

Sunday June 14th 2009

AUTOMOTIVE DESKTOP 2009

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Odette International is an organisation, formed by the automotive industry for the automotive industry. It sets the standards for e-business communications, engineering data exchange and logistics management, which link the 4000 plus businesses in the European motor industry and their global trading partners.

<http://www.odette.org>

1. WORLD NEWS FROM JUST-AUTO.

<http://just-auto.com>



GM IN BANKRUPTCY: NOW WHAT HAPPENS TO THE SUPPLY CHAIN?

Source: SupplierBusiness.com

As GM headed for Chapter 11, fears over the adverse consequences for suppliers grew. While there can be little doubt that more supplier pain lies ahead, GM has taken important steps to assist its suppliers, as SupplierBusiness reports. For years, the assumption was that the day General Motors filed for bankruptcy the North American supply chain would collapse in a heap.

Indeed, that was the foregone conclusion as recently as four months ago. GM accounts for more than 30 percent of the revenue at more than 600 suppliers. Among the most vulnerable include TRW Automotive, American Axle, and Lear. But that bit of conventional wisdom may have shifted. Bo Andersson's (now resigned from GM) tough love approach to parts manufacturers may not win him the top ranking in supplier relations poll, but General Motors' purchasing chief is looking out for his partners as GM enters bankruptcy.

Parts makers with outstanding receivables who were not covered by the US\$2bn pre-petition payment by General Motors will likely be paid, even after last week's bankruptcy filing. Andersson cheered suppliers shortly before the filing when he said a "critical vendor" motion with GM's petition would include production parts for components already shipped.

Still, suppliers struggling with reduced production, crushing debt and rising commodity prices face increased risk as a result of General Motors' filing. Cash-strapped GM suppliers will be further squeezed. GM, which paid out US\$50bn to 11,500 vendors last year, will reduce the number of Tier One suppliers it uses in North America from 1,400 to 1,100 by the end of 2011.

No one doubts that the fallout will come from the twin US bankruptcies.

"The greater a supplier's exposure to U.S.-based companies, the greater the impact on its performance," Standard & Poor's analyst Ephraim Levy in a note to investors. "Although some U.S.-based auto parts makers have exited or are progressing toward exiting bankruptcy proceedings, others - especially relatively smaller companies are under duress and risk entering bankruptcy, in our view, if they do not get support from parts and vehicle manufacturing customers," Levy said.

The GM suppliers with the biggest claims are Delphi, Robert Bosch, Lear, Johnson Controls, Denso, TRW Automotive, Magna International, American Axle Hewlett Packard and Continental. As a result of the GM filing, Lear will delay about US\$38m interest payments as it works out a deal with its lenders. Lear will try to restructure out of bankruptcy. But Delphi last week pulled out of Chapter 11 after nearly 4 years. Delphi has reached a deal to sell the bulk of its assets to a private-equity firm -- Parnassus Holdings II, an affiliate of Platinum Equity. GM, which spun off Delphi in 1999, will take back some of the company's North American plants, including its global steering business, and four U.S. factories. Delphi's other "noncore" operations will be sold or shut. A hearing on the plan is set for July 23.

This article was supplied to just-auto by SupplierBusiness, an IHS Global Insight company.

2. THE WEEK IN BRUSSELS.

<http://www.smmmt.co.uk>



1. Centre-right makes gains in European Parliament election

Results of the 2009 European Parliament elections have shown a “win” for the EU’s centre-right parties. In the UK, the British Conservatives won the most seats, giving them a total of 26 MEPs in the new parliament. UKIP secured second place in the poll translating to 13 MEPs, the same number as the third placed Labour party. The Liberal Democrats will have 11 MEPs, the Greens and the SNP two, and Plaid Cymru one seat. The British National Party made gains, picking up two seats. According to European Parliament projections on the formation of the new parliament, the EPP centre-right grouping will have 264 MEPs, the PES socialist group 161 MEPs and the ALDE liberal group with 80. Green parties across Europe made gains with a projection of 53 MEPs. 93 MEPs are assigned to no grouping, including David Cameron’s Conservatives, who intend to form a new non-federalist centre-right grouping with partners from the Czech Republic and Poland. Mr Cameron will need MEPs from at least six other EU countries under Parliament rules to establish the group. Newly elected MEPs will take their seats on 14 July for the first plenary of the new term, where it is expected they will debate and possibly vote on the new European Commission. (Source: European Parliament) www.elections2009-results.eu/en/index_en.html

