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All-new Range Rover systems successfully delivered

Jaguar Land Rover has formally accepted the control systems supplied by Autotech as part of the assembly lines for the all-new Range Rover at its Solihull factory.



This project is the largest by far that Autotech has ever delivered and – given its complexity and the high quality standards required by JLR – the whole team is extremely proud of the systems delivered and the important role they are playing in JLR's continued success.

and framing (for VDL Steelweld) and the closures (for KUKA), involving the integration of a total of 189 ABB robots.

Following a successful production launch, the new assembly systems have now been fully accepted by Jaguar Land Rover and are ramping up smoothly to full production at the Lode Lane plant.



The fourth-generation luxury Range Rover – which has a starting price of just over £70,000, although many models will cost over £100,000 – is the first SUV in the world to be made completely from aluminium, making it lighter and more fuel-efficient.

The Autotech project team – which involved over 160 people over the project's life – used virtual manufacturing technology for the design and commissioning of the robotic work cells in what is one of the most sophisticated body-manufacturing facilities in Europe. Autotech supplied the complete control solution for the upper body



From the CEO's desk...

Chinese people around the world recently celebrated New Year to welcome in the Year of the Snake, an animal that signifies cleverness and tenacity.

This is interesting because these are precisely the qualities that Autotech is renowned for – our expertise and determination are what led JLR to appoint us as preferred control systems supplier and this confidence has been fulfilled in the success of the all-new Range Rover bodyshop.

Our cleverness and tenacity are also, I believe, what led JLR to invite us to discuss plans for their brand-new factory in China, a joint venture with Chery Automobile. Recently, I travelled to Shanghai with Ian Farmer, Group Technical Director. Arriving on the Wednesday, we had a packed schedule – including meetings with JLR, Rockwell, Siemens and a potential supplier of circuit breakers for Igranic – before flying out on the Sunday. JLR acted as

our hosts and we worked very hard – although we did squeeze in a few drinks at a nightclub.

This is a very exciting project that we are confident we can play a key role in, as there is no experience among China's suppliers of JLR's exacting standards. It is also a very ambitious project – the factory is currently no more than a muddy field, and yet the first model (the Evoque) will be rolling off the production line in December 2014, followed by three more models at six-monthly intervals. The project will also provide the opportunity for some ATG staff to relocate to this highly enterprising and interesting country for a period of time – watch this space.



Andy



Fitter Kieran gets fitter!

Igranic fitter, Kieran Day, has been pounding the streets in preparation for this year's London Marathon, which takes place on 21 April.

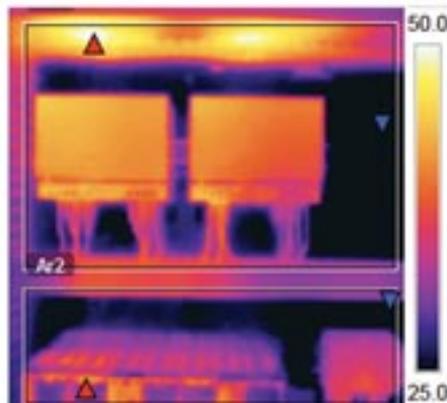
Kieran is running the gruelling 26-mile course to raise funds for the charity, Children With Cancer. Kieran has received pledges of £700 so far and anyone wishing to donate can do so at virginmoneygiving.com/OneKneekd.

Apprentices prove they can take the heat



When Jaguar Land Rover decided recently that they wanted to have thermal images of all the Autotech control panels on site – totalling over 100 – I thought this would be a great challenge for a couple of our Autotech Academy apprentices. Daniel Bullock and Thomas Barker were selected for this project and their first task was to work out how to use the thermal imaging camera!

Reading the instruction manual proved invaluable, as it mentioned an online training course, which Dan and Tom duly completed, earning themselves a certificate each. They were then able to undertake the project, successfully analysing and formulating the data into reports for the client. I was most impressed with the way they tackled this work and completed it to a very high standard. Well done, guys!



