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**Genie, a Pioneer in MEWP Training, Takes its Curriculum into the Future with a New Virtual Reality Platform**

*The VR training experience, which will be offered as an add-on to current training, enhances learning and safety when used in conjunction with Genie's classroom and hands-on curriculum*

**Bothell, WA (Feb. 15, 2024)** – Genie, which has offered high-quality MEWP training courses for well over a decade, is bringing its high-quality training into the future with virtual reality. Developed as an add-on component to Genie's existing classroom and hands-on training programs, Genie® VR training provides an opportunity for operators to use aerial equipment — and learn to avoid real-world hazards that cause the majority of jobsite accidents — from the safety of a virtual world.

The Genie VR training experience uses a specially programmed headset that allows operators to control a Genie Z®-45 FE articulated boom lift in four training scenarios designed to assist with control familiarization and operation. To develop the training experience, Genie engineers, product managers and trainers collaborated with a software company that is experienced in creating virtual reality programs for a variety of applications and industries, including defense flight simulation.

"In 2010 — the same year that a college student died in a scissor lift tip-over accident while filming a football practice in high winds — I helped develop and teach our first MEWP training course," said Genie Training Director Scott Owyen. "The goal of the course was to help end users understand common hazards they could face when operating scissor lifts and boom lifts so they could learn how to avoid them and stay safe while working at height. Since then, we've continued to focus on offering training that advances safety in the industry. And, our new VR platform does just that."

Owyen continued: "We invested in this new training platform to positively enhance the training we provide and to prepare people for the actual scenarios they could encounter in the field. It's not just a cool gimmick — it enhances learning and, therefore, safety."

The Genie VR training experience includes four different activities, although Owyen says not all of them will be used for every class:

- Operations, which helps users gain familiarity with the lift's controls;
- The Ghost Arena, which challenges operators to precisely position the machine to match a given outline;
- The Safety Gauntlet, a course that encourages users to navigate a virtual jobsite and avoid real-life hazards to collect trophies; and
- A Steel Erector simulator, which requires positioning the boom to weld steel beams onto a structure.

Initially, the VR training will be offered as an add-on to Genie's train-the-trainer courses, which are more in-depth than operator qualification training. Genie's train-the-trainer courses prepare an individual to teach operator training, and include a review of applicable standards and regulations, instruction on the training materials, time with actual equipment doing pre-operational inspections, functions tests and practice operating the equipment, as well as operator qualification training. The train-the-trainer class takes about 8-12 hours to complete, and the VR experience will add about an hour to class time.

While the VR experience is intended as an add-on to the train-the-trainer class, it could also be available for operator qualification training if requested, Owyen said. However, the VR training will not be offered as a stand-alone class, or a substitute to in-person training.

"While VR training feels very realistic, it simply can't replace that real-world experience," said Owyen.

"But, allowing someone to practice what they've learned in a classroom, before going up in a lift, not only makes what they've learned more memorable, it enhances safety. That's because, in a virtual world, you can experience a catastrophe without actually getting hurt. And, because the brain thinks it actually happened, it is an incredibly emotional and impressionable way to learn."

The visuals in Genie's VR experience were developed by utilizing Genie CAD drawings, real world specs, performance characteristics, videos of equipment operating, and sound recordings of an actual Z-45 FE boom. For the VR training, Genie chose headsets that are highly portable and offer superior graphics, as well as customized refresh rates that mirrors how we see things in real-life to reduce chances that a participant will experience motion sickness.

"We chose to make the training self-contained to ensure robust performance. It doesn't rely on internet access and we can take them to our customers, rather than requiring someone to come to us," said Owyen. While many train-the-trainer courses take place at Genie's training centers in Rock Hill, South Carolina; Burleson, Texas; and Bothell, Washington, training also often occurs at a user's location. "That

might be out in the oil fields, underground in a salt mine, or any number of places with unreliable internet,” Owyen added.

Genie will debut its VR training experience at the ARA Show, Booth #5339, February 18-21, in New Orleans. It will be offered as an add-on for train-the-trainer courses in the U.S. beginning in Summer 2024.

For more information about Genie’s training offerings, or to schedule a class, visit [Genielift.com/support/training](http://Genielift.com/support/training).

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### **About Genie**

Since 1966, Genie has been the leading name in the aeriels industry. With offices, team members and manufacturing facilities around the globe, Genie lifts and telehandlers can be found enhancing safety and improving productivity on jobsites worldwide. Genie’s ongoing leadership in aerial lifts and material handlers is built on our ability to consistently deliver superior quality for our customers. At Genie, we achieve this **quality** not by chance, but **by design**. For more information on Genie products and services, visit [www.genielift.com](http://www.genielift.com).