

Business lives

# Nordmeccanica a family-size multinational company

*WITH 95% OF EXPORTS AND 78 SALES POINTS  
ABROAD LEADER IN PACKAGING*

The definition of "pocket multinational" has already made history and today it fits Nordmeccanica like a glove. A family jewel in a country that stands on formidable shoulders: medium-sized, globalized, innovative companies.

Coating and laminating will say very little to profane eyes, but they are the A-B-C of flexible and increasingly environmentally friendly packaging. The films that come out of often huge machines assembled here will be used by those who buy them to produce safe packaging for food, pasta, chocolate, coffee, fruit juices and much more: from pharmaceutical blisters to thermal insulation, labels, wine caps, photovoltaic panels and even those metal lists on banknotes produced by the State Mint.

Some people would kill to buy a business like this, and some investment funds have tried, but there is a family strength here that will not be scratched and pulls straight. Engineer Antonio Cerciello, President of the Company, comes from Marigliano (Naples) as his savoury accent reveals.

When he was 26 years old, in 1967, he joined Andreotto Rotostar, a company that manufactures gravure printing presses in Frosinone; he became plant manager at 34 and left the company after becoming general manager.

He moved to Venezuela for 18 years, his gaze sweeping across South America, and opened an engineering company to sell turnkey solutions in printing and flexible packaging.

*"At the end of 1997, the Gasparini family asked me for help - he says - Nordmeccanica was right here, in a 3,000-meter warehouse. I represented it along with other companies, and they asked me to see if there could be a buyer".*

And Cerciello himself became the buyer. *"I saw the figures and in 1998 I took over 51 percent of Gasparini, a craft company with good quality machines."* Twenty members, however, were too many. After one year, Cerciello took over the company, one hundred percent, and started focusing on laminating machines. *"I wanted to bring the company from 7 million to 50-60 million Euros in turnover. Today we make 110"*. They worked well during Covid, 2021 went just fine, and 2022 even better, with a 15% increase.

The Nordmeccanica brand, founded in 1978, had established itself. It has since absorbed other companies, such as Cmf Omat of Tortona.

*"When we took over Nordmeccanica, we had 350 machines installed around the world. Now we have 3,700."*

Galileo Vacuum System also becomes part of the group's orbit in 2013.

And that was not all. As early as 2002, "we had the courage to take the first plant in America". We expanded into China, with smaller machines, just right for that market.

Today, the numbers draw an important profile: 230 employees in Italy, another 50 throughout the world and 78 sales points, plus 130 people in the supply chain: "Almost all mechanical components are made in the Piacenza area".

Electronic and pneumatic parts are purchased from companies such as Siemens or Parker. "Commercially, we are present everywhere. What happens if a country doesn't do very well? Another one will, and we feel like top of the world's class," says Antonio.

The family story continues with the children, engineer Vincenzo - technical director of the group and head of the research department - and Alfredo, a graduate in economics, who controls the finance sector. They joined the plant the day after graduation ("whether we liked it or not", they say, jokingly).

And there are 4 grandchildren, still young, but promising.

*"If my children did not fit into the company and if I was not convinced that they were up to the task, I would not be here at 82 years of age to fight and develop it together with them. I would have sold it."* Vincenzo shows the new ways: the containment of energy consumption on machines with motors that in braking mode put energy back into circulation instead of dissipating it (*"it is not enough to have an exceptional motor, or fantastic electronics, if the mechanics are not good enough"*).

Very close is the collaboration with the major adhesive suppliers, as the film glued to another film protects food. Partners include Dow Chemical, Basf, Coim, Henkel, Bostik, HP. We are looking for ways to give something new to a market thirsty for sustainable solutions.

*"Our machines must be ready for today and for the future"*. 5% of the turnover is reinvested in research.

The horizon is fully recyclable packaging. *"The world of paper has come back in an overbearing way; with an English customer, we developed paper packaging for butter, instead of aluminium foil"*.

Projects that require energy and are developed through managerial inputs.

*"We are like in the 1960s, when we moved from cellophane to plastic - the same historical revolution"*.

A strong point are the links with supply chains: *"If the supplier earns enough, they are fine and continue to follow us. With Siemens, Parker, Honeywell, we are at the top of the list of companies that they supply"*. And the customers, frightened from the current delays of deliveries, find in Nordmeccanica a reliable port, so much so that they reward it with an extra for our punctuality (*"we in turn pay to the day and honour our commitments"*).

