



Skanska UK's Mark Lawton at the rostrum. Photo: KOREC Group

TRIMBLE EXPRESS 2018, HATFIELD

The Jacobean splendour of Hatfield House provided the setting for the penultimate leg of Trimble's 2018 roadshows across the British Isles

As with earlier gatherings across England and Ireland, the event in mid-June was hosted by KOREC Group, Trimble's OEM distributor for the British Isles and saw 50 construction industry professionals converge on historic Hatfield House in Hertfordshire.

Chris Harris, KOREC's Strategic Account Manager, kicked-off the day's proceedings with an update on Trimble's extensive geospatial portfolio, including its latest handheld Controller, the TSC7. Now shipping, this boasts a seven-inch colour touchscreen, backlit keyboard, Trimble Access 2018 software, and full integration with the Trimble Sync Manager interface for easy field-to-office synchronisation.

Matthew Lock, Business Area Manager for Rail and Monitoring at KOREC, reviewed Trimble's various monitoring solutions and recounted how, on one project, two Trimble Total Stations were employed to monitor cracks in a listed Network Rail bridge as material was excavated below. With their in-built radios, the Total Stations, together with digital crack gauges, fed a real-time stream of data over a two-year period to Trimble's scalable 4D Control software. The latter can trigger alarms based on user-defined thresholds, control measurements, manage data, and compile and analyse the results. The cost of installation, training and support on the project worked out at £750 a week and the customer went on to redeploy the system

on a similar bridge monitoring project.

KOREC's Operations Manager, Debbie Vincent, outlined the company's service and support operation in Huntingdon and invited customers to take advantage of a promotion that offers a year's free instrument calibration service. With the theft of high-value instruments on the rise, she went on to describe Trimble's L2P asset tracking solutions. These use a combination of GPS and A-GPS technology to track assets both outdoors and indoors down to a street-level address and have led to the successful recovery of a number of surveying instruments across the UK.

Following a mid-morning break, Mark Lawton, Chief Engineering Surveyor at Skanska UK, described the company's ongoing work with Costain and Balfour Beatty to upgrade a 21-mile stretch of the A14 between Cambridge and Huntingdon. The statistics for this £1.5 billion Highways England road project – one of the UK's largest – are nothing if not impressive: 74 structures including 34 bridges are under construction; 250 million cubic meters of soil have been moved to create foundations for the road and junctions. 250 million cubic meters of concrete and 135 million cubic meters of pavement are to be laid in a three-year scheme that will cut journey times by 20 minutes by the end of 2020.

Lawton related how 300 units of heavy

plant and a 2,200-strong workforce are making use of a formidable array of Trimble solutions including mobile LiDAR, GNSS, optical Total Stations, SX10 scanner / Total Station, 3D machine control and mobile mapping systems – all operating within a survey control network established at 100-meter intervals. And with so much equipment to track, it goes without saying that it has all been signed up to L2P!

Mapping and GIS Consultant, Martyn Palmer, filled the slot before lunch by touching on the work of K-MATIC, KOREC's software division. Designed for speed and efficiency, its K-Mobile data capture and mapping system has most recently been exploited by the RPS Group in a manhole survey for United Utilities. The task of capturing up to 30 different types of manhole covers and chambers had, said Palmer, delivered a 70% saving in time. Already running on Windows and Android devices, an iOS version of K-Mobile will be available by the end of the year he announced.

A BBQ lunch was followed by partner presentations and demonstrations from GeoSlam (ZEB-REVO handheld scanner) and senseFly (eBee UAS), and concluded with KOREC's geospatial consultant Barry Monk explaining how Trimble Field Link software can boost productivity and accuracy during the construction layout process and how its streamlined workflows are tailor-made for BIM ways of working.

The final leg in this year's Trimble Express roadshow for the British Isles is scheduled to take place at Highfield Park in Reading, Berkshire, on 21 November.

Phil Oldbury
welcoming
attendees. Photo:
GeoConnexion



YOTTA CUSTOMER SUMMIT, HEATHROW

Following successful meetings in Manchester and Birmingham, Yotta touched down at Heathrow for the third of four 'Driving Customer Success' days

Despite soaring temperatures and transport chaos, Heathrow's Radisson Blu Hotel offered an air-conditioned oasis for those arriving in July to hear from Yotta's guest speakers, as well as to share best practice in infrastructure asset management with peers and colleagues.

Customer success is so often indivisible from the level of support provided by a supplier and, here, Yotta is clearly upping its game. Although appointed relatively recently to fill a brand-new role, Director of Customer Service, Phil Oldbury, kicked-off proceedings by describing how a change in support desk procedures from reactive to proactive had made a tangible difference to levels of customer satisfaction. By adopting a 'don't stop the clock' approach and by monitoring and analysing a dozen KPIs, average response and resolution timescales had been cut to seven and 17 hours respectively, with more than 70% of tickets resolved within eight hours.

Even so, customer expectations continue to rise and the 'You tell us what you want and we'll provide' supplier mindset is no longer tenable. "It's now a case of getting under a customer's skin, having a clear understanding of their latest asset management strategy, and delivering flexible, best practice solutions that will take them to the next level and beyond", said Oldbury.

Spearheading those future-proof solutions is part-and-parcel of the job for Manish Jethwa, Yotta's CTO, whose presentation addressed the challenge of enabling connected assets, i.e., exploiting IoT devices to deliver networked services from existing fixed assets such as street lighting columns and road surfaces. The lack of a standardised API for IoT devices was a major hurdle, he said, currently requiring middleware for each and every application and potentially burdening users with heavy development costs. A microservices architecture, as used in Yotta's Alloy platform to enable API linkages, was a promising alternative. Even so, Jethwa's takeaway message was clear: "It's easy to say that the data is out there and readily available in an Open format, but making actual use of that data is the hard part."

Guest speaker Steve Berry OBE, Head of Highways Maintenance, Innovation, Resilience, Light Rail and Cableways at the Department for Transport, gave an overview of the department's priorities and constraints in managing its highways infrastructure and joined a pre-lunch panel discussion on topics that ranged from lessons to be learned from the construction sector in applying BIM principles to asset management to the possibility of compulsory data management requirements being imposed on local

authorities, and from the integration of asset and customer management systems to how innovation funding can be best used to encourage the cross-fertilisation of ideas and the sharing of benefits.

The afternoon programme commenced with contributions from Yotta's Jon Shaw and Chris Dyer, and concluded with breakout sessions where attendees were able to hear from dedicated industry experts on highways, innovation in lighting and Street Works, and discuss specific areas of interest with like-minded users.

From Heathrow, Yotta was off to Cardiff for the final meeting in the series. Next on the agenda for this busy company are Enviro Summits, scheduled for March of next year, with their focus on waste, green spaces and street cleansing.



From left to right: Jon Shaw, Manish Jethwa, Steve Berry and Chris Dyer pictured during the panel session. Photo: GeoConnexion