

Cars, communities, and commercial concerns

Conrico International MD Gareth Beacham discusses the expertise that makes the company a vital strategic partner for humanitarian agencies and for businesses



Conrico supplies Suzuki's vehicles so its clients can operate safely and flexibly

For more than five decades, Conrico International has operated in the automotive industry, engineering vehicle solutions and distributing vehicles through specialist dealer networks. Its first successes were achieved through exporting Land Rovers into Africa. As Gareth Beacham, Conrico's managing director, notes, the company's success and global growth has been achieved because of the trust it has earned from customers in its ability "to deliver the right product with exceptional service". It now operates globally as a subsidiary of InterAmericana Trading Corp (ITC) - but Africa remains a critical market, where it works in with key actors in the humanitarian arena, including the United Nations, and also supports commercial concerns in agriculture

and mining. The company also deals in much more than automotive matters, as it also specialises now in the preparation and provision of capital goods and power generators, and associated after-market services, to private sector entities as well as the aid and development sector.

Mr Beacham met recently with African Review to highlight company's expertise in engineering and export, and how its commercial ventures impact the markets it serves. He stresses that the company seeks "to listen to the client to understand what the real value proposition is". In fact, Conrico's presence at events such as AIDF Africa 2016 in February and DIHAD 2016 in March offered a clear indication of the company's tenacious, ethical and professional approach to market.

For example, Conrico used the AIDF Africa event in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, to discuss vehicle, power and export requirements across several regional scenarios. Conrico was focused, particularly, on how its engineering and export practices could enable East African aid delivery and development strategy. At this and other events, the company entertains representatives from non-governmental organisations (NGOs), governments and private sector entities - to discuss strategic partnerships aimed at engaging with communities and improving livelihoods. It participated at DIHAD in Dubai, in the UAE, to foster partnerships and share knowledge with humanitarian organisations, and to showcase its product portfolio and expertise in service delivery.

The aim is to understand better what the company's customers need, as they serve communities and commercial operations. As Mr Beacham observes, "There is no such thing as a typical project, so we must be flexible."

Specialist vehicle solutions

The team at Conrico understands that customer needs will vary, and that it can be difficult to obtain the equipment and levels of service required to complete a job. So, Conrico offers an extensive range of vehicles, and offers also the engineering and logistical support to match machines and markets. It is determined to get an correctly-configured product on site, in any location - whether the order is for a small car or sedan, a utility vehicle or a bus, a truck or a tanker, a

tractor or a crane. And it can supply a diverse range of range of equipment and supplies such as tyres and workshop tools.

As Mr Beacham says, "We will find the solution to ensure a vehicle is ready to put to use immediately."

With respect to vehicle solutions, a great deal of Conrico's business comes from distribution of Suzuki machines through its dealer networks in South Sudan, Sierra Leone and Liberia. The vehicles it offers include the Vitara, Grand Vitara and Jimny. The first thing to note about the Vitara is that is extremely safe. Sophisticated integrated technology from Suzuki - including hill-descent and hill-hold controls, radar brake support and adaptive cruise control - make it easier to act quickly and decisively on any surface. The Grand Vitara features an even greater range of active and passive safety features to



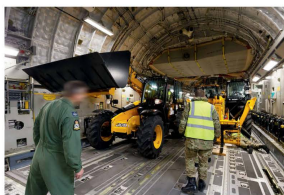
Conrico's engineering base in Chertsey, in the United Kingdom

help drivers handle harsh conditions, but it also offers greater comfort, more flexible seating, more powerful engines and superior transmissions. The Jimny is one of the most economical four-wheel drive vehicles around. And it is both compact, versatile and tough, renowned for being both rugged and manoeuvrable while offering plenty of cargo space.

Suzuki is one of a number of trusted manufacturers to partner with Conrico for emerging market opportunities. It is typical of the kind of partnerships the company commits to: brands which are well-established and focus only on producing quality products; established enterprises that include not only Suzuki, but also JCB. One of the world's top three manufacturers

of construction equipment, JCB partners with Conrico to ensure the humanitarian community has access to pre-positioned stock for emergency despatch during post-conflict and disaster relief scenarios. Conrico can avail NGOs and rapid response teams with JCB excavators, backhoes, forklifts, skid steers, telehandlers, compaction equipment and generators. Both JCB and Conrico are experienced in and are adept at supplying specialist vehicle solutions to enable and ameliorate disaster relief efforts around the world.

JCB vehicles and power units have been used for every application imaginable, from clearing debris on roads to rebuilding houses and providing power to hospitals and local authorities - and much of the company's equipment is in place and is working as a result of Conrico's distribution. ■



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Suppliers of automotive and power products to the aid and development community