Alfredo talks about relations with universities, with Isii Marconi: *"Classes from the institutes come in rotation. Our technical department collaborates with the Cattolica University, whose students do internships at our company."*

*"We are expanding - the President continues - and with the warehouse that will be ready in July, we will recruit more people; however, we struggle with finding technicians. Lately we have been lucky, a company in Lodi will be transferred to Germany and we have managed to take a dozen people to bring here"*.

Families and young people, out with your feelers, work is here.

**"We feel like top of the class with our technology, always moving forward."**

*(Antonio Cerciello)*

**"We need employees, but can't find technicians"**

*(Antonio Cerciello)*

**CONGRATULATIONS, PIACENZA!**

*"I congratulate all our employees, our collaborators, great workers. And I would also like to give compliment that few do in Piacenza, but there is a high-level class of craftsmanship here"*. Quality and responsibility. President Antonio Cerciello allows himself an emotional moment. And we also work on Saturday or in August, if there is the need for it. Password: always meet deliveries.

**THE CUSTOMER? LIKE BREAD**

*"I always say that the customer is like bread, you have to keep it good. Some people only take customers who buy out to lunch, we welcome everyone in the best way possible"*.

The Group covers 87 countries worldwide and also has direct offices in India and Argentina.



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## THE PROCESSING UNITS

In Nordmeccanica, 30 people work in the coating lamination process business unit, and other 7 in the vacuum metallizers division. There is continuous integration. The largest volume of work is on the food front, where more standardized but also customized systems are used; then there is the industrial sector, with the "roll to roll" concept, which is the basis to create photovoltaic panels.

## INDUSTRY 4.0

On 4.0 systems, the manufacturing world had to change its way of thinking. *"It was one of the best laws made in recent years for the industrial sector, even though the concept of an integrated machine with management systems and data analysis was already in place at our factories, as was the case in the USA and Northern Europe"*.

## The links with workshops

In addition to the 230 employees in Piacenza, another 130 people work within the supply chain. "They only work for us."

## Market share: 80%

Nordmeccanica has a firm market share of 80% with its machines in Europe.

## Close to the local territory

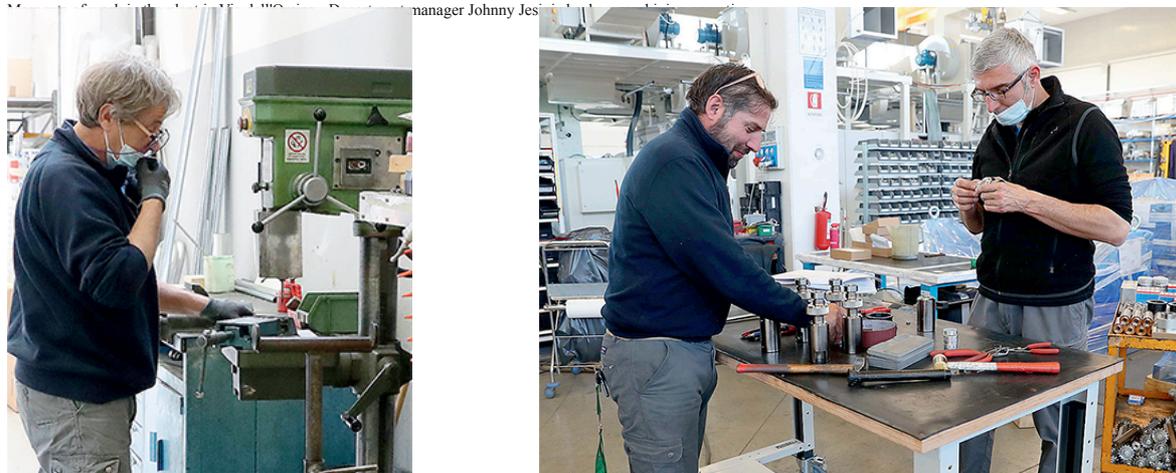
The company has sponsored men's and women's volleyball teams. Today, Vincenzo Cerciello is a member of the Fondazione per la Cultura.

