

QUESTER

In Search of Better Transportation Solutions: Quester

Quester is the first Japanese heavy-duty truck range specifically developed for growth markets which boasts heavy-duty chassis, heavy-duty cab and associated heavy-duty features like hub reduction axles, extra engine breaks, fuel coach tools and more.

It is the culmination of 1.5 million engineering hours spent, 65,000 hours of testing or 400 test rigs. A total of 650 components and trucks were produced and it took 3.5 years from concept to serial production. Behind the development was a 100 percent-committed project team comprised of hundreds of specialists with different knowledge, experience, age and gender who all came together to develop and manufacture Quester. It embodies the UD heritage of ultimate dependability - the first UD truck specifically made for growth markets.

The main 'ingredient' for the Quester is the Asian customers' input and blending it with Volvo Group's proven technologies and UD Trucks know-how to deliver modern, efficient vehicles for the customers. This has made the Quester a truck that will address the needs of the industry.

It is also UD Trucks' first completely built-up truck range manufactured outside Japan, leveraging expertise from both UD Trucks in Japan and the Volvo Group's global development resources.

One of the most obvious advantages with Quester is versatility. Quester offers users a unique experience of adaptability that is currently not available on the market. Quester offers ideal axle positioning available in seven different configurations - 4x2R/T, 6x2R/T, 6x4R/T and 8x4R configurations for distribution and long haul and 6x4R/T and 8x4R for construction and mining work. The 6x4R/T and 8x4R are designed for rough conditions and are particularly suitable for construction where durability and high reliability are of the highest importance. The 6x2R/T can be provided with a bogie lifting axle which is used to lift the axle in the unloaded condition.

Taking it to the next level, at the UD booth of the 2019 Tokyo Motor Show, customers could try the many functions that the Quon Concept 202X featured. Toshio Shiratori, Design Director, Product Design UD Trucks Complete Vehicle opined that in his view automation and alternative fuels are the most important aspects of new developments. That said, for him, automation is even more important as driver shortages are common around the world and the drive train is a part of the entire concept. Visitors could try five truck modes such as platooning, emergency and pre-inspection. Shiratori designed the front grille in a way that it would communicate with the outside via sound and displays.





UD Extra Mile Challenge

For UD Trucks, the quest to find the ultimate driver is part of its vision of smart logistics providing solutions to society's needs. Further efficiency in distribution is essential to meet the rapidly growing demand for parcel delivery. Competition in the distribution sector is also becoming more intense, while at the same time there is a severe labour shortage, particularly of skilled drivers. Despite these challenges, truck manufacturers have to be ever mindful of environmental issues, congestion and safety

This is why they say the world needs smart logistics which is efficient and profitable, safe and sustainable and people-friendly logistics and the UD Extra Mile competition is one format that helped nurture these traits.

Realistic Driving Challenge

The UD Extra Mile Challenge is based on a concept that has the real life of a truck operator in mind, with the Quester being the hero of the competition. However, it is not about reciting knowledge or just being very precise when manoeuvring. Drivers are put into a scenario that is very much derived from the demands of the market. This means that fuel-efficient driving is not good enough if the goods are not delivered on time. A delivery on time is not going to win any trophy if the goods are damaged.

The first part of the test is the pre-drive inspection. Here, contestants have to work through a long list of points on the vehicle to be checked to ensure that the truck is ready for the mission. This includes a check if the wheel nuts are tightened as well as the washer fluid for the windshield.

As a second part, contestants then have to drive a truck around the track at Ageo, where the UD production and experience centre is located. As one will quickly note, it is not just a drive around the block. First, the truck needs to be wiggled out of the parking space. Then the task is to drive as fuel efficiently as possible around the track. The track itself also has obstacles and a layout that is difficult to negotiate. This is to test the skills of the drivers as the container in the back holds a container filled with water. Drivers are judged by how fast they went around the track, how fuel efficient they drove (measured with UD's telematics system) and how little water they spilled.

What makes this challenge special is that the scenario is very close to the reality of day-to-day business. Drivers have a set starting budget and every mistake results in a deduction. At the end of the test, the driver with the most money left wins. For the fleet owners, this is also a great plus as drivers learn why their bosses are focusing on the issues of timely delivery, careful and fuel-efficient driving.

Driver's Perspective

in 2018, UD's Extra Mile Challenge was held in nine countries, with 300 drivers competing for the nine slots in the finals. With only one driver per country, this is a very prestigious event where drivers pit their skills against the best in the industry. After their respective turns, drivers say that this event is not just a competition but also a training platform for them.