Fred Oliver, Site Manager for Autotech

Pitch perfect

The inter-group ATG football match did not go ahead due to the poor weather conditions but is expected to be rescheduled for a date in May. If you fancy digging out your footie boots to represent your company, contact Dan.Roberts@igranic.com or Bill.White@igranic.com – you don't have to be especially fit, just keen!

If you have any ideas for other activities you would like to arrange with the help of the committee, please get in touch via ATGSocial@autotech.co.uk



The L405 project and the secrets of its success

With the systems supplied to Jaguar Land Rover (JLR) for the all-new Range Rover now accepted, we asked one of the team's project managers, Simon Godfrey, to answer some questions about the job that was code-named L405 by JLR.



So, Simon, just how big was this project?

It was huge. In fact, it was the largest project that Autotech has ever supplied. It was a big deal for JLR too – they say that it's the largest aluminium bodyshop in the world and it's for their flagship vehicle, the all-new Range Rover. As well as designing, installing and commissioning the control systems, we also supplied, built and installed all of the control and distribution panels – including 26 line power supply panels, 37 area enclosures, 8 line PLC enclosures to house 37 PLCs, 120 diagnostic displays, 27 servo panels and over 400 small junction boxes.

Was it the project's size or complexity that made it challenging?

A bit of both, really. There were a number of parties involved and that makes communication really important, of course. Autotech worked with VDL Steelweld for the upper body and framing, with KUKA for the closures, with V Installations for the delivery conveyors and skid return, and with Webb for the EMS (electric monorail system).



What skills were required for Autotech to create the new bodyshop?

At the outset, the team comprised some of our most experienced engineers and, as the project progressed, their expertise was complemented by the skills of new employees who joined the ATG group during the life of L405. These people included trainees from the Autotech Academy and there is no doubt that L405 – being for such an iconic British brand that plays a key role in the UK's automotive industry – will be a very memorable

project for these young people. The project has also been a great training ground for our robot programmers and their work has been vital to the success of L405. They had a total of 189 robots performing different tasks from handling parts to riveting panels to applying glue and sealant. In all, the project involved 4 EPLAN designers, 15 PLC programmers, 18 robot programmers, 6 Robcad engineers, 15 panel builders and 40 electricians – in addition to the management team looking after them all. The project has clocked up some 150,000 man-hours for Autotech across all these disciplines.

What was the most difficult part of the project, in your opinion?

Simply resourcing such a large project. We had some 160 people working on the project over the life of L405, spread over the various systems required. It was very challenging for the management and supervision team to ensure that everything progressed smoothly and was kept on track, but – thanks to the hard work and

dedication of everyone involved – we did it. At the technical level, a challenge for the development team was the introduction of Virtual PLC. Autotech also took on the design of the PLC interfaces for the ISRA measuring system – used to check the dimensions of finished vehicles – and the Profil robotic nutting/studding application.

What has been the most satisfying part of L405?

Knowing that all that hard work has paid off. The project was delivered on time, within budget and JLR is pleased with it. Once again, the Autotech team has shown that its expertise plays a key role in JLR's ability to deliver new models. Another pleasing part of the project is its safety record. Over a million man-hours were invested in L405 by the various parties involved and the project was completed without a major incident. This reflects the high standards of both JLR and their suppliers.

Fan-tache-tic total raised for Movember



Many thanks to all the guys who participated in the 'Movember' campaign to raise funds for the men's health charities, Prostate Cancer UK and the Institute of Cancer Research. ATG's efforts as part of this nationwide initiative were

organised by ATG's Social Committee and raised not only a few smiles and eyebrows but also a tache-tickling total of £155 for the team effort – in addition to all the monies donated through sponsorship of individuals taking part.

Pete Thurston, Movember Team Captain and Igranic Draughtsman

Reaping the benefits of acquisition

Having acquired PSJ Fabrications – along with Igranic – last year, Autotech has been looking at ways to keep procurement within ATG. To this end, it was decided that PSJ would fabricate the cable trunking used in all Autotech projects, which had previously been sourced from Spain, via Germany and Ireland! PSJ engineers designed heavy-gauge, walk-on trunking and produced samples which were tested at JLR in Solihull. The Autotech installation team made suggestions to improve them and the second prototypes were approved by JLR. Then PSJ turned its focus to light-gauge trunking. After samples were again enhanced by the Autotech team, this design was also approved by JLR. So now we have trunking products – which can be supplied for internal or external use – manufactured in-house, right here in Bedford.

