



The mood is very optimistic at Giardinagroup, the new organization that has merged three stories, three different experiences, to create a center of excellence for finishing technology in the heart of Brianza.

VISION, COMPETENCE AND SERVICE SECURE FUTURE SUCCESS!

It was not an easy challenge, but the Mauri family (the late Giampiero and his sons Stefano and Riccardo) played their trumps and won quite a few hands on the green table of finishing technology. No bluffing, no hazard, just the confidence that they could design an ambitious project. And so, in 2020 – in the year of the sanitary emergency that frightened everyone – **Giardinagroup** was established, incorporating the businesses of **Ventilazione Italiana** and **Mauri Macchine**, a recognized specialist in profile coating, under one of the most popular Italian finishing brands, **Giardina**, after which the group has been named.

And in the same year, they did not hesitate to create a new company, **Destefani**, which inherited the sanding excellence and expertise of De Stefani Valerio and Co.

These decisions were rewarded with a stable trend of **revenues** in 2020, around 20 million euro, stronger export, expanded presence in more countries, new machines, new employees in strategic operations, and many projects for the future.

If one thing is certain at Mauri, it's that in 2021 there will be plenty of ideas, innovation, enhanced technology, new ways to interface with the markets...

"We have closed a year that, however tough, was very intensive and taught many useful lessons," said **Stefano Tibè**, sales manager of the group. "We executed all the orders without significant delays, learning to live with the constraints of "Covid-19". We have refined our remote working skills, finalizing three major installations overseas for which we would normally have sent several people abroad. Everything went smooth, and these new methods allowed us to stay longer at home and focus on new projects.

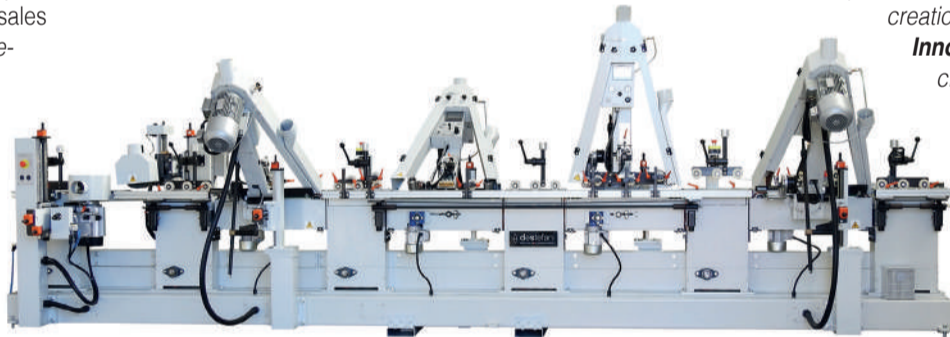
An example is the new **"FlexiMachine"**, a solution we have been developing for the past three years to apply the basecoat on shaped panels using rollers instead of spraying guns. Spraying is very reliable and flexible, but it has lower product-to-surface transfer efficiency, approximately 50 percent or even lower, depending on the panel complexity. A roller is close to 100 percent efficiency, which means lower consumption, less material, higher execution speed, and sustainability. We made several tests with different rollers, getting to the conclusion that the result is not related to the softness or elasticity of the roller, but rather to its perfect inte-

gration with the functions of the machine where it is installed and its configuration.

So, we developed a totally new machine, which we temporarily called **"FlexiMachine"**, and we patented it at the end of 2020. This is our quality response to the current demand of technology, especially from door manufacturers, who will finally be able to apply rich, consistent, easy to sand basecoats that will ensure good quality finishing. We have further perfected our **excimer drying process**, an area where we have been experimenting even more effective solutions that might represent the state of the art in the coming years.

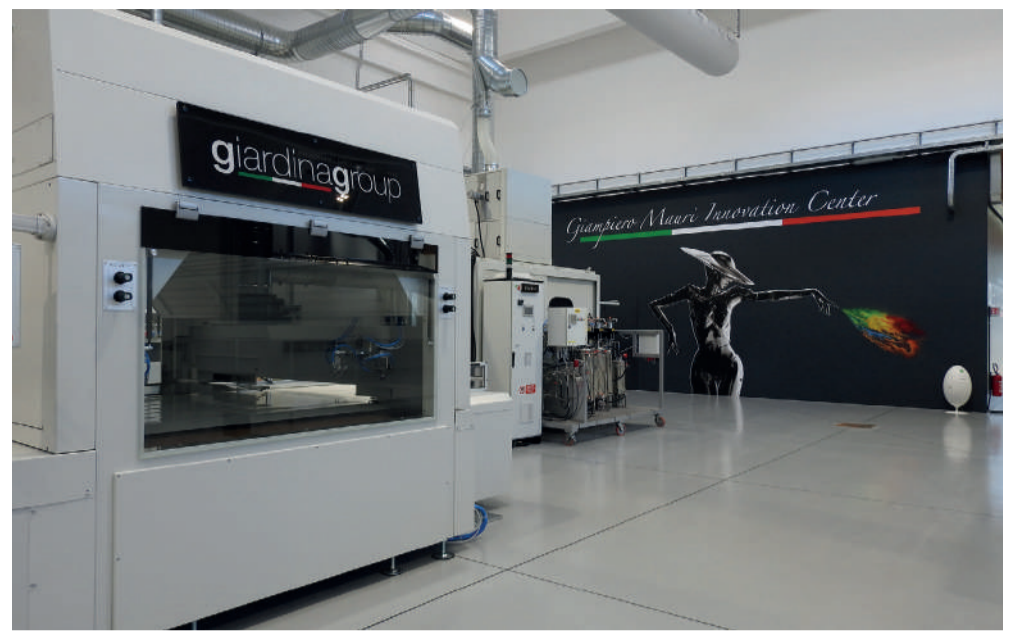
"We cannot forget that drying is a key part of the finishing process," Tibè continued. "Effective sanding of the raw part, and even more perfect intermediate sanding, can make a big difference. Well, Uv technology have a drawback, they increase the substrate temperature: if you exceed 35-40 degrees, the quality of sanding is jeopardized, the belts get clogged, and in extreme situations, there might be negative effects on the resins in the particleboard or mdf, causing "shifts" that form visible valleys or holes.