2. Barroso announces intentions to stand for Commission president

Current European Commission president José Manuel Barroso has announced his intention to stand for re-appointment. The former Portuguese prime minister has held the post since 2004, and was asked to stand again by Czech Prime Minister Jan Fischer. President Barroso has the backing of German chancellor Angela Merkel, and French president Nicolas Sarkozy said he would back him if he sets out a significant programme for European recovery. The UK government also backs Mr Barroso, with business secretary Lord Mandelson saying: “He is the man to ensure that the next Commission remains our European economic conscience, and he needs to surround himself with the best talent from around Europe”. Mr Sarkozy said he hoped that EU heads of state and government would be able to come to a political agreement on the next Commission president at the 18 to 19 June European Council summit. However, Martin Schulz, leader of the socialists in the European Parliament, is opposing Mr Barroso’s reappointment and instead backs former Belgian Prime Minister Guy Verhofstadt, with support from the liberal and green parliamentary groups. MEPs are expected to vote on the new Commission president at its first plenary meeting of the new term on 15 July. (Source: BIS, EurActiv) www.euractiv.com/en/future-eu/leaders-buy-time-deciding-eu-top-jobs/article-183136

3. EIB signals increased lending to €70 billion in 2009

The European Investment Bank’s (EIB) board of governors has confirmed the bank expects to lend €70 billion in 2009 due to the financial crisis. Strong demand from businesses around Europe led to an increase in loan signatures of 63% from October 2008 to the end of May 2009, some €46.9 billion, and an increase in disbursements of 37% year-on-year to 35.8 billion. The European

Economic Recovery Package instructed the bank to increase overall lending in 2009 and 2010 by 30%, with the EIB signaling it is well on course to meet the 2009 target, and "an ample stream of viable projects" could increase the total by more than €10 billion by the end of the year. EIB president Philippe Maystadt said: "Total lending of some €70 billion would mean a truly significant contribution in terms of liquidity to European banks, corporates and public sector clients." The EIB reported that lending has advanced strongly in response to demand in areas such as SME support, energy and mitigation of climate change, and investment in EU 'convergence regions'. (Source: EIB)

www.eib.org/about/press/2009/2009-104-eib-board-of-governors-meeting-2009-eib-lending-could-reach-eur-70-bn-in-2009.htm

3. THE WEEK IN WESTMINSTER.

<http://www.smmmt.co.uk>



1. Business, Innovation and Skills Department unveiled

Government has announced the creation of a new business department following Prime Minister Gordon Brown's cabinet reshuffle. The Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS) has been formed through the merger of the former Department for Business, Enterprise and Regulatory Reform (BERR) and the Department for Innovation, Universities and Skills (DIUS). Secretary of state Lord Mandelson will lead the new department, and has been elevated to "first secretary of state" in the new cabinet. Commenting on the new department, Lord Mandelson said: "The government needs to provide active and urgent help to business and employees. Bringing together the strengths and capabilities of the two former Departments will enable us to do that more effectively, ensuring British business can compete successfully in the future world economy". Ian Lucas MP has replaced Ian Pearson MP as the minister responsible for business sectors including automotive. Pat McFadden MP has been installed as a senior minister, deputising for Lord Mandelson and taking ownership of the government's "Industrial Activism" and "New Industry, New Jobs" agenda. (Source: BIS)

nds.coi.gov.uk/Content/Detail.asp?ReleaseID=403097&NewsAreaID=2

2. New transport secretary Lord Adonis launches van CO₂ database

Newly appointed transport secretary Lord Adonis has launched a van CO₂ database, created jointly between SMMT, the Vehicle Certification Agency (VCA) and the Department for Transport (DfT). The database allows consumers to search for new van models on the UK market and compare CO₂ emissions and fuel consumption. Speaking at the Low Carbon Vehicle Partnership's (LowCVP) annual conference, Lord Adonis, who replaced Geoff Hoon MP as transport secretary in the recent cabinet reshuffle said: "At a time when the government is working hard to create a stable financial environment to encourage long-term investment in the motoring industry this tool is also good news for van producers by stimulating interest and demand in the models they make." Paul Everitt, SMMT chief executive said: "We believe that our efforts in assisting government departments compile this information will not only impact positively on tailpipe CO₂ emissions but will also help buyers select the most economical vehicle they need for their business." (Source: SMMT) The database is accessible online at:

