Logistics News ME conducted a round table with industry experts to discuss the various trends that are taking place in the trucking industry.
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The transportation industry continues to evolve, entering every new year with renewed vigour and better products, including tyre and driver systems. Factors like sustainability, safety, and technology are constantly pushing manufacturers to put their best foot forward— or else they risk being left behind. Today’s clients are well aware of the market conditions as well as their own expectations from the products they purchase. It is vital for the manufacturers to meet these expectations. In fact, trucking businesses are famously said to rely on the brand loyalty factor.

Logistics News ME conducted a round table with industry experts to discuss the various trends that are taking place in the trucking industry.
Hans Wising
Regional Sales Director, Scania Middle East

Harish Krishnan
Regional Sales Head – GCC, FarEye

Juan Uruburu
Head of Sales Middle East, Continental

Marcus Schmidt
Area Sales Manager, MAN Truck & Bus Middle East

Martin Roberts
Transport Manager, Momentum Logistics

Pervaz Moosakutty
General Manager, Premier Logistics
We want to make mobility safer, smarter, and more sustainable. For example, tyres consist of different raw materials and one of these elements is natural rubber. Between 10 and 30 percent of a car tire includes natural rubber, while truck tires can include proportionally higher amounts. Today, natural rubber is still obtained almost exclusively from the rubber tree (Hevea brasiliensis) which can only be cultivated in what is referred to as the “rubber belt” around the equator, a fraction of the world’s land surface. Continental in 2016 revealed a new compound as an alternative to natural rubber. It comes from the dandelion root. This particular dandelion can thrive in a large part of the world. The growth cycle for the Russian dandelion is approximately one year. Conversely, the rubber tree has a long-life cycle, where the first harvest could start seven years after planting. Also of note, the dandelions Continental are working with were optimized without the use of genetic engineering.

MARCUS SCHMIDT
Driver safety as always been a focus for MAN Trucks & Bus. This is why we have partnered with Dubai Police and RoadSafetyUAE with dedicated safety campaigns. It is important for us to educate and train the drivers and also build awareness. This region has a lot of trucking business and we believe as a truck manufacturer it is our responsibility to introduce the latest technology and develop road safety measures.
Pervaz Moosakutty

For lot of our clients there are certain standard expectations in what they look for in a truck. The current market shows that a lot of the buyers are price conscious, as people seek to buy lower priced trucks. But at the same time when we do negotiate the type of price with our customers they also do look at the type of vehicle that you are operating. This always depends on the type of materials that you are being asked to transport. There are certain materials that cannot be transported by any trucks. So clients are becoming more knowledgeable about the type of truck you are operating. Clients also look at health and safety, cleanliness, type of vehicle and quality of the vehicle. There have been times where we have not loaded certain materials because of the quality of the truck.

Martin Roberts

We went to the truck manufacturers and we put together questions for what we were looking for. We were looking at the fuel efficiency, driver safety, maintenance cost, driver training. We also are looking at the residual value of the truck especially after five years’ time. Our vehicle replace program is based on a five year cycle so essentially we will never have a vehicle for over five years old. We operate Scania trucks and with them we have a reasonable buyback program where we can also sell these trucks back to the market if we want to. The point here is that we are given that guarantee with our truck manufacturing partners. That guarantee and the value speaks volume about the confidence that the truck manufacturers have in their own product. We also only buy trucks that have automatic transmission, even a bad driver as well could achieve reasonable fuel efficiency in an automatic transmission truck compared to a manual transmission truck.

Harish Krishnan

From FarEye’s perspective we are a digital technological platform that moves goods from one side to the other. When it comes to the ideal truck we focus on the total customer experience. If we have on-time deliveries, safety of goods, and the customer is getting the best rates. Essentially these trucks needs to take an innovative approach so that they could take the customers experience to the next level. Smart trucks too is important as this is essential when it comes to delivery service system. For example, if you have already gone to a customer’s address and if you need to type in that customer’s same address again then it becomes redundant.
From the tyre company point of view we recognise that there is no thing closer to the road than a tyre. As a result we try to implement new technology for our tyres and also to make our tyres more sustainable. Continental is now creating a new system which makes the tyre smarter by placing a sensor inside the tyre which provides the necessary information about the tyres performance in real time. The system can also be integrated into the telematics or the fleet management system that are currently in the market. The system is called ‘ContiPressureCheck’ and this system allows the operator to ensure that the right maintenance is done. Tyre performance also directly impacts the fuel efficiency of your truck. So we make our tyres smarter and in the future we want to make these sensors to also measure the weight of the vehicle. Maintenance is the key to the success to any tyre, not just for the tyre but also for the end user. For us in Continental we have one system that works and these are the benefits that you can reap out of it.
**HANS WISING**
The biggest advantages is that it helps the environment and improves sustainability. With electric trucks there are still technical challenges that exist in terms of range, the payload and the cost of the vehicle to make it sustainable not only from an environmental perspective we also need to make it sustainable from business perspective. However, if we are going to be honest about us moving towards sustainability we also need to ask where we get the electricity from. If we start to fire up power plants with oil or gas to make the electricity to be put into the vehicles then there is no point. We need to have sustainable electricity or fossil free electricity, if we have that then we can push towards more sustainability.

**MARCUS SCHMIDT**
We as a truck manufacturer, we believe in electrical vehicles and we have recently launched a complete portfolio of electric commercial vehicles at the IAA starting with the small electrical TGE along with the medium range electric TGM electric truck up until the electric bus. So technology wise, we are investing a lot of time, money to develop this technology. We have electric vehicles running in Europe and we are in discussions with certain parties in the Middle East who are interested in these electrical trucks. There are certain factors that need to be taken when it comes to the Middle East like heat, the range and the availability of charging points and we need to ensure at all times that we listen to the customer needs. Customers with big fleets are more likely to invest in electric trucks due to brand imaging and reputation.
HARISH KRISHNAN
FarEye has emphasises on disruptive technology which is absolutely getting to a stage where we are talking about innovative value added services. This can be about machine learning or IOT or implementing robotic automation and all this technology is coming into our industry. FarEye has been extremely strong on the e-commerce front when you talk about last mile delivery.

PERVAZ MOOSAKUTTY
We are very much focused on technology. There is so much focus on getting everything on an app. However, there is a certain extent where at times. Right now there is a discussion within the industry where there they are setting high expectations, expectations that can’t be met at the moment. When it comes to technology it means investing more money and depending on the size of your organisation you would need to make calculable decisions when it comes to investing in this technology. Clients as well are not really speaking about getting this advance technology as they are more worried about getting the cheapest and the most efficient.