

IoT, alternative fuels to drive commercial vehicle segment

SERI KEMBANGAN - The internet of things (IoT), alternative fuels, and GPS tracking will be among the megatrends driving the commercial vehicle segment forward, said Asian Trucker editor Stefan Pertz.

Speaking to reporters after launching the biennial Malaysian Commercial Vehicle Expo 2017 (MCVE 2017) here yesterday, he said big data is increasingly becoming a key instrument to manage businesses, whether industrial or providing services to commuters and travellers.

"It is essential to mobility and connectivity, which are two important areas in the commercial vehicle field, benefitting both fleet operators and commuters," he said. Pertz highlighted four megatrends seen in the commercial vehicle industry. "First, the search for alternative fuels.

For years, commercial vehicles have been powered by diesel, which has its problems. At the moment, many companies are looking at different ways to propel their fleets. "While Tesla's Elon Musk has announced that he is working on electric trucks, electrification is not the only way forward.

Manufacturers are also looking at technology that convert municipal waste to fuel, or buses that are hydrogen-powered, "he noted. The second megatrend is the use of GPS in tandem with machine-to-machine connectivity, which allow for self-driving vehicles.

These are currently being developed and tested in numerous countries. The third trend is the use of IoT to manage commercial vehicles in terms of speeding, and idling time.

"There is a United Nations charter on the reduction of carbon dioxide, and there is only one company registered as compliant to it: Balakong-based Nittsu Transport Sdn Bhd. They use GPS tracking to reduce carbon dioxide more than everyone else, and hired five people to look at GPS data. "But the money Nittsu saved on fuel via GPS tracking not only paid for these five people but also led to increased profits," Pertz illustrated. He continued: "Fourth, just as consumers have Uber and Grab to move around, there are apps to schedule loads on trucks that might otherwise be empty. So you move a good from KL to Penang, but on the way back the truck is empty, but someone wants to move a pallet from Ipoh to KL and you can take that on." Occupying 8,000 square metres of space, this year's MCVE sees renewed participation by past exhibitors in addition to newcomers, from a range of service providers in the transportation and logistics industry.

Following a 23% jump in trade visitors at the 2015 expo, MCVE 2017 expects 7,000 visitors this year. Officiating the launch of MCVE 2017 was Deputy Transport Minister Abdul Aziz Kaprawi.