



## **BRITISH INTERNATIONAL MOTOR SHOW EXHIBITION STEERING GROUP MEETING**

Notes of the meeting held on 23 September 2008  
at Forbes House, Halkin Street, London SW1

Chairman: Andy Gilson, GM UK & I

### **Attended by:**

Paul Andrews, BMW (UK)  
Peter Collins, Citroën UK (representing Marc Raven)  
Lisa Brankin, Ford of Britain (representing Mark Ovenden)  
Andrew Cullis, Hyundai  
Andy Fellows, Jaguar Land Rover (representing David Lewis)  
Nigel Unwin, Koelliker UK/SsangYong  
Anthony Bradbury, Land Rover  
Kim Crawford, Mazda Motors UK (representing Mark Cameron)  
Caroline Earley, Nissan GB  
Mark Waller, Renault UK  
Alun Parry, Suzuki GB (representing Darren Ponsford)  
Lance Bates, Toyota (representing Jon Williams)

Giles Brown, Sales Director, imie  
Tim Etchells, Managing Director, imie  
Rob Mackenzie, Managing Director, imie  
Kirsty Perkinson, Marketing Director, imie

Nikki Rooke, Head of Communications, SMMT  
Sefton Samuels, Company Secretary & Head of Legal Services, SMMT  
Janet Wilkinson, Communications Manager, SMMT

### **Apologies:**

Marc Raven, Citroën UK  
Al Clarke, Ferrari GB  
Mark Ovenden, Ford of Britain  
Tom Gardner, Honda (UK)  
David Lewis, Jaguar Cars  
Mark Cameron, Mazda Motors UK Ltd  
Gordon Freshwater, Mercedes-Benz UK Ltd  
Matthew Parkin, Morgan Motor Company  
Steve Robertson, SEAT  
Darren Ponsford, Suzuki GB  
Jon Williams, Toyota (GB)

## 1. Introduction

- Andy Gilson welcomed the group and explained the meeting had two objectives. Firstly, a critique of the 2008 British International Motor Show, looking at its results and feedback from exhibitors, and secondly, a discussion on the next show. imie would leave the meeting after its presentations.
- Seftton Samuels advised that this was the principal meeting in the series of SMMT's BIMS debriefs, after earlier presentations to Car Section and Public Affairs Committee. This group would form a recommendation for 2010 which would be discussed and adopted by Car Section at its next meeting.

## 2. Presentation by imie: 2008 BIMS

- Rob Mackenzie began by saying he hoped it was felt imie did a good job with the Show organisation. A DVD was played with highlights from the Show.
- Kirsty Perkinson began the presentation by reminding ESG that the detailed PR campaign had been presented to PAC and suggested that their PR colleagues would be able to elaborate should they have any questions.
- Today's presentation would focus on the Show's marketing. The 5+ million marketing budget was the same as 2006, but the campaign was more condensed than last time.
- Digital marketing had been used more this year with a more comprehensive web site and extensive list of online partners as well as other initiatives. It also included a targeted e-marketing campaign and the database now totals 130,000 records.
- More than 200 joint promotions were set up, significantly more than 2006, and a high number of media partnerships were also arranged, many built on relationships from the 2006 Show.
- Kirsty pointed out that VM support had increased and imie had met exhibitors' teams, often a combination of PR, marketing and event staff, which had been very extremely useful and enabled activities to be more focussed and supported.
- The complimentary ticket strategy was more targeted at key media and event partners, resulting in 9% of visitors with complimentary tickets against 13% in 2006.
- imie had appointed three PR agencies covering motoring specialist, lifestyle and broadcast. An article in PR Week had focussed on how well they had worked together, and with imie and SMMT's Communications department.
- Media attendance totalled 3,080 (2006 media attendance - 2,800) with 30% international press from 60 countries (2006 - 23% from 41 countries). 30 international TV crews filmed on press day, 16 UK TV channels and 43 radio stations covered the show, many with live broadcasts on Press Day.
- It is important to point out the international audience reach was up by 37% over 2006 with international coverage secured pre-Show up from 35% to 39%. Almost every global market showed an increase in audience reach: + 525% in the US, + 167% in Germany, +77% in Spain, +147% in China and +59% in Canada. International coverage as a proportion of total coverage increased by 5% (to 39% in 2008). Research shows this level of coverage now ranks BIMS as the fourth most important European motor show. *(Note: This report is also attached.)*
- Visitor attendance showed a 14% increase - a total of 472,300 compared with 415,500 in 2006.
- Travel to the Show was one of the few negatives in visitor research with 45% having a good/excellent journey, against 87% in 2006. This was due to disruption of the DLR and Jubilee line as they are upgraded in preparation for the Olympics. The work will be completed by 2010.
- The quality of visitors also increased with key demographic groups represented as well as the audience profile. Research also showed an increase in family and female visitors, and a car buying audience with an average age of 38.