www.businesslink.gov.uk/vanfueldata

3. Business minister announces further flexibility of AAP at inquiry

Newly appointed business minister Ian Lucas MP has given evidence to the House of Commons Business and Enterprise Committee inquiry into the Automotive Assistance Programme (AAP). The minister used his appearance in front of the committee to announce that the £5 million threshold for eligible projects under the AAP will be lifted to encourage greater take up of the scheme. Mr Lucas, whose ministerial responsibilities cover business sectors including automotive

said that the industry is of vital importance to the UK economy and UK manufacturing base. He indicated his enthusiasm for the sector, referring to automotive companies based in his Wrexham constituency. MPs on the committee pushed the minister on why no loans or loan guarantees had been given under the AAP scheme. Mr Lucas referred to companies waiting on parent organisations to approve investment decisions and noted that 18 official applications had been received by his team. When questioned by Peter Luff MP, chairman of the committee on the additionality aspects of the scheme, Mr Lucas stressed that there was a need to get businesses to understand that the scheme is flexible. On the government's scrappage incentive scheme, the minister indicated there were now 48,000 orders that have gone through the scheme, and when questioned on whether the scheme will be extended, he said that an assessment has to be made, but was encouraged by the success of a good policy. (Source: SMMT, House of Commons)

www.parliamentlive.tv/Main/Player.aspx?meetingId=4259

4. LATEST UK CBI ECONOMIC DATA.

<http://www.cbi.org.uk>



The Bank of England's quarterly Inflation Attitudes Survey showed that public expectations of inflation over the coming year had edged up in May, with respondents expecting prices to rise by 2.4% over the next twelve months, compared to 2.1% in February - when inflation expectations were at a four year low.

Both industrial production and manufacturing output fell in the three months to April, by 3.2% and 2.8% respectively. On an annual basis, industrial production was 12.6% lower than the same three months a year ago.

Producers' input prices fell by 9.4% in the year to May - the biggest annual fall since November 2001 - after a decline of 5.8% in April. Output price inflation stood at -0.3%, turning negative for the first time since July 2002.

The RICS housing market survey in May provided further signs of stabilisation in the housing market. New buyer enquiries rose for the seventh consecutive month, to their highest since 1999, while average sales per surveyor ticked up for the second month in a row. Meanwhile, latest data from the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) showed a 1.1% increase in house prices in April. However, house prices were 13.0% lower than a year ago.

The British Retail Consortium (BRC) reported growth in retail sales values of 0.8% in May, down from 6.3% in April, when sales were boosted by Easter trading and warm weather.

5. NEWS FROM "AFTERMARKET".

<http://www.aftermarketnetwork.com>



JOHN TULLET JOINS THE GREAT MOTOR INDUSTRY CODE OF PRACTICE DEBATE - FIND OUT WHY HE SAYS SIGNING UP NOW IS VITAL!



HARDLY a moment goes by in the aftermarket without a discussion (or a full-blown argument!) about the Motor Industry Code Service and Repair Code (MISRC) raising its oily head.

Anyone who came along to the GEA Aftermarket Technical Workshop in Watford on Tuesday (9th June) will know there are strong feelings on both sides of the fence. But, just like a curry, Aftermarket reckons discussions are at their best when things get heated. Aftermarket reader John Tullet MIMI from Autocar Repairs in West Dulwich is the latest participant in the code debate, responding to reader Vernon Taylor's recent letter.

Vernon reckons full-blown licensing is the only way to improve standards in the sector claiming the MISRC is a "white collar solution to a blue collar problem". "The solution lies with a licensing system for mechanics and a mandatory requirement that retail workshops employ only licensed mechanics and those mechanics should be perpetually in fear of having their licenses suspended," wrote Vernon.

