

Scania Buses and Coaches – 100 years of innovation

Innovation and customer focus have characterised Scania's bus operations since 1911 – and still do. Read about historical milestones and bus designs that have garnered attention worldwide, as well as about the company and the trademark.

Clickable pictures

1911.

The newly merged Scania-Vabis delivered the first Swedish-built engine-powered omnibus, the 'Nordmark bus'. Its chain-driven chassis was built by Scania in Malmö, in southern Sweden, equipped with an engine and body from Vabis in Södertälje.



1922.

Pioneering development together with the Swedish Post Office produced an important 'niche' product. The new 'post bus' delivered mail throughout the year to sparsely populated areas in northern Sweden, using front skids and rear tracks during winter. Produced for the remainder of the decade, it managed to break the winter isolation in remote regions. It was also the start of continuous bus production for the company.



1932.

Sales of buses surpassed sales of trucks. There was a growing need for larger and larger buses. Scania-Vabis launched the 'Bulldog' bus, a pioneer because of its simple, space-saving design.



1948.

Scania-Vabis exported buses to Brazil for the first time, followed by trucks in 1951, under an import agreement with the Brazilian automotive company Vemag. Chassis assembly started in 1957 and the Scania-Vabis factory in São Paulo opened in 1961.



1953.

The Scania-Vabis Metropol suburban bus, developed in collaboration with US-based Mack Manufacturing Corporation, was launched on the Swedish market. The inline 8-cylinder engine was mounted transversely at the rear of the bus. The Metropol was the first bus fully built in Sweden with a monocoque body.



1957.

Firmly established in Brazil, Scania-Vabis started manufacturing engines. In 1959 the B75 was the first bus model built for the Brazilian market. This front engined bus was used both as a tourist coach and a city bus. It featured a robust engine in a strong chassis and was prepared for easy bodybuilding.



1971.

In 1966, just in time for the changeover to right-hand traffic in Sweden, Scania-Vabis launched a comfortable and passenger-friendly city bus, the CR76. Low weight and a low floor were priorities and the engine was tuned to emit the lowest possible amount of smoke. The CR76 served as the basis for the CR111 'silent' bus, with a noise level of only 77 dBA, launched in 1971.



1986.

Environmental issues became increasingly important. Working with the regional public transport company in Stockholm, Scania began testing CR113 ethanol buses in normal city operation. The 11-litre engine was adapted to operate on ethanol according to the diesel principle. Scania ethanol buses have been used in the Swedish capital ever since.



1996.

Scania launched the new aluminium-bodied city bus, the Scania OmniCity. The low-floor bus with full lateral kneeling is ideally suited for urban traffic. The platform is also used for the Scania OmniLink low-entry models and the Scania OmniCity double-decker.



2004.

With its front-mounted 5-cylinder engine and robust chassis, the Scania F-series is ideal for tough conditions, where it provides both comfort and high passenger capacity.



2007.

Having developed its first hybrid bus concept in 1995, Scania launched an innovative hybrid bus concept designed for maximum passenger convenience, with centre-seated driver, wheels at each corner and all-wheel steering.



2009.

Six three-axle Scania OmniLink ethanol-powered hybrid buses begin full-scale operational trials in collaboration with the regional public transport company in Stockholm.



2009.

The Scania Touring coach was launched, generating a lot of interest from operators. Styled by Scania and produced in cooperation with Chinese bus builder Higer, it is designed to satisfy demand in both new and existing markets. The 3-axle model followed in 2010.



2009.

Scania's involvement in BRT systems (Bus Rapid Transit) resulted in an order for 143 high-capacity articulated buses designed to run on dedicated bus lanes in Johannesburg, South Africa. The 'Rea Vaya' system has rapidly become popular among commuters, relieving them of the hassle and pollution of peak-hour traffic in Jo-burg.



Bright future for buses

Scania is celebrating its 100th anniversary as a bus builder. Now, says Melker Jernberg, Head of Buses and Coaches within Scania, the challenge is to speed up the transition to more sustainable passenger transport.



Investment in public transport is on the rise as cities around the world seek sustainable solutions to often urgent traffic problems.

To date, Scania has delivered about 2,000 vehicles to bus rapid transit (BRT) systems in Australia, Mexico, South America, South Africa and elsewhere. Such systems will also be launched in Europe, says Melker Jernberg.

“This is bound to happen. But we need to influence urban planners and other decision makers so they understand the importance of sustainable transport systems.”

Among Scania’s products are buses and coaches powered by biodiesel, bioethanol and biogas. So far, demand for alternative fuel vehicles has been weak outside Sweden, but in November 2010 a breakthrough occurred when Scania received an order from Brazil for 50 ethanol buses.