- Green issues were an increasing part of car buying and the Green Pavilion was positively received by visitors and press.
- imie is confident the glamorous supercar brands can be retained for future shows and with their own stands.
- *(Note: A copy of the full presentation is attached to these notes.)*
- Questions on the 2008 Show results were invited:
- imie was asked if any changes in the marketing plan would be considered. It was felt the benefit of radio was questionable, although it was good for walk-up visitors. May reduce radio and increase digital spend next time.
- The £5 after 5pm offer was unexpectedly successful with queues at 5pm that delivered local people including Canary Wharf workers, and a clear profile of 25-30-year-olds. This vindicated the Show's late opening. The additional hour on the final Sunday afternoon also increased attendance that day.
- Although stronger Dock Rock bands than 2006 had been booked, all concerts had taken a massive dive over the summer. The concerts had not been used for corporate hospitality, as expected, so an alternative way to deliver evening audiences would be investigated. The new indoor conference site for ExCeL Phase 2 offered different opportunities and would be more cost-effective than building an arena. The idea of live broadcast programmes with motoring celebrities could be considered.
- imie was asked how the 2006 visitor database had been used and whether visitor information had been tracked to see who bought tickets to the Show, giving a loyalty indicator. Although they had been offered a two-for-one ticket offer, it was felt more value could be obtained from the database. imie agreed to re-examine this and see what other ways the database could be used.
- Andy Gilson reminded ESG that it had been originally set up to discuss and guide marketing proposals. He complimented imie on its marketing activity for the 2008 Show and he thanked the group for all its input.

### 3. Exhibitors' feedback questionnaire

- The survey was tabled *(attached to these minutes for non-attendees)* and Seftton presented the results.
- 15 VMs had returned questionnaires, covering 20 brands and giving positive Show results. Additional written comments focussed on negative aspects of the Show; however this is a good mechanism to discover common problem areas.
- Press Day and marketing were very positive and the number of brands launching products had increased on 2006.
- PR coverage was up on 2006, but international coverage continues to lag behind national media.
- All Show features received a solid endorsement and added to the appeal of the Show. Most respondents were in favour of the Electric Village, less so for the Greener Driving Pavilion which seemed to lack a cohesive focus. SMMT's Policy department felt the environmental area was dealt with differently by each VM.
- The transport challenges discussed earlier in the meeting were highlighted. Leith's was strongly criticised and prices again were felt to be unnecessarily high.
- The cost of exhibiting at the Show was felt to be reasonable, but extras significantly added to the costs.
- There was positive feedback for imie's organisation of the show.
- Most agreed that 2008 was better than 2006 with some negatives. However, it was clear that exhibiting VMs felt the growing number of missing brands compromises the Show's status.
- The principal brands gave affirmative responses to exhibiting in 2010, but others are less sure today, given the distance before the next Show.

### 4. SMMT overview

- Nikki Rooke presented the tabled paper (*attached*). An increase in all areas - visitor attendance, global and UK debuts - was positive.
- It was felt that the environmental emphasis helped to attract VIP visitors - more than 30 attended, just seven in 2006. The Prime Minister's attendance was helpful for coverage after Press Day.
- SMMT's Policy department arranged for the entire HM Treasury taxation team to attend for a meeting and Show visit which was well received.

Before moving to Item 5, Andy Gilson asked for further questions on 2008:

- Ultimate Collection. Although the original plan was that all brands taking part in the Ultimate Collection should have a stand in the halls, for a number of reasons exhibitors like Ferrari and Maserati who were originally to be in the Heritage Enclosure, had been brought into the Ultimate Collection Public Gallery. imie acknowledged the UCPG could have been better organised, with small, individual stands. Most exhibitors were happy with the UC and had a successful event.
- Rob summarised imie's performance against SMMT's objectives:
- 500,000 visitors had not been achieved, but this number had been predicated against full VM support. However, there was a 14% visitor increase with quality maintained.
- As previously shown, there was a significant increase in international press coverage.
- Visitor satisfaction was high, but missing brands will be a major issue going forward.

