

Innovation, service, expansion, all in colours more vibrant than ever



New machinery, new services for the customer and projects to expand the manufacturing site are the answer of MB Trading – the Italian specialist with a European dimension involved in the sector of customised decorations for recreational vehicles – to the (albeit brief) market stall. We met with Walter Bracci, founder of MB, to take stock of the company's situation and to look at what might be the future scenarios for the industry.

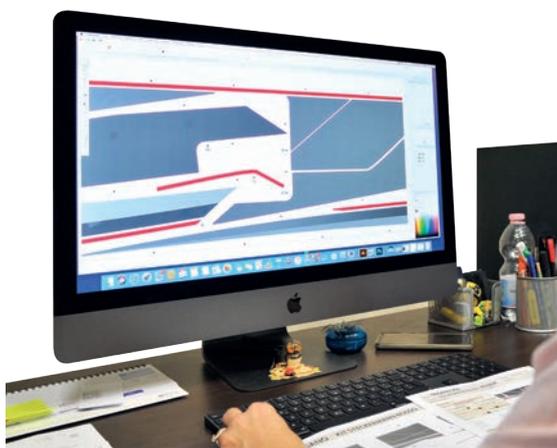
Words and photo Enrico Bona

MB Trading is an Italian company, relatively young in the RV segment, but which, thanks to innovation, in just a few years has succeeded in becoming a leader in the production of customised, premium-quality adhesive graphics for the European and global recreational vehicle industry. Today, in fact, the exterior of one camper out of four in Europe is decorated with graphics produced by this dynamic company from Pisa, in Italy. Established in 1997 as a screen-printing studio, thanks to the intuition of Walter Bracci and Giampaolo Maffei, in 2011 MB Trading ventures into the world of recreational vehicles, starting to work in partnership with the Sea Group and shortly after with Trigano, Rimor and others. From a 30 square metre garage with just one employee, as the two associates like to recall, the company has grown steadily and now staffs 50 employees working on 3 shifts, 7 days a week, within a facility of more than 2000 square metres. "In our last interview we had mentioned that the space in which we work was large enough... but we were wrong", says Walter Bracci. "In fact, new projects are continuously being de-

veloped leading us to having to negotiate the purchase of two warehouses adjacent to our current facility, in order to further enhance our industrial capacity with new machinery and gain access to new markets". The company's recent evolution has already brought MB Trading new technologies and cutting materials like the introduction, in June, of two

new printing machines and a cutting plotter of the largest size currently available on the market. MB Trading can presently unleash all its production capacity thanks to 10 printing machines and 7 large-scale cutting plotters, a concentration of technology unlike any other in Italy which, with no surprise, has brought the company to control 98% of the domes-





safely claim that about 25-30% of the recreational vehicles manufactured in Europe is “dressed” with its colors. *“Our business is experiencing remarkable growth and we want to continue innovating our range of products and services. In this sense, we are working on developing increasingly innovative solutions that will allow us to enter the camper providing various interior decoration details as well. Offering these added services to our*

customers requires significant investments, which we are already in the process of making, in terms of company’s expansion and new technologies”.

On an operational level, MB Trading currently works in partnership primarily with the Trigrano and Rapido Groups. Business-wise, the company is taking important steps towards the Far East, with a well-established presence in Korea and with a very keen eye on the Chinese market, with which it is establishing concrete and significant contacts. In Europe, there is no question that MB Trading ranks among the leading manufacturers in the industry, and the company continues to focus heavily on the German and French markets. In terms of further consolidating its presence in a primary market like Europe, in fact, MB Trading is also planning to take part in the upcoming editions of the Caravan Salon in Düsseldorf. *“We entered this sector on tiptoes but with professionalism and respect and have since grown quite a lot”, says Walter Bracci. “The results we have achieved and our plan of investments give us confidence to present ourselves to an even broader audience and to acquire visibility in markets where we still have huge growth margins”.*

We end our interview with MB with a final comment on a year that has been strange, at least thus far, regarding the future of recreational vehicles following the emergency caused by the pandemic. *“We are optimistic about the future of the European RV market. More specifically, we do not expect to close the year with a loss and rather see a bright rest of 2020 ahead of us. The positive signal predominantly comes from the market, with the same number of orders and with new end-users attracted by the social distancing advantages that a holiday in a caravan or camping car has to offer. Making a prediction now about what will happen exactly is like a throw of the dice, but my outlook is positive”.*

tic RV market. In addition, a major highlight introduced by MB in 2020 to its range of services, thanks to a number of new and strategic partnerships, is the supply of customised vinyl without any added cost for the customer. Quantity, colors and dimensions, materials and special manufacturing processes will be available for ordering to customers without any restriction. The variety of products available will provide a great advantage for the designers and, above all, for the customer’s purchasing departments. This solution gives even greater freedom and is beneficial both to large-sized businesses, managing several brands, and to those manufacturing smaller limited and special series. After closing 2019 with remarkable results in terms of growth (in the range of +10%), MB Trading started 2020 with a highly positive performance until the unexpected and untimely stop in April imposed by the Italian government to the entire domestic industrial system. At a time of generalized anxiety, MB prefers not to look at the momentarily negative situation but rather proposes a mid- to long-term vision with a positive outlook both for itself and the market at large. *“We are a solid business and are very quick to take action, there was no reason for us to panic on a structural level, we did not face cancellation of orders and, on the contrary, we took advantage of the 4 weeks of forced closure to reorganise and streamline our internal processes”, says Walter Bracci. “Our production now undergoes strict social distancing, sanitisation, and work shift protocols, in order to eliminate any risks for our staff. Upon physically reopening the manufacturing plants, both our own and those of our customers, we picked up production at the same exact pace we had prior to the healthcare emergency: an excellent token of the health of our business and, quite luckily, of the market”.* MB Trading, in fact, is maintaining its high performance and can

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Company Profile

M.B. Trading srl is one of the leading Italian and international companies in the field of printing for industrial and advertising decorations. Cutting-edge technologies, orientation towards innovation and creativity are at the base of a wide range of products and solutions that enable M.B. Trading to dress and decorate surfaces and materials of any kind. M.B. Trading’s printing techniques range from screen printing, with an over 20 years experience, to the most innovative digital printing.