John's letter in full

Dear Aftermarket,

As I understand things, the imperative for a standardised code originated from Consumer Focus and their demand for regulation and not from within the trade or our government. I am sorry to take issue with Vernon. I can sympathise with his position, but the profitability, conduct and standards of any company are entirely the responsibility of its managers or directors.

It should never be left to employees to determine and enforce standards; that is surely not their role, although they will be expected to conform to and comply with standards. Any manager that responds to pressure 'from upstairs' to carry out unsatisfactory work is in dereliction of his own duty. This variability in standards is one of the prime reasons for an enforceable code.

Quality control is essential to any product, demonstrably so for the repair of such expensive and potentially dangerous items as motor vehicle. To a degree, the quality of repair could be left with the technician and I would be content with this as long as the technician's competence is sound.

A licensing system for mechanics would fill this necessity, but to exempt any company or manager from responsibility as well would lead to the current 'problem' repairers continuing with impunity at the expense of their staff. Even a licensed, regulated mechanic may carry out sub-standard work if instructed to do so when in fear for his job.

I have been placed in that position personally when employed by a main dealer. I left but others may not readily have that option. I see little comparison between this situation and the CORGI system for gas installer. Nobody at this stage is demanding that mechanics achieve qualified status, just that a vehicle repairer commits to a standard.

Subscription to the Motor Industry Code of Practice is voluntary and demands little that most conscientious, satisfactory repairers already do. Not subscribing will be much more expensive.

6. NEWS FROM BODYSHOP MAGAZINE.

<http://www.bodyshopmag.com>



The Retail Motor Industry Federation (RMIF) has completed its purchase of the membership and field consultancy businesses of the Motor Vehicle Repairers Association (MVRA).

The RMIF has purchased the MVRA from Capita Group Plc for an undisclosed sum, and will now begin incorporating the MVRA's body and repair programmes into the RMIF's member offering. The MVRA will become the RMIF member association for bodyshop businesses, with its brand and identity intact. The existing Bodyshop Services Division will merge with the MVRA.

This purchase will also expand the range of services and benefits provided to RMIF members, in particular Independent Garage Association (IGA) members.

Chief Executive Rob Foulston said, 'Now the acquisition is complete we can begin the merging of the services offered by the MVRA, and the existing RMIF member benefits. The combination will provide a services offering unparalleled anywhere else in the sector.'

7. FLEET NEWS ONLINE.
NEWS FROM BAUER'S ON LINE PUBLICATION.
<http://www.fleetnews.co.uk>

fleetnews.co.uk

Thrifty Car and Van Rental UK is continuing with a network development programme which has seen the company grow from 37 corporate locations in 2006 to over 80 in 2009.

A new location has recently been established in Park Royal with a further 2 locations opening in Swansea and Luton.

Roger Hancock, managing director of Thrifty Car & Van Rental UK, said: "I am particularly pleased that, even in a time of global economic instability, we continue to identify new market opportunities, which is critical to a growing company."

8. HIGHLIGHTS.

SMITH SUPPORTS LONDON MAYOR'S CALL

The operators of the largest electric van and truck fleets in the UK are urging other companies to follow their lead.



TNT Express and Sainsbury's Online are among seven leading UK companies working with the Mayor of London to encourage wider take-up of commercial electric vehicles. TNT has the largest fleet of new technology electric delivery trucks in the world. Supplied by Smith Electric Vehicles, the Smith Newton has a top speed of 50mph and a range of up to 100 miles.

Tom Bell, Regional Managing Director, TNT Express UK & Ireland, said: "TNT is delighted to be at the forefront of the electric vehicle revolution and we're extremely proud of our 100-strong fleet which is the largest express delivery fleet in the world. London was the natural choice to trial TNT's first zero emission vehicle three years ago, and since then we've deployed them around 23 other major towns and cities. TNT fully supports the Mayor's initiative in London and we are happy to share our expertise and knowledge with all City Hall stakeholders to ensure the capital has a much greener future on the roads.'

