

Lifting equipment: Italian high

by Renato Ferretti

The aggressive competition of Asians, adverse financial conditions and increasingly demanding markets are the same conditions that many production sectors suffer, and that are anything but comforting, at least from the perspective of western entrepreneurship, and particularly that of Italy. In effect, even by restricting the analytical field to the niche sectors, the conditions to be faced do not seem to change. But the strong points which our enterprises can boast of in the global scenario remain constantly positive. An example is the ITALKRANE enterprise of Milan established in 1962, with the aim of designing, producing and marketing machines for the hoisting and transport of material of any dimension, capacity and type. «Our sector – says Engr. Paolo Cavandoli, Chairman of ITALKRANE – constitutes a market niche that was less affected by the negative conditions the crises imposed. However, the setting in which we operate has undergone changes and opened out to new competitors (Indians, Chinese, Koreans and others) who have gained market shares, even if they cannot guarantee the high standards requested, given their lack of experience in this sector. In a condition of strong competition and elevated uncertainty, such as the current one, the most effective strategy consists in consolidating the over 50 years of experience which have enabled us to study specific solutions in the field of lifting equipment, with a corporate structure conceived to satisfy the requests at best. This is done through the blending of competencies, innovation and high quality standards with safe usage.»

What are your strengths?

«Versatility, flexibility and advance technology are the elements which have enabled a continual growth and undeniable affirmation in the global markets. Initially created to propose lifting engineering and the relevant electromechanical parts, ITALKRANE slowly rose to international levels as one of the most important enterprises for the manufacture of lifting equipment. Overhead and portal cranes, electric powered wire rope and chain hoists are the main products. Our wire rope GO*UP

THE DESIGN AND PRODUCTION OF LIFTING AND TRANSPORT EQUIPMENT IS A MARKET NICHE WHERE EXPERIENCE AND TECHNICAL COMPETENCES STILL ALLOW OUR SME (SMALL AND MEDIUM ENTERPRISES) TO DOMINATE. ITALKRANE IS ONE OF THE EXAMPLES



hoists and the small YO*YO chain hoists are now renowned in many countries. Constructive forms of all types and load capacity up to 320 tons for the cranes and 32 tons for the hoists are the expression of our creativity and potential. In particular, ITALKRANE is one of the leading enterprises in the explosion-proof construction machines designed for use in petrochemical plants in hazardous environments, refineries, methane compression stations, fertiliser production industries and offshore platforms. The quality system that controls our activities complies with the standard ISO 9001 and was certified by ICIM in 1995. Lastly, cooperation with clients and rapid post-sales assistance guarantee the constant running of all our plants in any part of

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THE LIFTING CAPACITY OF CRANES DESIGNED AND PRODUCED IN THE ITALKRANE FACTORIES

the world.»

In what way do you express your flexibility?

ITALKRANE, boasting over 50 years of experience, is able to study specific solutions in the field of the moving of materials and production logistics. The range of our products can furnish the best answers for all lifting demands, from the transport of material to the servicing of the production plants. Our mission is to offer specific solutions for every need, proposing tailored lifting solutions that target the boosting of the profitability of our clients' own corporate activities, ensuring a more efficient internal logistics. In particular, our experience of over 50 years enables our engineers to technically develop off-standard solutions on the basis of

modular components or those expressly manufactured: we are able to respond swiftly to the most unusual requests, and propose solutions that can best combine productiveness and effectiveness.»

What are the markets in which you are most outstanding?

«Our enterprise operates mainly in the foreign markets and is present in those geographic areas where there are installations or extensions for the production of Oil and Gas, Petrochemical, Energy generation, Chemicals, and Offshore plants. In particular, the markets where we are very active are: the Persian Gulf area (Kuwait, Qatar, Oman, Emirates, Saudi Arabia, and Bahrain) Southeast Asia (Malaysia, Indonesia, Taiwan, Thailand, and South Korea) the Russian Confederation, Nigeria, and the whole North Africa (Egypt, Tunisia, Morocco, Libya and Algeria).»

What are the main features that distinguish your product in the market?

«ITALKRANE customises its own products according to the specific requests of the clientele. Many customised lifting equipment use ITALKRANE products in an original way, while in some cases, we have to design new elements in order to sat-

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In every industrial activity, research and development play an important and fundamental role as a success factor. «But certainly – specifies Engr. Paolo Cavandoli, Chairman of ITALKRANE – we mustn't consider research applied to our sector as that which, for example, is carried out in the automotive industry where, almost yearly, totally innovative technological solutions are presented. The creation of a "continual innovation strategy" requires a work setting rich in stimuli for all the operators. In this perspective, innovation can become an "operational method" that can be put into practice, after adequate assessments and new proposals. We thus need to have a corporate policy and cultural environment ensuring that all the staff perform a dual role: carrying out the tasks assigned, and dedicating themselves to improvement and innovation of the processes and activities they are involved in. The precondition to encourage and guide the "innovation strategy" is the management's capacity, first of all, to be open to change and be qualified to handle the inevitable and more or less obvious "resistance" which the corporate structure may come up with. The objective of adequate management is to make the staff actors of development, favouring the creation of a fluid and dynamic corporate environment, an environment that is open to change.»



isfy technical specifications. Each crane is conceived to guarantee to the clients the most suitable solution for each of their requirements for lifting operations. To guarantee safety and reliability for each, tailored lifting equipment, ITALKRANE uses tested technical solutions and totally certified components. More and more our clients request for machines that can operate in extreme environmental conditions (low temperatures or particularly aggressive environments like for example, the Offshore plants), and for us to furnish increasingly top-level certifications of the machines.»

In what sectors is this explosion-proof lifting equipment applied?

«ITALKRANE offers a vast range of cranes, hoists and components for critical or hazardous areas. The technology of the explosion-proof lifting equipment is used in many production sectors: in the chemical and petrochemical industry, energy production, and the food and pharmaceutical production sectors. With its highly reliable and customised solutions, ITALKRANE is among the global market leaders. All the strategic elements, like the wire rope and chain hoists, moving mechanisms, overhead cranes and crane control systems are designed and made in such a way as to guarantee the highest safety levels required in hazardous environments, like those typical of chemical and petrochemical plants, refineries, gas-fired power plants, plants for the treatment of waste waters and paint plants. Cur-

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rently, besides a vast range of products and solutions for every need, our enterprise offers consultancy and project design service to support clients and find the best solutions together. Besides complying with the European ATEX Directive, since 2012, our products have been certified in conformity with the IECEx Certification Scheme that represents an important business opportunity, given that the most important Countries of

the world have recognised it - USA, Australia, UK, Germany, France, Italy, China, India, Korea and Brazil – eliminating the need to duplicate certificates and attestations foreseen by the certified Countries, and favouring the commercialisation of our machines with great benefits for the international clients.»

What are the technical and technological innovations that will be asserted in the near future in your sector?

«The sector of moving and lifting equipment is considered "mature" but to remain competitive and expand one's own market share, we need to keep a constant eye on technological innovation. Thanks to the direct experimentation on the new technologies available, we propose advanced solutions. In particular, we foresee an ever greater use of electronics in the equipment (the machines' "brain") with perfection of both command to improve the machine's performance, and also of control to increase safety in operations. In other words, a new industrial era is about to dawn. We are ready to face it with new lifting systems, equipped with electronic programmers and sensors for controlled and automated movement designated to the factory of the future.»

Cutting-edge technology for lifting equipment

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