban which is also available in the full range of power options. Also introduced at Busworld was a 13.2-meter (43.3 feet) bus with 55 seats.

A premiere at this event was the battery-electric Citywide Low-Floor bus. This new

model will be operated on trials in the months ahead and should be released for commercial use in 2018. Scania also talked about increasing the operating range on its CNG bus chassis by increasing tank volume to 1,875 liters. Their Fleet Care service was expanded in the areas of repairs and maintenance with Scania Fleet Care and Uptime Guarantee.

Otokar

Otokar, a member of the Koç Group, is a popular builder from Turkey who had

several buses on display on the north side of Hall 3. They have a lot of experience with smaller buses and are expanding their product line into longer buses. Their exports have increased nine percent in three years with particular growth in the countries of Spain, France and Italy. The company now has buses running in 60 countries on five continents.

On display were several city transit buses ranging in length from 5.8 meters to 12 meters. Drawing particular attention was a

Another new introduction at this Busworld event was the Iveco Crossway LE (low entry) with a length of 14.5 meters (47.5 feet) and either two or three doors. Iveco now offers several different power options including diesel, CNG, biomethane and even electric trolley buses.



Easily one of the more interesting coaches on display was the battery electric ICe12 from Yutong. With a length of about 40 feet, it has two doors and offers touring coach features. While the range of about 137 miles with the AC on is questionable on many coach applications, it will work for commuter or shuttle service.



new concept bus that had a low floor and was 8.4 meters long with a front engine. The Otokar staff emphasized their electric Vectio transit model. In addition, Otokar introduced a 10-meter Ulyso midi coach known as the Ulyso T.

Iveco Bus

A branch of CBH Industrial NV, Iveco is a major player in Europe but not well known for buses in the United States and Canada. Their factories are located in Spain and the Czech Republic. The Iveco display was on the south side of Hall 3, across from Otokar. Iveco company offers a substantial product line including school buses and touring coaches under the Crossway and Magelys brands, transit buses under the Urbanway and Crealis brands and minibuses under the Daily brand. The company also builds chassis for bodybuilders.

In the past, the Iveco Magelys coach was given the Coach of the Year 2016 award. A new introduction this year was a high-end version of the Magelys that features two-tone leather and fabric seats as well as electrical outlets, Wi-Fi and video screens. It is basically designed for coach routes with higher standards. Noteworthy is the fact that it comes standard with the new ZF Traxon transmission.

In the transit market, an introduction was the three-axle Crossway Low Entry with a length of 14.5 meters and either two or three doors. The Crealis model won a Comfort Label in the awards presentation. Iveco is now offering more options with CNG and biomethane power. Iveco continues to offer electric trolley buses. Additional models were introduced in the Daily minibus product line.

Yutong

Yutong from China was located on the south side of Hall 7, opposite Temsa. They offer a substantial product line including touring coaches, transit buses and electric buses. On the coach side of the product line they showed their T12 Tourist coach. With a capacity from 49 to 53 passengers. Interesting features include color-changing interior atmosphere lights, aircraft style parcel racks and Kiel seats.

An interesting debut at Busworld was the Yutong ICe12, an electric intercity bus. It is intended for operation between cities and has several safety and other features. It reportedly has a range of about 270 kilometers (168 miles) with the air conditioning off and about 220 kilometers (137 miles) with the air conditioning on. The other new electric bus being introduced was the Yutong E12 transit bus. It has a range of about 320 kilometers (199 miles) with the air conditioning off and about 230 kilometers (143 miles) with the air conditioning on. Like the electric coach, it has several safety features.

King Long

This marked the seventh Busworld for King Long. This Chinese builder displayed on the west side of Hall 4. There were four major introductions that we saw. This started with the debut of their new Longwei II charter and tour coach. This model replaces the popular Longwei I that was introduced in 2007. King Long claims that it represents the leading Chinese bus manufacturing level and also surpasses European standards in some areas. The King Long C9 model was also recently upgraded after 10 years on the market. This is a nine-meter (30 foot) coach that has been King Long's most popular model in Europe.

Introduced was an electric version of the Airport Shuttle Bus known as the APE14. It uses new technology including wheel hub drive and comes with multiple doors. Its all-electric operation and quick charging make it attractive for shuttling passengers between planes and the airport terminals. Also shown was King Long's 18-meter (59 foot) articulated bus for Bus Rapid Transit (BRT). This model is popular in China as well as elsewhere.

Others

There were several other bus builders and suppliers exhibiting. Unfortunately, it became impossible to visit and obtain information on all of them although many seemed to be very interesting. If you are

interested, I invite you to attend the next Busworld and see for yourself.

There are other Busworld events that take place around the world. However, this one in Belgium is the most important and has

the greatest impact on the bus market in the United States and Canada. The next Busworld Europe will not take place in Kortrijk but will move to Brussels where there is more space for exhibitors. The dates are October 18-23, 2019. □

The lack of autonomous buses was almost disappointing. This EasyMile autonomous pod-type vehicle was on display and has been proven in operation. In addition, Alstom showed their Aptis bus on the parking lot.



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