



Stefano Lovati

Innovation and transparency

Automotive industry production logics have been driving the activities of Sguinzi for over half a century and the company has successfully entered the RV sector with innovative doors, windows and roof lights, operating either independently or establishing co-design partnerships with customers

Words Renato Antonini, photo Enrico Bona

Sguinzi may have been working in the RV sector for a few years, but has already established a name of itself for high-quality products and the ability to develop projects independently capitalising on over fifty years of experience in the automotive sector. Sguinzi is one of the biggest Italian players in the production of doors and windows for a variety of different vehicles. Based just outside Milan, the company supplies components for light commercial vehicles, such as Fiat Ducato, Iveco Daily and Renault Master, earth-moving machinery and many types of special vehicles. Founded in 1963,

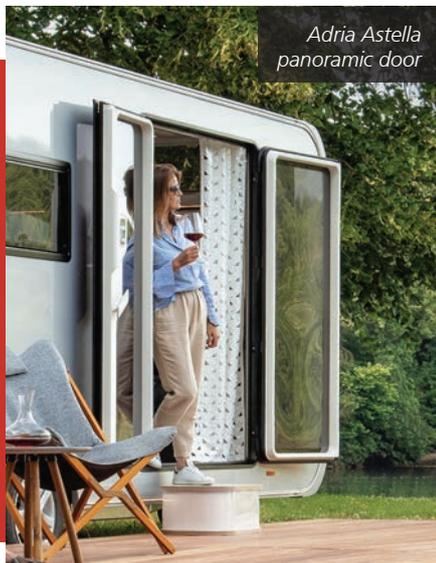
the company has always been in the Sguinzi family and is now being run by the third generation. "We have always worked in the automotive sector making doors, windows, portholes and hatches", explained Stefano Lovati, COO of Sguinzi and grandson of the founder. "Our products are fitted on buses and light commercial vehicles, as well as military vehicles, farming and earthmoving machinery, cable cars and snow groomers. We recently approached the RV sector and several manufacturers soon recognised the potential of a company with an automotive background like ours".

Invisible hinge for the garage door



Ergost System for flush sliding windows



Adria Astella
panoramic doorPanoramic windshield
for Trigano vans

Side sliding glass for motorhomes



Doors for RVs living area



Giovanni Cozzi

New ideas for the RV sector

Sguinzi makes all types of vehicle windows and doors, using mainly aluminium for the frames and glass for the glazing. The company has been a long-time supplier of Fiat and Iveco for commercial vehicles and buses and an integral part of their supply chain. A plan was launched to diversify production by exploring other areas, including the RV sector, in 2016.

"We were managing a generational change at that time and the bus sector was experiencing a crisis", explained Giovanni Cozzi, former general manager of Sguinzi and now strategic advisor to the Board of Directors. "Diversification was imperative for us. The RV sector was showing signs of growth, so we chose to tentatively approach this world as 'observers'. From the get-go, we realised that our experience in the automotive sector could bring real innovations but that to do so we needed to think out of the box. We set out to whet the appetite of potential customers with solutions that were new to the sector, bolstered by the fact that professional designer Stefano Lovati, co-founder of the award-winning industrial design firm Altromodo Design, had joined us".

Stefano Lovati, a company shareholder and newly appointed Chief Operating Officer, is the creator of Sguinzi's innovative products for motorhomes and caravans. The first step of Sguinzi in the RV world was the design and production of a motorhome garage door. This apparently simple item was treated in an original way precisely to break the

mould of pre-established logic. The result was the door with invisible hinges. It was patented and is still successfully used today. Following that initial approach, requests started flowing in and Sguinzi started to make living pod doors as well. Then came the orders for two complex motorhome cab components: a driver's side door and sliding windows. The first steps had been taken and Sguinzi became an important partner of major players in the sector, first and foremost Trigano Group, and as a supplier for Laika for the Erwin Hymer Group. The Panorama doors for the Adria Astella luxury caravan range (maxi and mini versions) and panoramic glass roofs for the Trigano camper van range (fixed and opening) are just some of the highly innovative products that Sguinzi has developed and is currently manufacturing. Equally noteworthy are the living pod doors with two windows (top and bottom) and EDI electric doors. Sguinzi holds patents for invisible hinges and the Ergost system for flush windows with a safety lock for the ergonomically simplified opening of sliding windows in motorhome cabs.

Superior quality production and customer service

Today, the RV sector accounts for 35% of the business volume for Sguinzi. All components are manufactured either in-house or through partnerships with top-level subcontractors (working to Sguinzi's specifications and using the company's dies). They include glass and aluminium frames, but also complex elements, such as handles

and locks. Glazing transparency, brilliance and durability are factors of excellence for which Sguinzi products are famed. A new concept was presented at the Caravan Salon in Düsseldorf to improve products for the RV sector consisting of a sheet of plastic paired with tempered glass that was only slightly heavier than standard glazing, but with much greater thermal insulation capacity.

"We tip-toed towards the RV sector choosing not to launch demanding commercial challenges", Stefano Lovati, COO of Sguinzi, added. "We made use of our expertise in the automotive field, our technological content and our ability to dialogue with customers in co-design activities. Our customers realised that they could also entrust us with the appearance of the product and that we could supply considerable production flexibility, being able to handle runs from 10 to 100,000 pieces".

Results like these can also be achieved by having an in-house design office, consolidated logistics and a well-stocked spare parts warehouse. Importantly, Sguinzi is IATF-certified, which guarantees the highest quality in the automotive sector.

"We believe that production capacity must always be accompanied by punctual customer service but that a well-stocked spare parts warehouse, containing parts for products made even many years ago is equally important", Giovanni Cozzi concluded. "Product quality, innovation and excellence in customer service is what characterises Sguinzi today."



Driver doors for motorhomes



Entrance door and handles

