

WHERE TO, GUV?

The Philippines, Paris, Milan, Abu Dhabi, China, Trinidad and Tobago, Hungary and Angola are just some of the places where the iconic TX4 is being exported to as orders are placed from around the world. LTI Vehicles' Coventry factory is one of the few British carmakers left in the UK today. The company is justifiably proud to be receiving orders from such a wide market place.

It is a bit of an old cliché that taxi drivers say "Where to, Guv?" and it is part of expectations many tourists have when visiting the UK, especially London. For many of them their trip to the capital would not be complete without enjoying a journey by black cab. During the last few months, the iconic taxi, simply known around the world as a "black cab" regardless of its colour, has been exported far and wide. This export market is a developing sales area for the company and together with the agreement in China, the TX4 will be seen in more and more places.

'BIENVENUTO' SAYS MILAN



ADM in Milan placed an order recently. Nigel Walters, Overseas Operations Coordinator for LTI Vehicles, said: "The TX4 has an Italian engine so we have had a lot of interest from Italy. Everyone recognises the taxi and it has always attracted a lot of interest. I was at a motor show in Bologna and it attracted a lot of attention from both the Italians and the foreign journalists. Hopefully this is the first of many batches to Italy and we hope this develops into a long-term and fruitful partnership."

The vehicles, which have all been supplied in white because it is the official colour of taxis in Italy, are being sold through Milan's Lamborghini dealership.

THE STAR TREATMENT

Bigfoot Entertainment is a television and film company in the Philippines. They have bought a new London taxi to ferry around cast and crew members. The gold specification black cab will advertise its International Academy of Film and Television while negotiating the streets of Cebu. The taxi was shipped in May, a bumper export month for LTI.

BONJOUR PARIS!

A grey TX4 has been shipped to Paris for a customer who wanted to update an older model.

Including 2 taxis which have been shipped to Angola, these export deals are worth around £200,000 to LTI Vehicles. Nigel Walters, said: "Our taxis are famous the world over, instantly recognisable as a British icon. We already have got cabs in all corners of the globe but new export orders for the TX4 are really booming. Since its launch, interest has grown month on month. Existing customers are updating their models and new enquiries are coming in from far and wide. We are delighted with the success and have increased production at our factory to cope with demand."



Harvey Nichols has bought its own London-style taxi to let the world know about its newest overseas store in Istanbul in Turkey

TX4 TAXIS DRIVE HOME ANTI DRINK DRIVE MESSAGE

Double-world Formula One racing champion Mika Hakkinen is Global Responsible Drinking Ambassador for Johnnie Walker, a world famous brand of whisky. He recently launched a campaign in Monaco with the slogan: "Winners always stay in control - don't drink and drive." Eight specially-liveried black cabs from LTI Vehicles were used to promote the campaign with its serious message. "My experience as a racing driver has taught me a lot about being in control," said Mika. "I believe that I have a responsibility as a high-profile driver to help address the hugely important issue of drinking responsibly and never drink-driving."

Johnnie Walker is a partner of Vodafone McLaren Mercedes. As part of his role as Global Responsible Drinking Ambassador, Mika Hakkinen is helping to promote an anti-drink-driving message to the large audience of Formula One race fans around the world. "Figures for people convicted of alcohol-related driving offences are at a ten-year high in England and Wales. Almost a quarter of offenders and victims of drink-driving in London are aged between 17 and 24 so it is more important than ever to ram home the message that if you are going out, you should plan your journey home," said Matthew Cheyne, Sales and Marketing Director for LTI Vehicles. "A London taxi is the obvious choice. We are delighted to have been able to help launch this important campaign."



AFTER THE KNOWLEDGE...

For the past 25 years Tony Norris has been one of the foremost tutors of the world famous Knowledge of London. Now running the Computer Cab plc Knowledge School in White City, he tells Taxi Mirror how he not only helps students through the Knowledge, but after they get their badge and they prepare to get behind the wheel of a cab.

"A big part of being a Knowledge tutor is removing the fear of the Knowledge from the students. There are so many myths and stories in this trade that often students starting the Knowledge don't know where to begin - but ask any cabbie and they'll tell you that there is any number of methods you can adopt but the main thing is to follow some method! ComCab use a TX4 at the school and the students are always impressed - it has very quickly gained a reputation as a superb vehicle. Many students of course start out by renting a cab but it's surprising how soon many look to buy - it is an investment and I think with this latest vehicle that has become clearer than ever before.



Tony does the rounds in the Knowledge School TX4

"When we take our students over to Heathrow for example we make a point of taking the cab onto the motorway and for me that's the big difference with the new TX4 engine - the remarkable ease with which it handles longer distance runs and motorway driving. Like many cabbies a lot of my students live in the suburbs or the home counties so it's a much nicer ride home. I have a TXII and I only ever keep my cabs for 3 years and I am really looking forward next year to upgrading.

"Whenever I have used our School's TX4 for working, customers have remarked on the smooth ride - you should never underestimate how much punters notice these things - especially corporate users who take a lot of cabs."

"The quieter running of the TX4 is also a major bonus and the Gold model is something else - we didn't have much of a summer this year but the air-con was still very welcome. It is really a pleasure to be able to show Knowledge Students that at last here is a vehicle that meets up to the hype."