

SAMOTER

SaMoTer

Italy's show

With the 30th edition of Samoter coming up, Giovanni Mantovani of Veronafiore tells Sandy Guthrie about the gamble of the first show, and how confident he is about the 2017 incarnation

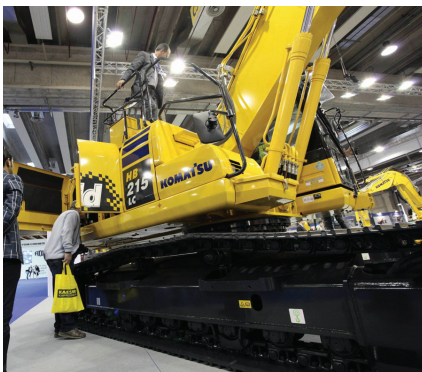
February 2017 will see the 30th edition of the Italian trade show Samoter, which is now a regular part of the European trade show calendar having first appeared at its Verona home in 1964.

Giovanni Mantovani, CEO and director general of Veronafiore, the company behind the show, said that there was a central theme for each edition of Samoter, around which international-based content and insights were built.

He said, "The focus of the 30th edition of Samoter is the prevention of hydrogeological imbalance, land preservation and maintenance, and solutions for environmental emergencies, with special reference to the contribution that machines and technologies in the earthmoving field may offer to operators involved in an environmental risk context."

He said it was a national issue, as more than 7,100 Italian municipalities were at risk of landslides and floods, affecting more than 7 million people.

Mantovani said Samoter was the only event in Italy today which included all segments of the construction industry, and he pointed out that it was the major landmark on the European calendar in 2017.



Mantovani, "Slight slowdown should not affect the recovery started in 2015"

"Italy," he said, "has an industrial system of small and medium companies acknowledged worldwide for its machinery, and especially for its finished equipment and components, requiring a benchmark exhibition for the industry throughout Italy."

"The event is deep-rooted in the Italian and international tradition of construction machinery, and enjoyed steady growth at all its editions until the economic crisis of 2008."

Mantovani said that the first Samoter in 1964 had been "a real gamble". Earthmoving equipment had, until then, been a part of Fieragricola. At the time, Italy was completing an "economic miracle" which saw the country transformed in the immediate post-war period from a predominantly agricultural economy to an industrial one.

In the late 1970s, the industry entered a difficult period. Mantovani explained that it saw a decrease in demand for technological products and the number of major construction works declined. After much deliberation, it was decided to hold Samoter every two years.

Since 1993, the event has been held every

Komatsu is returning in 2017



The first show in 1964 was described as "a gamble"

three years. An agreement was forged with Bauma in Munich and Intermat in Paris, so that the major European shows did not clash.

"This strengthened the brand and expanded its representation in the industry to include other emerging segments," said Mantovani, citing tunnelling, rental, distribution, technical/scientific analysis and research.

It was also in 1993 that Samoter was included among the exhibitions sponsored by CECE (the Committee for European Construction Equipment).

Mantovani said, "At the 2008 edition, thematic paths were included dedicated to individual segments represented at the exhibition – earthmoving machinery, concrete, roadbuilding, drilling, crushing, lifting, vehicles and components."

"These paths not only included the exhibition, but also training sessions and conferences."

According to Mantovani, Samoter has, for a few years, been strengthening its role as a partner for businesses, especially abroad, developing a series of initiatives to support the internationalisation processes of SMEs (small and medium-sized enterprises), focusing on presentations and business-to-business meetings.

"At the same time, the exhibition has recognised the need, expressed by visitors and exhibitors for a more interactive and dynamic exhibition focused on the presence of demonstration areas, where many of the machines exhibited can be examined and

ALL THINGS COME IN THREE'S

The 30th Samoter will run at the same time as two other shows – Transpotec, which is dedicated to transport and logistics, and Asphaltica, for the roadbuilding industry.

Komatsu, Kobelco, Case, Hyundai and Mecalac will again be exhibiting at Samoter, along with Yanmar, Takeuchi and Ihimer. Asphaltica's exhibitors will include Ammann, Wirtgen and Marini.

Elaborating on why visitors should attend Samoter, Mantovani said that since the



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exhibition was information based, initiatives and activities had been organised with technical and scientific partners for each product segment – earthmoving machinery, concrete, drilling, crushing, lifting, components and services.

"The same applies to the target group of visitors," he said. "For each operator, specific conferences and training sessions have been planned, based on their own activities."

"Much focus has been placed on professional training and development – all under the name Samoter Training & Education – in order to contribute to discussions, and support sharing."

He said this would encourage dialogue and co-operation between the construction industry, and national and European institutions.

Mantovani said that with three shows within one large event for the complete supply chain for construction and transportation, good numbers of visitors – both Italian and from further afield – were expected. And there will be more visitors than last time, he predicted.

The international economic crisis saw Italian production tumble by almost 80% after 2008.

He said the 2014 Samoter saw 453 exhibitors, of which 23% were from outside Italy – from 29 countries, in fact. There were 40,067 visitors from 57 countries, and 32,422m² of net area were occupied.

According to Mantovani, the 2014 show was "a turning point that marked a strong acceleration in our path to revise the format".

He said, "Just like a living organism, those who are better able to adapt and evolve are those that survive in the fair system."

"Given the downturn in the market and reduced investments by large manufacturers on event participation and promotion, we had to ensure that participating in Samoter was not only a showcase for companies but also a true business and training tool that is tailored to the real needs of companies, to make it worth every Euro and minute spent by exhibitors and visitors."

He said this meant breaking away completely from an old exhibition model that offered only visibility and square metres, to create one in which the exhibition organiser is a real partner for the companies – "a provider of high value-added services".

He said he was confident about the number of visitors.

"First and foremost, the situation has changed. The market shows slow, yet steady signs of recovery."

The first three months of 2016 marked the ninth consecutive quarter of growth in the Italian earthmoving sector.

"After the low reached in 2013, there was a rise of 46% in 2014/2015."

ON THE ROAD

A roadshow is being held in the final months of this year, and it started in Puglia in September, with visits to Sicily on 14 October, Calabria on November 18 and Liguria on December 2.

"The roadshow includes the presentation of commercial activities, initiatives, actions and promotional incentives," said Mantovani, "but ample room will also be given to the debate on the protection and maintenance of the land, prevention of hydrogeological imbalance and solutions for environmental emergencies, as

well as involving institutional representatives from the individual regions."

In addition, there will be another Samoter Day. One was held in June and another is planned for 28 November, in Verona.

Mantovani said, "It is a one-day training/information event during which companies and operators are given an overview of the current situation, and future prospects, to navigate through the Italian and international building world and construction machinery to their best advantage."

"The data comes from our Samoter-Veronafiere Osservatorio, established as another service offered to companies, and realised in co-operation with Prometeia, a leader in the analysis of the current trends and prospects of the Italian industry."

The next Samoter Day will also see the ceremony for the Samoter Innovation Award.

The Italian construction market has struggled over the past few years, but Mantovani said, "As to the Italian construction panorama – a market of over €135 billion – the slight slowdown of 0.5% recorded in the first quarter of the year should not affect the recovery started in 2015."

He said that according to Prometeia's forecasts, it will close 2016 with growth of 1.6%, with 1.9% to follow in 2017.

Samoter runs from 22 to 25 February, 2017, at the Veronafiere exhibition centre, Verona, Italy. A video interview with Mantovani can be viewed at www.khl.com/videozone **ce**



French company Mecalac was also at the 2014 edition