We have repurposed a technology launched by Giardina in 1993, the **"cold light"** drying system



we had named "Albatros"; we see interesting developments in terms of accelerated production cycle time and easier process control with panels that remain below the 40-degree threshold.

Big news also for our automatic spraying machines, with the remake of **"Dualtech 420"**, probably the most successful model of our medium-high productivity range. Now this machine can be equipped with a paper or self-cleaning conveyor, or even both, complementing its multiple benefits with high flexibility in process selection. Such re-engineering has significantly simplified and accelerated the installation at the customer site, moving towards a plug-and-play concept that has become the keyword for many".



... now please put on your sales manager dress and... what can you tell us?

"Giardinagroup must stand closer than ever to markets and users. We are pursuing this goal - among other things - with improved communications and a stronger involvement of our resellers, ensuring faster information exchange to be more effective in our relations with end users. Giardinagroup keeps growing: the potential we can leverage thanks to the Mauri Macchine's expertise in profiles and Destefani's in sanding enables us to offer **complete lines**, but most of all the necessary knowledge to respond to process-related issues, not only paint application. Our solutions are increasingly effective, fast, versatile and smart, and we must be able to promote them all over the world. Hence the decision to strengthen our presence in **China** with a local figure like Gianluca Bernardini, to develop our partnership with Vinpack in India, that offers a huge showroom where local operators can see our technologies in action. **Mark Robinson**, with his great experience, is now in charge for Canada, the UK and other European markets. These are just a few moves made in 2020 to set deeper roots in different world regions.

We are setting up a totally different organization: with the creation of the group, the unification of production under one big roof, the creation of the **"Giampiero Mauri Innovation Centre"**, we have clearly communicated to customer and partners the quality and the expertise we can offer. Each day, we work hard to improve, facing our competitors all over the world on equal terms.

The establishment of **Destefani** was a major step, as we "brought home" a specialization that projects us into a much bigger and interesting scenario. Effective sanding is 50 percent of good quality finishing: you cannot think that a fluid can "hide" the flaws of a substrate. The 40-year experience of Destefani in profile and panel edge sanding not only has strengthened our knowledge in a critical stage of the finishing process, but it has also substantially expanded the capabilities of Mauri Macchine, traditionally focused on profiles, to develop **complete lines** that are receiving excellent feedback, because now we can solve the whole problem, from raw substrate preparation to primer, from intermediate sanding to coating".

Mr. Tibè, what do you see in the future of painting?

"In the recent decades, wonderful materials and lamination technology with increasing performance have certainly taken market shares away from conventional painting.

But we have not been standing still: today, painting processes deliver amazing results in visual and haptic terms, without forgetting their contribution to the mechanical resistance of surfaces, and therefore of finished products. We are still playing the game, if you allow this expression, and there are many competitions where we win big.

It's a tough challenge, and each process offers benefits and constraints; as usual, it's up to the user to choose the best option to preserve competitiveness and margins. There will also be room for everyone, maybe also for artificial substrates, materials that are not wood-based but must be painted anyway; just think about the new "Lvt" vinyl parquet, which are emerging as stronger and stronger competitors of traditional or prefinished wooden flooring; Lvt also requires a painting stage.

I mention this example because we have major references in this sector, proving the versatility and the opportunities the painting can seize: there are more and more materials we can process, from plastics to composites, from glass to metal, although our heart keeps beating stronger for wood..."

... and what if I asked you about your secret weapon?

"It's the team. The exchange between all business functions is constant, intensive and frequent: sales organization, engineering department, production managers, owners, we all interact on a daily basis, on each projects, sometimes on seemingly insignificant details that might turn into winning features for our machines and plants. Such constant information exchange and interplay of specific skills is **our greatest asset!**

We love to be consultants, to make all the skills within Giardinagroup available to the customer; we don't want to sell a standard or preset solution, but exactly what the customer needs to work according to his favorite methods, to achieve the goals he has set. We realize that such commitment is perceived, that our customers know we can offer a key contribution, and that's a source of great satisfaction".

by Luca Rossetti ■

giardinagroup.com