Sainsbury's Online utilises Smith Edison vans for home shopping delivery in London. An early adopter of EVs, Sainsbury's has worked with Smith Electric Vehicles since 2006 and now has the largest fleet of new technology electric delivery vans in Britain. As part of a longstanding commitment to greening its fleet, Sainsbury's Online is ordering an additional 50 electric vans.

Jat Sahota, Sainsbury's head of corporate responsibility, said: 'Showing respect for the environment is one of our key values, which is why we have just placed an order for 50 brand new electric vans. This will allow us to deliver to the majority of our customers in central London in an environmentally responsible way. We believe this to be the largest order of its kind by a UK retailer. We are committed to using electric vehicles wherever possible, so

customers can expect to see more and more of our 'little green vans' appearing on roads across the UK over the coming months and years."

Sainsbury's and TNT have signed up to work together with City Hall to share their experiences and to help other organisations across London to do the same. Other companies who have electric vans on London's streets and are supporting the scheme include DHL Supply Chain and Go-Ahead London.

Leading bus operator Go-Ahead London recently took delivery of its first Smith Edison vans following a successful month-long trial of the technology. The vans are used as support vehicles to keep London's bus fleet running.

Frank Thorpe, Business Development Manager, Go-Ahead London, said: "Go-Ahead are pleased to be working with the Mayor of London's initiative to encourage the use and development of electric vehicles and we are committed to converting our entire bus support fleet in London to electric power as soon as possible."

The Mayor has developed ambitious plans to make London the electric vehicle capital of Europe by pledging to deliver 25,000 charging points to form an integrated network across London by 2015; add 1,000 electric vehicles to the GLA fleet and guarantee to retain the congestion charge exemption for EVs. Turning London's fleets electric is a first step to achieving this and City Hall will offer help, advice and information for companies that want to take the plunge.

The Mayor of London, Boris Johnson, said: 'I am thrilled to announce a partnership with some of London's largest fleet owners who are committed to using eco-friendly vehicles on the streets of the capital. Not only do electric vehicles save a large sum off fuel bills, helping businesses to remain lean in tough economic times, they are also great for London's environment. We are now going to work hand in hand with fleet owners to accelerate the take-up of electric vehicles, which are available to buy right now. This is a key element of my plan for London to become the electric capital of Europe, so now is the time for other companies to join us on this eco-mission.'

Companies wanting advice on electric vehicles or information on the Mayor's electric vehicle plans can visit: www.london.gov.uk/electricvehicles/ or email: ev@london.gov.uk

75TH BEN BALL: A DATE FOR YOUR DIARY

The 75th Annual BEN Ball will be celebrated at London's Grosvenor House Hotel on Wednesday 16 December 2009. Last year's Ball raised over £150,000 for BEN, the UK's automotive and related industries' own charity.

Charles Davis, BEN's Director of Fundraising and Communications said;

"The BEN Ball is traditionally the most exciting event in the automotive calendar, allowing people from all sectors of the industry to come together and support their own charity. Both BEN and the industry it supports have had a tough year and we're determined to go out with a bang and welcome better times in 2010. This year we are thrilled to celebrate the 75th BEN Ball on a brand new date with brand new surprises and sumptuous glitz and glamour."

For further information and booking details please contact BEN's Events Team on 01344 294755. emily.bird@ben.org.uk

COMMERCIAL VEHICLE OPERATOR SHOW GETS GREEN LIGHT FOR 2010

The Commercial Vehicle Show Partnership is delighted to announce after several weeks of consultation with transport sector suppliers, Spring 2010 will see the launch of the "Commercial Vehicle Operator Show", to be held from 13-15 April at the NEC, Birmingham.

The event will enable exhibitors to present the widest possible range of products and services used in the day to day running of commercial vehicles of all sizes and types, with a particular accent on environmental impact, improved efficiency and profitability. The following year (2011) will see the first of a new Commercial Vehicle Show series.

"This is tremendous news for the industry," said RHA chief executive Geoff Dunning. "We are planning a new style of show, targeted at transport operators that will add value and deliver operating solutions. This new Show will be an ideal platform, particularly for those specialising in vehicle maintenance equipment, replacement parts, logistics and fleet management systems," said Nick Jones, chief executive at the SOE (Society of Operations Engineers). "This industry needs a business-to-business Show to cater for professional transport operators' wide-ranging needs and the Commercial Vehicle Operator Show will do exactly that."

