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WELCOME FROM THE EDITOR



BTME

I spent time with people from all over the world during Harrogate this year, and very enjoyable it was too. It makes it all the more galling that the accusation that Harrogate is nothing more than a “regional show” is currently being spouted by certain individuals and groups.

It is obvious that a greater percentage of people from within easy reach of any venue will attend an event, but the range of accents to be heard at Harrogate, covers all parts of the UK - as well as many of an international nature. Flat caps, whippets and Yorkshire puddings are not generally front and foremost.

I've also read the comments that, as BIGGA represents the customers ie, its members, -: “It's like a band of truck-drivers running the Commercial Motor Show”. It may be a strange concept, but BIGGA employs specialists to fill specialist roles rather than expecting its members to fit in the running the Show round their day jobs.

Indeed, thousands of people have attended, done business and enjoyed the Show since it first opened its doors in 1988 - people who, incidentally, include the gentleman who made the aforementioned comments in an industry blog.

They are also gravely insulting to the manner in which BTME has been managed since the start, and incidentally came with no examples or evidence whatsoever that the Show is run anything other but extremely professionally.

We are on the verge of a General Election and are hearing all sorts of promises from those people hoping to persuade others that they can do a better job than the incumbents. Let me tell you something. If those people do find themselves holding the reins they will find that it's not quite as easy as it sometimes appears from the sidelines.

The easy bit is to shout about how things could be better, but there are often so many “simple” solutions on offer, getting a consensus and a single route to a given goal is all but impossible and the compromises that inevitably have to be reached bring things remarkably close to the status quo.

We do hear calls for one show to represent the industry. Companies are not forced to attend both and should - indeed they have a duty to themselves - take a view as to what is best for their business, whether that be attending one show, two shows or no shows.

My wife and I are currently looking for a new car. There is a lot of choice out there and it is difficult to weigh up all the various offers. Wouldn't it be so much easier if the car manufacturers got together and decided to produce one car for everyone? No difficult decisions, no dilemmas about whether you were getting the best deal or not. As Alexander Meerkat says “Simple!”.

...or is that a stupid idea?

Surely choice is something to be embraced and we should all trust our judgment sufficiently to make the right decision for ourselves.

In the meantime I would ask people to look at what they would lose by leaving Harrogate, as well as what they feel they would gain by foregoing choice and moving to another venue in, what is, another region of the British Isles.

Scott MacCallum
Editor