

# Masterly transformations

Maller Company was founded in 1973 by Erasmo Mallozzi and operates in the field of ennobled plywood panels for the recreational vehicle sector and in the field of semi-finished products for the furniture industry

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In 2013, Maller SpA celebrated its 40th anniversary – 40 years of serving the recreational-vehicle sector, supplying premier Italian poplar panels laminated with a huge range of decorative paper and plastic laminates. After the founder's death in 2008, the company was run by external managers; from December 2013, Simona Mallozzi, the founder's daughter, took direct control as Managing Director, assisted by Gianmaria Piroli as Commercial and Factory Manager.

*"We add value to simple materials. In our local area and throughout the Po Valley, we take quality poplar plywood, chipboard, and MDF, and we enhance them with PVC paper, plastic laminates, and decorative paper. Our end product is very similar to top-quality wood. This whole procedure is called laminating; we are laminators".* Thus, founder Erasmo Mallozzi – once knighted as a captain of industry – clearly pinpointed what Maller does. The company was set up in 1973 specifically to supply the recreational-vehicle industry with laminated panels for internal surfaces and furniture, working to the highest standards. Over time, the business has branched out into semi-finished products for the furniture industry, furnishing accessories, doors and finishings, while achieving a significant foothold in the naval sector, reflecting its products' superior quality and wide spectrum of uses.

This excellence is rooted in the considerable experience and technical expertise that the firm has invested in its production processes. For Maller operates using one line for laminate and two for CPL and HPL (Continuous / High-Pressure Laminate) finishing, with calender machining and wood-grain finishes. (The untreated panel is fed between two



cylindrical rollers that affix the decorative sheets of light finish paper, Alkorcell, and PVC via hot bonding.) Pressure veneering (thermal pressing) is dedicated to making strong laminates for tabletops and kitchen surfaces (with decorative paper impregnated with melamine resins) and premier real wood veneers sliced into thin sheets. After the calender process, the panels enter the press (of which Maller has 3), to emerge free of impurities and imperfections. The panel moves on to the line for electronic cutting to size and squaring to apply the customer's preferred finishing. The end result is a perfectly flat product of uniform thickness without any surface defects.

The quality of these first-rate finishing

techniques is also ensured through an exclusively Italian feature: the choice of raw materials, starting with local poplar sustainably cultivated with FAO approval. Indeed, Italian poplar is light, flexible and stable, enabling superior machining and finishing than for similar but lower-performance materials sourced elsewhere (like Meranti, made with Asian timbers). These benefits provide considerable versatility, allowing the company to produce panels to suit any requirements.

Allied to its scrupulous selection of raw materials and precise workmanship, another of Maller's key strengths is its agility. It can respond swiftly, supplying a highly tailored product to meet the requirements of RV manufacturers large and small.



*“Logistically speaking, we offer a winning service”, stresses Factory Manager Gianmaria Piroli. “We are extremely flexible in terms of production volumes, enabling us to support individual projects within an overarching package. We are heavily used by leading manufacturers – like Laika, Adria, Sea Group, PLA, Giottiline, Rimor, and soon Trigano – but we are also well placed to serve smaller producers, which appear to be growing significantly at present. We have an agreement with the Lombardy firm CLEAF for the exclusive use of a Design Collection of 22 decorative features for making veneer panels CPL and HPL products, which we presented at the Düsseldorf fair. Our hot postformed and curved processes complement our special treatments for tops or scratch-resistant wall coverings, and we make edges with the same finish for complete continuity between the upright and horizontal surfaces”.*

The caravan sector provides 75% of the company's turnover (the rest coming from the HPL furniture veneer market), with 80% of its European sales achieved in Italy and the

remainder in Germany. Maller is an established supplier that is maintaining its focus on overseas markets. Its effective sales network serves customers wherever they may be – not just in Italy and Europe but in the States, Canada, Australia and New Zealand, too. These markets are growing vigorously, especially in the USA, which is finally showing signs of appreciating European technology and construction standards (as the success of the little Fiat 500 demonstrates). And it is not only about weight, although high fuel prices are starting to bite there, too. For Italian poplar adds value not only with its lower specific weight than other non-European materials but also with its greater structural strength, enabling high levels of finishing to be applied to the multilayered media (to which American manufacturers are turning to replace the local sandwich materials), thanks in part to the advanced production-process technology.

Every day, promising new markets are opening up (Maller has an eye on South Africa), where its product quality and decorative

range is increasingly valued. Italian poplar's versatility, stability and excellent finish in plywood and multilayered panels is complemented by a wide selection of decorative woods for the laminating paper, which can be tailored to customers' needs. This service will be implemented soon using the digital press, which the company plans to offer for large and small quantities alike.

Maller holds ISO 9001 certification for product quality control and meets FSC (Forest Stewardship Council) and PEFC (Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification) standards for managing the Chain of Custody for forest products.

