

NEWS

Samoter company moves to become joint-stock company

Italian trade fair company Veronafiere – organiser of Samoter – has announced it is to transform into a joint-stock company, trading under the name Veronafiere SpA. The company agreed to make the changes at an extraordinary meeting, while also approving its latest business plan, which will see the company invest €94 million by 2020.

The company's investments will include consolidating its existing exhibitions in the natural stone-construction sector, which Veronafiere said targeted growth in countries such as the US, China, Brazil and Africa.

The company also aims to strengthen its involvement in agriculture and its related technologies, as well as expand and modernise its existing exhibition centre in Verona, Italy. Veronafiere said its business plan aimed to increase its capacity and generate more wealth in its local area.

The company said it expected to record revenues of €113 million by 2020, with its earnings before interest, taxes, depreciation and amortization (EBITDA) reaching €21.9 million – a 19% profit margin.

France is 'on the rise again'

Building construction in France is on the rise again, according to CISMA (the French association of manufacturers of construction equipment and material handling technology), which said that 375,000 new homes were expected to have been built this year – 30,000 more than last year.

It said that at the same time, non-residential building starts had totalled 24 million m², a rise of 2.7%, at the end of the 12 months to September.

CISMA said that the rise was expected to be close to 5% this year.

It said that in terms of public works, the news was encouraging, and that order intake had increased.

In the Greater Paris area, road improvements and the laying of pipes were boosting the figures, it added.

The sector will increase by about 3% this year, it predicted, while the increase would be similar next year.

Against this backdrop, which is supported by an investment-friendly tax system and lower interest rates, equipment manufacturers were performing well, CISMA said.

Earthmoving machinery manufacturers recorded a strong increase in sales since the beginning of the year, rising more than 20%, said CISMA, which added that sales of road equipment had also posted a good performance, increasing by 32% over the first six months of the year.

Manufacturers of concrete materials were reported to have recorded a "spectacular increase" in their sales on the French market.

The low investments of the past few years were said by CISMA to explain the need to buy new machines.

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Designs for a £150 million (€178.68 million) building at the University of Manchester in the UK have been unveiled. Arcadis, Arup, Laing O'Rourke, architects NBBJ and Ramboll are to build the Henry Royce Institute at the university as part of a £235 million (€279.85 million) project that will, it is claimed, be the UK's leading centre for advanced materials research and commercialisation. Located at the heart of the University of Manchester's Engineering Campus, the 16,000m² building is expected to open in 2019. At 46m high, the Institute is expected to be the tallest building on campus and a prominent new landmark on the Manchester skyline. Project and cost management is provided by Arcadis, civil and structural engineering by Ramboll UK, ARUP is the building services engineer, Gilliespie is the landscape architect and the main contractor is Laing O'Rourke.

NEWS IN BRIEF

KITEMARK FOR BIM

A new Kitemark for BIM (Building Information Modelling) has been introduced by business standards company BSI (British Standards Institution), which it said would help construction businesses around the world prove their capabilities in delivering projects at the design and construction phase. BSI said the first organisations worldwide to achieve the Kitemark for PAS 1192-2 included Balfour Beatty, BAM Ireland, BAM Construct UK, Gammon Construction and Skanska UK.

€27 BILLION UK FUND

A £23 billion (€27.11 billion) fund has been announced by the UK's Chancellor of the Exchequer to provide additional spending in areas that he said were key to boosting productivity – including transport, housing, digital communications, and research and development (R&D). The Chancellor, Philip Hammond, announced the fund in his Autumn Statement, and it includes £2.3 billion (€2.71 billion) for a new Housing Infrastructure Fund.

ITALIAN SHOW WILL RETURN

The first edition of GIC – Italian Concrete Days closed on Saturday November 12, claiming more than 120 exhibitors and around 3,000 visitors. The organisers said that the fact that the exhibition, held in Piacenza, was dedicated to the concrete industry, along with the specialised nature of the visitors, had been appreciated. There was also a gala dinner attended by more than 120 people, during which the ICTA – Italian Concrete Technology Awards – were presented. The next GIC – Italian Concrete Days will be held, again in Piacenza, from 8 to 10 November, 2018.

SPECIALIST GEOTECHNICAL DIVISION

UK foundation contractor Aarsleff Ground Engineering is aiming to enhance the delivery of its products and technical services, after announcing the launch of a new specialist geotechnical division. The company said it believed the new division would also help provide a greater level of focused support to its customers. The new geotechnical division will be operated out of the company's new dedicated office in Doncaster, UK, which the company said formed part of its expansion programme and on-going strategy to enter new market sectors, grow its existing business and to develop fresh opportunities.

BLUE ANGEL FOR CATERPILLAR

Caterpillar wheeled excavators and wheeled material handlers have been awarded Blue Angel certification – an environmental award supported by the German Federal Environmental Agency and the Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation, Building & Nuclear Safety. The award recognises products that protect both people and the environment by reducing noise and emissions. The Cat M318F, M320F and M322F wheeled excavators and the MH3022 and MH3024 wheeled material handlers have been awarded the certification. Cat said its 906M, 907M, 908M, 926M, 930M and 938M wheeled loaders had already been awarded Blue Angel certification.