## The Minister's visit

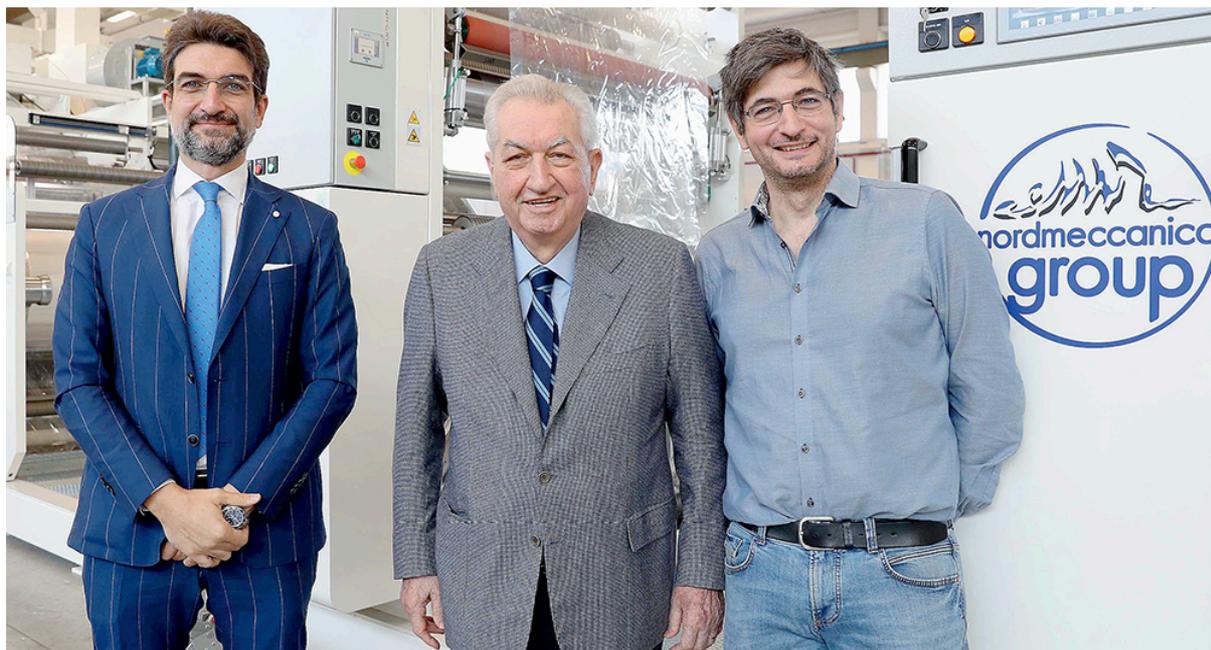
On 25 May 2021, the Minister of Economic Development Giancarlo Giorgetti visited the Nordmeccanica plant.

Cesare Setti, engaged in a technical inspection; below, some images of Nordmeccanica plants, and processing and assembly phases.





## PERFORMANCE / AND INTERCONTINENTAL TRAVEL



President Antonio Cerciello in the middle, between his sons Vincenzo (on the left) and Alfredo.

## Technicians with a 360-degree gaze «They are our best bet»

*CESARE SETTI SPENDS MONTHS ABROAD TO TEST THE MACHINES. JESINI: «MOTIVATING YOUNG PEOPLE»*

Between software and mechanics. The former is more invisible in Nordmeccanica's large production spaces, as it dwells in the monitors, in the programs, it belongs to the designers; the latter emerges at every corner of these plants, on the work tables, in the retouching of equipment, in the assemblies, and bears the mark of an exquisitely Piacenza wisdom.

Johnny Jesini has been working here for 11 years and is department manager; every day, he deals with the required pieces, he optimizes delivery times, and orchestrates the staff.

*"With the war, everything is more complicated."* The electrical parts, the materials are harder to get since the lockdown.

Young people? *"We have guys who come for internships, but we need to motivate them, make them appreciate the work they should theoretically already be talented for, we need to know how to involve them"*.

We meet a Ukrainian electronics technician, who is in charge of start-ups in that battered country.

He has been in Italy since March with his family, hosted by Nordmeccanica. The children were enrolled into the Anne Frank school, the wife works in smart working for a pharmaceutical company.

Here, he found a very "friendly" welcome. But while we're chatting, he's got very serious eyes. He wants to get back home as soon as possible. And, by the way, speaking of orders, there's one machine stuck in Ukraine and another one in Russia.