#### **5. Presentation by imie: towards 2010 and beyond**

- The Motor Show was growing in stature and attendance, unlike other international motor shows and UK consumer exhibitions. Its unique indoor/outdoor combination had received favourable comment from press and visitors.
- ExCeL's Phase 2 will provide a further 35,000 m<sup>2</sup> of space, totalling 101,000m<sup>2</sup>, equivalent to the size of Geneva. It will be Europe's most modern exhibition centre.
- imie needs earlier confirmation of VM participation to ensure future success. Some brands pulled out very close to this year's Show, with others reducing stand size and therefore costs. However, it had been learnt from this that it is not necessary to have large stands to produce a successful show in 2010.
- Recognising that it is difficult to look too far ahead in the current economic difficulties, a solution might be to defer a show from 2010 to 2011.
- imie would be organising The Sexy Green Car Show in 2009, in conjunction with The Eden Project. This would enable imie's team to remain together. (*Note: imie's presentation on the Sexy Green Car Show is attached separately.*)
- The Docklands Festival concept presented at the last ESG was on hold, although research had shown a positive response.
- Andy Gilson asked for views on 2010 vs 2011. imie would have to commit to tenancy for 2010 in Spring 2009. It was felt that holding the Show in 2011 - a Frankfurt year - was not a sensible move as the momentum gained from the 2006 and 2008 Shows could be lost.
- ExCeL had offered May dates in 2012.

At this point, imie left the meeting.

#### **6. Discussion and recommendations**

- Andy Gilson reminded ESG that after this discussion, a recommendation would be put to Car Section on the Show's future.

- It was agreed that 2008 had been a good Show. Although visitor numbers had not reached the target 500,000, given the missing VMs and the economic environment, it was a good result.
- There was agreement that there was demand for a UK show but early commitment was needed from VM senior representatives on Car Section.
- Non-exhibitors had their individual reasons for not attending, including budgetary issues. However, non-exhibitors in 2008 have asked to meet imie again.
- Some exhibitors had support from their European offices, but not as much as the Geneva show was supported. It was noted that Moscow and Beijing shows are increasing in profile.
- A discussion on this year's launches followed. The UK doesn't generally attract major launches, although imie had delivered premium demographics which may help to encourage VM head offices to review earlier decisions. (*Note a list of 2008 product launches is attached.*)
- It was suggested that VMs need a clear timeline from imie to help them make decisions. All agreed it would be helpful.
- SMMT was asked how the Show was perceived at senior level. Seftton said it is felt the Show is a good event but there is concern at the lack of collective VM support. Now that SMMT has contracted out the Show organisation, the Show can be used for wider economic and policy lobbying. SMMT was no longer reliant on the Show for income but should a decision be taken not to hold a 2010 show, it would likely not return.
- There were more negatives than positives in delaying the Show to 2011. However, the cost implication to visitors of a move to a May show in 2012 needed to be borne in mind. It would be expensive for families to visit BIMS and then the Olympics.
- It was agreed that three years was too long between shows and we should continue the momentum. However, The Sexy Green Car Show did not need to be a collective VM decision.
- New guidelines for imie in 2010 would be needed - global launches attract international media.
- A short discussion on the Show's name followed. It was agreed to keep the British International Motor Show as London Motor Show implied a regional show.
- The group agreed a review of the features was needed. Dock Rock was not successful and needed to be refreshed. The van and motorhome areas were unacceptable, although it was recognised these outside areas would not exist in 2010 so the products could probably be displayed better. It was reiterated that early VM commitment would help imie's planning.
- It was agreed that imie should be asked to assess the success of other international shows - Paris, Geneva etc - as well as major consumer shows, providing a critique for ESG to consider and recommend what ideas may be investigated.
- The group agreed that imie should provide a timetable of deadlines, ask VMs what they want, then ESG would discuss and guide how this could be delivered.
- It was agreed to hold an ESG meeting in early 2009 once this information was available. A date will be confirmed as soon as possible.

**Note:** *all attachments can also be accessed from the BIMS ESG area of SMMT's web site -*

*<http://www.smmt.co.uk/committee/template.cfm?sid=208&tsid=0&catid=3031&fid=23&fid1=17&fid2=3&gid=249>*