Spotlight on....



For this issue's 'Spotlight on...' interview, we find out more about Igranic's Technical Director, Ian Brice.

What brought you into this industry?

My dad was an electrician and my mum used to work for the original Igranic during the war, so I just drifted into it. I didn't like school, so left at 15 and gained a craft apprenticeship at Brookhirst Igranic. During a five-year apprenticeship, I gained qualifications and was transferred to a technical apprenticeship, during which I won 'Apprentice of the Year' twice. After my apprenticeship I ended up in the Engineering Department. I continued my studies and got involved with working on Low Voltage, Medium Voltage, DC controls and PLC systems. I also spent time on site, both at home and abroad. In 1987 the company decided to close its Systems Division, thus Igranic Control Systems was born and I become a founder member, shareholder and Technical Director. During the next 25 years, I did much the same for the new company – and I have had the same role since its acquisition by Autotech.

What is the most exciting thing about your job?

It is very satisfying to see a project right through from design to completion, with the system fully working.

Who inspired you most in your career?

When starting my career, a lot of experienced engineers were always ready to give me advice on all aspects of the job – something that I hope to pass on to the younger engineers of today.



If you had to do it all over again, what would you do differently?
I would take more calculated risks.

What is the most embarrassing thing that has ever happened to you?

Some years ago, I was a navigator in a road rally on a cold February night with my friend, who was driving. Somehow or other, we ended up in a river and totally submerged the car. I have maintained to this day that I told him to turn right after the river!

What is your favourite book of all time?

It's difficult to choose between 'Watership Down' and 'The Wind in the Willows'. I suppose that indicates a love of the English countryside.

Do you have any secret ambitions?

Yes – to build a house from scratch using all the skills I have learned over the years when carrying out DIY. I'm a very practical person and don't think there is a single trade I couldn't tackle.

What are your favourite pastimes?

I enjoy walking, DIY, gardening and reading.

What are your three favourite movies of all time?

That's easy: Clint Eastwood's spaghetti westerns... 'The Good, The Bad and The Ugly', 'A Fistful of Dollars' and 'A Few Dollars More'.

What is your favourite guilty pleasure?

Eating sweets. I have a real weakness for them, especially Liquorice Allsorts and toffees.

Sponsorship

News

Injuries hamper the Blues

**BEDFORD
BLUES**



1886

Bedford Blues, sponsored by PSJ Fabrications, have had an interesting couple of months. The rugby union club narrowly lost to Division 1 rivals, Nottingham and London Scottish, but won through to a national cup semi-final. The Blues squad has been stretched after a succession of injuries in what has been a gruelling season. As they approach the business end of the season, the club will look to cement a second place finish and a play-off position for the fourth year in a row.

Austen's new car takes shape

Austen Greenway, Senior Simulation Engineer with Autotech, continues to be sponsored by the Autotech Academy. Austen, who collected his Second-In-Class trophy for last season's efforts at the annual awards dinner in January, has been working hard on his brand-new car. Says Austen, "The new car is taking shape but rather than rush to try and get it out this season, we want it finished and fully tested ready for the 2014 season. The first race is only a few weeks away, so the old car is being prepared to do battle for its final season." TV coverage of the 750 Motorclub events has been negotiated and they will be aired on Motors TV during the year. You can track Austen's success at www.austengreenway.co.uk.



FA Cup run ends for the Hatters



Despite a disappointing fifth round exit at the hands of Millwall at Kenilworth Road, the Hatters can be proud of their performances against top-flight opponents during this year's FA Cup run – including wins against Championship side, Wolverhampton Wanderers, and Premiership side, Norwich City. All focus now turns to the league and the critical push to reach the play-off places. With poor recent form and the unexpected resignation of Manager, Paul Buckle, this is going to be a tough task.