With Vincenzo Cerciello, we cross the well organized work environments and the technical and design offices.

Corporate welfare? *"There is, we have agreements with gyms, insurance companies, schools, and free lunch for employees"*.

We exchange a few words with Cesare Setti, 32 years old and in Nordmeccanica for 12, busy on the control screen of a machine.

Setti graduated from Isii Marconi, and today he deals with testing and commissioning of plants. He represents well that kind of young professional that you need, but it is not easy to find.

*"Part of the work is carried out internally within the company - he explains - we verify all functions, electronic and mechanical components, and test the system. Then the machine is disassembled and reassembled at the customer's premises, and we travel there to check that there are no assembly and wiring errors"*.

It can take a week to test the systems, or even a month, and the same goes when testing at the customer's premises. Then there is always remote assistance, the customer calls and if there are corrections to make, we work from Piacenza. It is our precious, indispensable after-sales service.

Setti spends up to 4-5 months away abroad for commissioning the machines; his last trip was to Chicago.

*"The trips are very stimulating, I have travelled to all continents, in North and South America, Asia, Australia. From Canada to Israel... I am only missing some parts of Africa".*

Do you notice differences between how we work and technicians from other countries? «In

*some cases, yes, we have an extra shot, the level in Germany and in Northern Europe is good, but abroad they notice the fact that their technicians are more compartmentalized. They only see the part that belongs to them, we do not have certain blinders, we deal with it 360 degrees. We are also compartmentalized, but more open and with the curiosity to launch beyond our specific field".*

Here we are at the R&D lab.

We visit it. On the wall, a big butterfly plastically translates the idea of sustainability. Engineer Vincenzo tells us about it.

It is an ad hoc demo space where tests are carried out on a medium-cut machine, also in partnership with adhesive manufacturers, for example, with the aim of developing new technologies. There are ongoing projects with some big brands in the industry. And customers come from abroad to visit the production area and request tests. Others buy without even coming to see the machines, in full confidence.

**"There is also a Ukrainian expert, welcomed here with his whole family"**

**"But I hope to be able to return to my country as soon as possible"**

**"They recognize that we are more open, we throw ourselves beyond our field..."**

**FROM VIA DELL'ORSINA TO SHANGHAI AND NEW YORK / MECHANICS MEET ELECTRONICS AND DIGITAL**





**EXPANSION** In Via dell'Orsina the historical base, production sites in Via Ranza (expanding by 17 thousand square meters) and in Gariga. A total of 30.000 square meters. We produce in Shanghai, and we have commercial headquarters in New York.



**WORK LINES** They are called Linear, Simplex, Duplex 1 Shot, Super Combi, Triplex SL to name just a few plant lines. They embody the advanced peaks in coating lamination technology

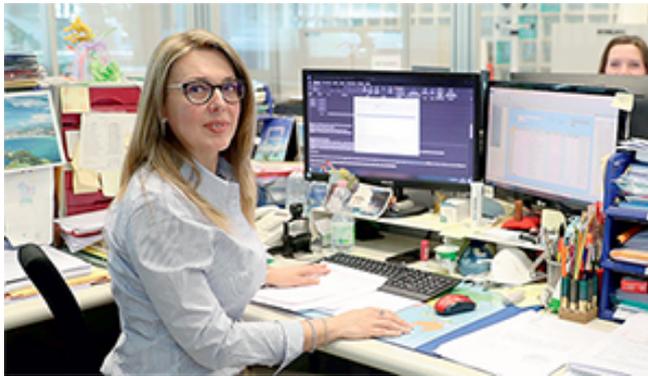
**BORDERS** More recyclable packaging is the future, but it takes time and transformation of plants. By 2025, it will be possible to change 5-7% of packaging with latest-generation ones.



**BALANCE** The average age of workers is 40 years. "We are looking for a fair balance between young people and people with experience." Today, digitisation counts and young people play well here.



**DESIGN** In offices, the pace of design is sustained. A dozen standard machines are tailor-made according to customers' requests, with which the exchange of information is dense.



**OPENING** Nordmeccanica has held major satellite events to showcase its machines to customers worldwide, highlighting the name of Piacenza. Now, we also return to trade fairs in person.