



More and more RVs on the horizon

By heavily investing in injection-moulding technologies, LAM aims to firmly consolidate its presence in the RV sector, counting also on the training of its staff.

Words Andrea Cattaneo - photo Enrico Bona

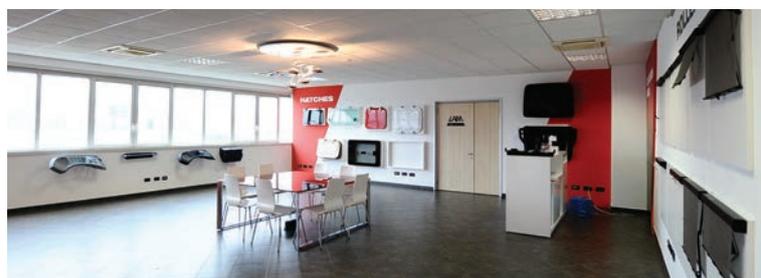
Backed by considerable investments in facilities, machinery and training courses, LAM wants to further expand its presence in the RV sector, where it has already been present for several years now, through the supply of roof hatches and particularly sun blinds for the driver's cab installed at the front of the customer's vehicle. The Company was first established in Italy towards the end of the 1960s, supplying hatches and awnings to one of the biggest Italian bus manufacturers, Orlandi. It then relocated from the original offices in Modena to a new manufacturing plant in Spilamberto, starting a phase of expansion of its business. In the 1980s, the Company's clients included major European bus manufacturers. Since 1976, LAM has also been an official supplier of the IVECO bus di-

vision. At the turn of the century, the Company makes a big leap forward, expanding its market to farm tractors and campers and also supplying some products to the railway and maritime industry. In addition to aluminium and tempered glass, LAM also heavily processes plastic materials, relying on thermoforming and injection-moulding technologies to manufacture hatches, plastic parts for the driver's cab and dashboards.

"2015 marked an important milestone for the Company," says Davide Malagoli, nephew of the founder and current CEO of LAM, "because we invested in injection-moulding technologies. Prior to those investments, we would outsource the production of plastic parts to external companies and would then assemble them onto the RV. In 2015, a big order from one of our customers led us to decide to manufacture most of the components in-house, and we decided to start with what is by most standards the best system available today on the market. We invested in an innovative tech-

nology like glazing, a type of injection and compression moulding, picked a machine from Engel (a leader in the industry) for the job. We decided not to purchase small presses and aimed directly for a large press that could handle even the most complex machining processes. Manufacturing components in polycarbonate by injection and compression moulding is not simple. It demands a big initial investment not just in machinery, but also in skilled labour. We decided to make the big leap and the response we're getting from the market is excellent".

The Company is well organised, staffs 43 employees and generates annual sales of about 8 million Euros. In addition to the headquarters in Spilamberto near Modena, in Northern Italy, LAM can also count on a second man-



LAM Academy

In October, the Company will be inaugurating the LAM Academy, an impressive project that sees LAM collaborate with the University of Modena to help train staff in the field of plastic moulding.

"When we started investing in the moulding of plastic materials," says Federica Malagoli, Davide's sister, who is directly involved in managing the Company's human resources, "we realised that it was rather hard in our area (and elsewhere as well) to find qualified workers in this field, even though we were ready to pay high salaries. We therefore decided to collaborate with the Faculty of Engineering of the University of Modena in supporting a specialised training course in plastic moulding. The course, which primarily targets fresh graduates, will last 6 months, with 175 hours of internship in a production department and 60 hours of lessons in the classroom. Our goal is two-fold: we want to be socially active in the territory where we operate and at the same time, train staff members who will turn out to be valuable resources for the Company. LAM Academy could become a permanent post-graduate training school in the future. After all, staff training has always been a key asset to us, and the Academy is a definite milestone in terms of our growth in that direction".



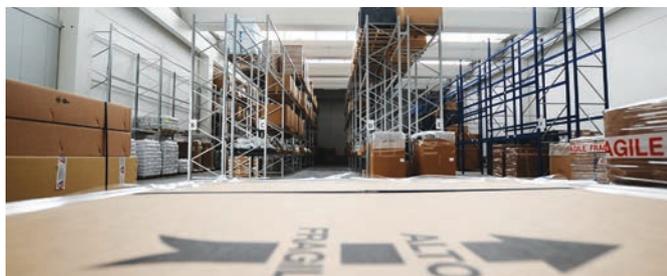
ufacturing plant in Belarus, which is reserved for the production of sun blinds for the driver's cab and which serves demand from customers in Eastern European markets.

"The RV market is one of our main focuses", says Davide Malagoli, "and thanks to the new machinery introduced a few years ago, we're capable of manufacturing various types of parts, like the components for the camper's cell, as well as transparent surface panels for the roof. Thermoforming is remarkably cheap when it comes to the production of small series, whereas the more sophisticated injection moulding does indeed demand a considerable investment in the moulds, but also guarantees high surface quality, precision and transparency when necessary, not to mention high durability with limited thickness ranges. Our goal is to further consolidate our presence in the OEM market of the RV sector, but also in the spare parts market and product replacements. In the RV sector, we currently work with big names such as Laika, Dethleffs, Rapido and Concorde, while also supplying products to other manufacturers. Today our core market is Europe, but we also look to the global market with great interest. We

already have established several contacts in Australia and are developing new marketing campaigns for Northern America and Asia".

LAM just recently finished the construction of a new logistics centre that will be up and running in September. Separated from production, the centre will have a warehouse of 900 square metres. The Company is therefore making a number of sizeable investments and in the business forecast for 2019-2024, supplies in the RV sector are expected to experience a sharp increase. And it's not just the quality of the product that helps to attract customers; a full-scale customer service is equally important. When it comes to the design of the products, for instance, LAM offers the ideal solution to customers, who have the option of supplying their own model design or to co-design the product with the help of the Company's technical department, or finally, to purchase the finished product directly from the catalogue.

"In May of 2018, we obtained the IATF automotive certification", says Davide Malagoli. "Our goal is to transfer the level of manufacturing excellence that is customary of the automotive industry to the world of campers".



Co-design

For the development of new products, LAM offers its customers maximum flexibility. In fact, customers can choose to co-design their product together with the Company's technical department. Our experienced staff will guide you through the various steps of the process, from the initial design to the concept's final approval all the way to the item's production.