"There have been strong calls from companies within the sector for the CV Show Partnership to run a new style event in 2010. The CV Operator Show will meet this demand while setting the scene for the return of the Commercial Vehicle Show in 2011," said Paul Everitt, SMMT chief executive. "I am delighted that the new show will be at the NEC and that mid-April remains a significant date on the industry calendar. The partners have listened to industry and will be bringing forward events that meet their needs and anticipate the economic conditions."

The new Show will generate business and save time and money for exhibitors and visitors alike. By creating a lively marketplace, where operators can meet and discuss business with the widest possible range of providers, the CV Show Partnership aims to improve the efficiency and profitability of this vital UK industry and its suppliers.

Next year's Commercial Vehicle Operator Show will be held at the National Exhibition Centre from Tuesday 13 to Thursday 15 April, between 0830 and 1730 daily.

The event is owned by the CV Show Partnership, comprising the Road Haulage Association, the Society of Motor Manufacturers and Traders and IRTE Services Limited, the trading company of the SOE (Society of Operations Engineers). Crystal Communications will manage the Show organisation, stand sales and marketing. For more details, telephone +44 (0) 1634 261262 or e-mail sales@crystal-communications.co.uk

9. E-COMMENT.



© Christopher Macgowan Images.

This weekend saw me at motorexpo 2009 in London – a show seemingly dominated by Mercedes, BMW, Bentley, Jaguar, Land Rover, Volvo, Saab and Nissan with Hummers and Corvettes thrown in for good measure – and others. The Canary Wharf setting is stunning and the show has a nice feel to it. Very specialist – I suspect not pulling the 500,000 visitors the SMMT relied on and got at recent motor shows! - and primarily aimed at the high rollers working in Canary Wharf - but none the worse for that.

Sincerely

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AUTOMOTIVE DESKTOP is all about delivering information to you promptly and reliably and the success of the e-mail rests on the rich list of sources which is available to me – and of course to you. Here is a list of just a few of my favourites which have to be visited frequently and many of which provide an auto-email service as well. The list below is in random order and is my personal choice. I am not in any way remotely suggesting there are not many other extremely useful sites – there are!!

<http://www.aftermarketnetwork.com> Highly informative aftermarket site.
<http://www.ameinfo.com> A fabulously functionally rich site from the Middle East.
<http://www.am-online.com> BAUER's AM magazine is required reading.
<http://www.autowired.co.uk> Daily news by e-mail.
<http://just-auto.com> A huge database – has become the industry standard.
<http://www.automotivepr.com> automotivepr has a blue chip client list – visit!
<http://www.autonews.com> Run by the global automotive news provider Automotive News
<http://europe.autonews.com> Automotive News Europe – excellent European perspective.
<http://news.bbc.co.uk> Few can compete with Aunty Beeb's truly global coverage.
<http://www.bodyshopmag.com> Visit Soapbox first – Chris Mann at his best!
<http://www.thecarconnection.com> Daily news of new stuff. Top class.
<http://www.reuters.com> The Reuters name says it all – a brilliant site.
<http://www.economist.com> Essential out-of-office reading!
<http://news.ft.com> The Financial Times. Up there with the best.
<http://online.wsj.com> Wall Street Journal. Such a nice site to use – so good I subscribe.
<http://www.nobull-communications.co.uk> Clients include Peugeot, Volvo, Manheim, Avis.
<http://www.nytimes.com> New York Times. Some of the best articles around are here.
<http://www.pfpr.com> Ranked Top 50 UK Consumer Consultancy by PR Week 2006/2007.
<http://www.cw360.com> Computer Weekly. Best for e-commerce and new IT trends.
<http://www.awknowledge.com> Packed with automotive data, knowledge and reports.
<http://www.mbendi.co.za> First rate automotive coverage and not at all confined only to Africa.
<http://www.smmmt.co.uk> SMMT. Top site – as you would expect it to be!
<http://www.fleetnews.co.uk> Fleet News Online - BAUER's site; stuffed with fleet info.

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