



MAKING ITS MARK

Zanasi is the only fully Italian company designing and manufacturing inkjet printing systems using CIJ (continuous inkjet) and DOD (drop on demand) technologies. Its mission is to print permanent marks on any products, from a delicate egg to a ceramic tile. Barbara Rossi talks to general director Mr Zanasi to find out more.

Based in Sassulolo, Italy, Zanasi was established in 1978 and initially operated in the tile sector for which the area is famous. Later it entered the packaging sector when it introduced the first DOD system produced in Italy. Thanks to the success of the product, it went on to develop the first and only CIJ system manufactured in Italy. Sales of these two products allowed it to invest significant resources in setting up its chemical laboratory in order to start ink production, completing its new production structure.

The success of this new production profile allowed Zanasi to expand further. At first it grew at a domestic level by establishing commercial branches in Milan and Avellino; then, in 1996, it began its growth on an international level by opening a site in Minneapolis, US, which will shortly be joined by a new branch in San Diego, California. Indeed, Zanasi has consolidated its position across five continents by establishing a global packaging distribution network. A production and commercial site was set up in China in 2006, with the aim of optimising the management of ▶



markets in south-east Asia. This site manufactures products for the Far Eastern markets, as well as supplying them with products imported from Italy.

Unique products

The company makes large investments in R&D to continue offering new and innovative products to the market. Its main products include a wide range of small character CIJ systems, from entry level to top of the range, as well as high definition DOD systems for absorbent, partially absorbent and (a world first) non-absorbent surfaces. Also featuring amongst Zanasi's core products are low and middle definition DOD systems for both absorbent and non-absorbent surfaces. This range includes its innovative MEK-free inks, biodegradable inks and its new edible liquids, all of which are customisable in terms of type and colour.

But that is not all: The company also offers a CIJ printing technology integrated vision system, managed with hi-tech software which prints and checks alphanumerical, bar and 2D codes in real time and expels non-conforming products at a speed of 15 strokes per second. In addition to this, there are CIJ printing technology integrated traversing systems, with

traversing speeds reaching up to 120 metres per minutes, as well as high level software packages customisable to the most varied production needs.

New products are currently being developed in the areas of CIJ, TTO (thermal transfer overprint) for non-absorbent surfaces and high level software products for packaging and traceability. The two current production sites at Sassuolo (2500m² of covered space) and Guangzhou, in southern China, are able to meet the demands of future production growth – particularly as the Chinese site is shortly to undergo a further 1000m² expansion. Other site expansion will be purely at the commercial level, as in the case of the new site that Zanasi will soon be opening in San Diego, California.

Furthermore, Zanasi has recently invested in an automated warehouse managed by latest generation software for total product traceability, as well as an IP technology communication system linking the different sites. Alongside this, the company has invested in artificial vision R&D for the coding of any material and advanced ink chemistry software. Moreover, it continuously invests in human resources with a particular focus on training younger staff members.



New markets

Zanasi is an all-round producer for the packaging sector, supplying diverse segments such as food, cosmetics, pharmaceuticals, stationery, the automotive industry and construction packaging, as well as offer product traceability solutions. In terms of geographical markets the company is active on a global scale, covering all five continents. However, its goal is to continuously search for new markets. It feels that the Far Eastern markets are showing good prospects for expansion, and it is also planning to grow in emerging markets, including Africa.

Commenting on his company's future growth, Mr Zanasi explains: "Our future growth will mainly derive from an active organic expansion, which will have to be continuously increased. Acquisition opportunities are under review. In terms of structure and organisation we have the intention of increasing our presence in key markets by opening new branches and offices. Then, obviously, in order to grow we have to carry on with our activity of continuous new product research, offering innovative and, at

the same time, simple solutions, as happened at the last Interpack trade fair in Dusseldorf where we presented five absolute world firsts."

At Interpack, Zanasi showcased its HD printing systems for non-absorbent surfaces such as glossy, painted and processed carton and plastic film, an artificial vision system integrated in CIJ systems and Z5000 ITS, an X-Y double axe traversing system, integrated in and managed by CIJ systems and able to print on two axes, even in reverse order, which is particularly suitable for high productivity thermoforming machines. Alongside those, Zanasi also presented an advanced, but low-priced DOD system featuring a compact touch screen display and a continuous working field ranging from 7 to 20mm, for both absorbent and non-absorbent surfaces. It also displayed its range of inks and liquids for CIJ systems, including biodegradable and MEK-free inks and edible (FDA approved) liquids. Furthermore, Zanasi is currently working on software development for configurable and customisable product traceability. □

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