Jernberg predicts that buses and coaches will be better equipped to meet the comfort needs of customers. This includes long-distance coaches where passengers have access to fully reclining seats, catered food, broadband and big-screen film showings.

“Quality time instead of idle time make coaches more attractive, and thus a more competitive alternative,” he says.

Environmental milestones

Gas-powered buses. In 1980, Scania delivered the first gas-powered buses in modern times. The latest generation, from 2010, has been developed to give diesel-like performance. A total of more than 2,300 buses with Scania gas-powered engines are in operation, for example in Australia.

Bioethanol buses. Based on experiments in the late 1970s and early 1980s, in the mid-1980s, Scania developed its first ethanol-powered bus engines, and ethanol-powered buses have been in full-scale operation in congested urban traffic ever since. Today the third generation ethanol engine is in production, operating with diesel combustion for maximum efficiency. To date, Scania has sold more than 800 buses with ethanol engines.

Hybrid buses. The first test of hybrid buses took place in 1986. In the intervening years Scania has presented six hybrid bus concepts, among them the world's first hybrids using renewable fuel. These ethanol-powered hybrid buses underwent trial operation in Stockholm traffic in 2009-2010.

Commercial renewable fuels. In 2010, Scania became the first bus manufacturer to supply buses that can operate on all three commercially viable renewable fuels available today – ethanol, biogas and biodiesel.

BRT. Scania has delivered about 2,000 buses to BRT systems around the world, including some with a length of 20 m.

Scania – 120 years

Scania's roots go back to 1891. The initial focus was on railway carriages, but in the early 1900s, in view of the growing interest in road transport, the company entered the automotive industry and started to build cars and trucks. In 1911, public transport vehicles were added to the product range.

It all began in 1891. Philip Wersén, who had married into a leading industrialist family in the town of Södertälje south of Stockholm, the Ekenbergs, approached Surahammars Bruk with a proposal to jointly establish a factory for the manufacture of railway carriages. Surahammars Bruk, a centuries-old ironworks, was Sweden's leading supplier of wheels and other rolling stock components. The proposal was accepted, and Articles of Association for a new company were adopted in December 1891.

1891. VABIS	The name of the new company was Vagnfabriksaktiebolaget i Södertälje (Swedish for 'Waggon Factory Ltd. in Södertälje'). This name was eventually abbreviated VABIS or Vabis. Railway carriage production at Vabis lasted until 1911. Meanwhile the company's efforts to develop and manufacture cars and trucks gained momentum.
1900. Scania	In 1900, Maskinfabriksaktiebolaget Scania (a mixture of Swedish and Latin meaning 'Machine Factory Ltd. in Skåne') was established in Malmö, the largest city in Sweden's southernmost province of Skåne, for the purpose of manufacturing bicycles. At an early stage, Scania also began production of cars and trucks.
1911. Scania-Vabis	In 1911, the two companies Vabis and Scania merged to form Scania-Vabis. The reason for the merger was a desire to meet increasing competition from around Europe. Production of trucks, cars and buses continued in both Malmö and Södertälje, but production of bicycles and railway carriages ceased. In 1921, the company ran into financial difficulties. Fresh capital was supplied by Stockholms Enskilda Bank, owned by the Wallenberg family. Scania-Vabis was now built up into a stable, technologically advanced company.
1969. Saab-Scania	In 1969, Scania-Vabis merged with the Swedish aircraft and car manufacturer Saab to form Saab-Scania.

1995.
Scania

In 1995, Scania again became an independent company, and it obtained a stock market listing the following year.

The trademark

Scania's first trademark, dating from 1901, consisted of a pedal crank from a bicycle with the head of a griffin (a mythological beast) in the middle. The red griffin head with its golden crown has been the symbol of the city of Malmö since 1437.

The pedal crank and griffin trademark have been preserved over the years, except during the Saab-Scania era (1969-1995) when the pedal crank was replaced by spherical rings. From 1969 to 1984, after a trademark dispute, the company used only a logo with the name Scania as its trademark.

In 1995, the trademark with the pedal crank and the griffin was resurrected in a modernised form.



Scania buses 100 years – public service on road

Read more in a longer document (in English only) in the press room at www.scania.com/media/bus100

The following periods and milestones described:

- From rail to road – 1891-1911
- Tough struggle – 1911-1921
- Navigating cautiously ahead – 1921-1939
- Crossroads of change – 1939-1951
- A complete busbuilder – 1951-1959
- Turning right – 1960-1968
- Pioneering technological advances – 1968-1980
- Expanding global market – 1980-1989
- Pioneering steps in new fuels – 1989-1996
- Travel with a smile – 1996-2001
- Securing stability – 2001-2011
- Going forward by bus – 2011-2025

Pictures are available from the Scania Image Bank, <http://imagebank.scania.com/>. Enter “Bus 100 years” in the search field.

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