



Machines for the automotive industry: tech and quality

Reducing waiting times and improving production performance

A world leader in the design and construction of machines that assemble mufflers and exhaust systems for cars and trucks, Comas is the flagship of Ferofin holding, a group that as well as the company “headquarters” of Marseille includes Comassud (Teramo), Gbf Tecnomec (Soncino) and Cmp Energia (in the Pavia area). Founded in 1979 by Felice Ferrario, director of the group and today assisted by his sons Fabio (technical sales engineer), Roberto (purchasing manager) and Marco (head of production), Comas is synonymous with precision, technology and quality in the production of special machines of which 70% are for the automotive sector. The remaining 30% of the machines are produced for companies that make heat exchangers or deal with packaging. “Our machines make it possible to reduce waiting times and improve production performance: we guarantee our customers speed and quality during assembly - said Ferrario Felice -. Working in a market where everyone embraces the philosophy of ‘Just in time’ and where now there is no more stock of products, we need to be timely and produce orders efficiently”. One of the main advantages of Comas machines is definitely flexibility, a quality particularly appreciated in the automotive sector, where mufflers and silencers change the weight, geometric shape and size for each model of motor vehicle and where, therefore, the production lines should pass from the assembly of a product to another without any idle waiting time. “Every year we

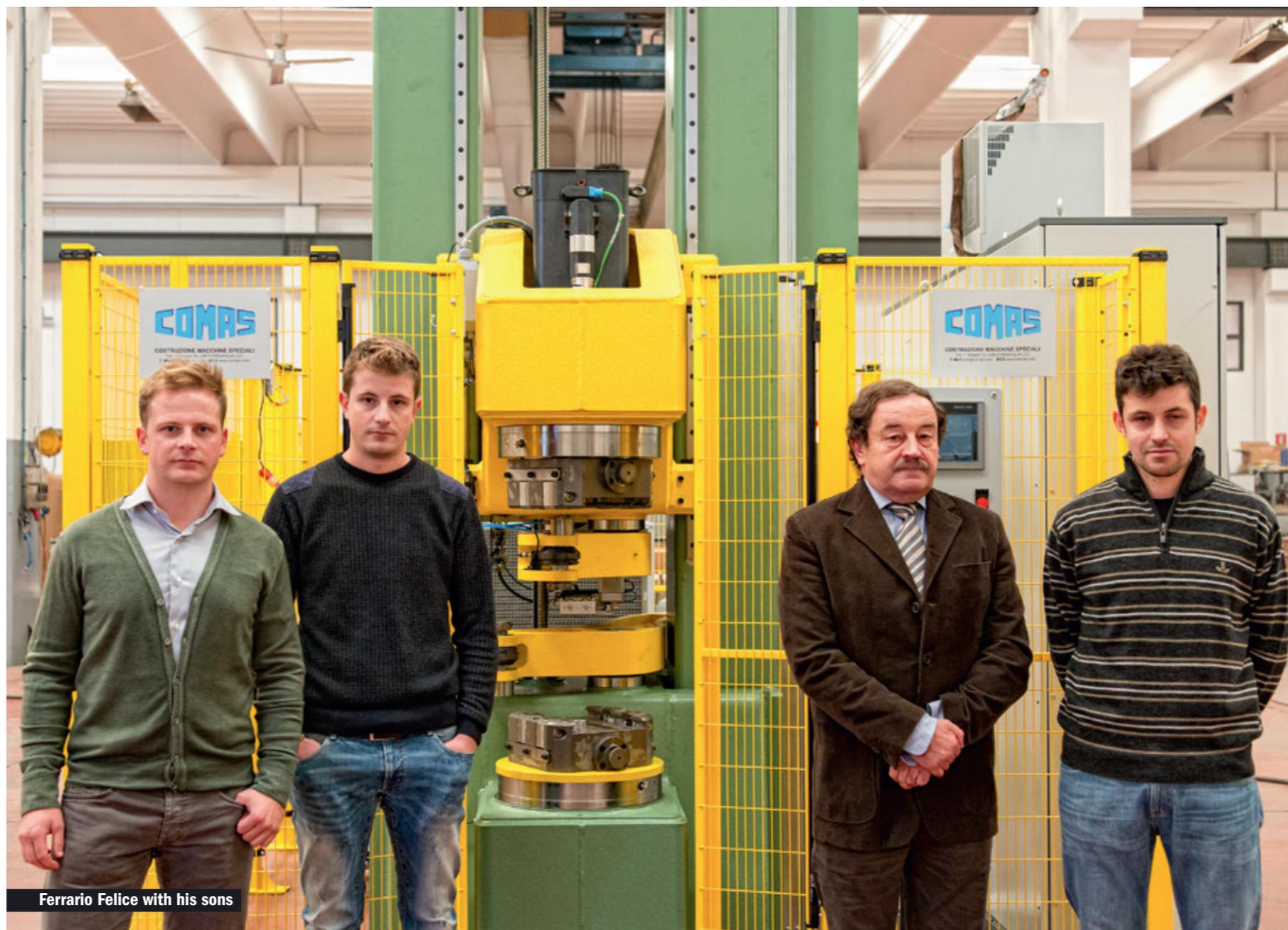
invest up to 10% of our turnover in research and development - adds Fabio Ferrario -. We have an internal office design with six hi-

ghly specialised members of staff who work every day to satisfy any customer request”. For this reason the level of technology and

automation on Comas machines is constantly updated. “Today, to meet increasingly stringent environmental regulations, the exhaust systems for cars and trucks are made from quality materials such as stainless steel. It is therefore important to improve our machines on a daily basis by introducing systems that can reduce the consumption of raw materials, increase accuracy, lead to energy savings and reduce the use of dynamic oils”. But that is not all, the evolution of technology and the con-

stant work on innovation have helped make revolutionary changes to Comas machines, introducing numerical control systems (Cnc) and traceability (in order to easily detect the production batch) or by applying “foolproof” cameras and sensors, to ensure that during the assembly phase each component is inserted with the right orientation. It’s no surprise that today Comas is the world leader, ranging from the traditional European markets up to China, India, Thailand, South America and the

United States, where the market share even extends to 95%. Global coverage, however, supported by excellent customer service that provides answers online within 4 hours and technical interventions on site within 24 hours. “We have 37 years of experience behind us, but every day we work on innovation: this allows us to solve any problem at the manufacturing facilities of customers, taking on even seemingly impossible challenges”, resumes Felice Ferrario. In this regard, take the recent case of a well-known German car manufacturer that, after designing a silencer of large dimension and with a particular geometric shape, came across the problem that none of its suppliers were able to produce it industrially. “We accepted the challenge, despite the scepticism of all our German competitors who called it a mission impossible. But after careful testing, we were able to design a machine able to industrialise this new component from scratch and delivered it three days ahead of schedule. Seeing the astonishment in the eyes of our customers has been a really huge satisfaction. It is proof, if ever it were needed, that in the production of machine tools, Italia still has a lot to teach”. With, a total of 35,000 square metres of production area and 130 employees, the Ferofin group boasts increasing sales, even with a growth of 40% with regard to Comas. “In respect to the quality of our machines and to the know-how we have, there is no doubt that our prices are not high and it is for this that the market rewards us”. That is why the leaders of Comas can look ahead with optimism. “Our future challenge will be to launch within four years a production site in the United States, to better serve markets such as the Usa, Canada, Mexico, Brazil, and in general the whole of South America, where our machines are in great demand and well-used”. The countdown has already begun.



Ferrario Felice with his sons