



LEADING EDGE TECHNOLOGY



OPERATING EXCELLENCE



CUSTOMER SUPPORT

FLEXIBLE MACHINES, SPECIALIST INNOVATIONS

Italian coating service provider Lafer is one of Hauzer's longest-running customers, which Lafer and Hauzer celebrated last year with a spectacular party in and around Piacenza, Italy. Established in 1986, Lafer has always focused on developing innovative coatings for specialised applications. Primo Civardi, Lafer's Technology Manager and director of the production plant, shares how Lafer's relentless focus on innovation has brought the company to where it is today.



Team from Lafer and Hauzer.





Luigi Parenti, Lafer CEO, and Michiel Eerden, Hauser Director of Sales.

Specialised in Problem Solving

This focus on innovation and specialisation has remained a key part of the Lafer company culture. Primo, who has been with the company since its early days, is always looking for specialisation opportunities. “The market changes rapidly nowadays,” he says, “so you have to keep up to date with production capabilities. Coating production has become much more complicated, and focusing on innovation and specialisation is the only way to retain market interest. You have to really dive into the client’s specific application. What materials do they use? What results are they looking for? Then you develop a highly specific coating recipe that solves their exact problem.” →

Finding the Right Match with Technology

When Lafer first started, their focus was on chemical vapour deposition (CVD) coating. Primo: “This was a very good time for us and we made CVD coatings for several years. CVD was a new technology for Italy and everyone was eager to learn. But this type of coating was complicated for technical reasons, and the market was not ready to take full advantage. When we had occasion to be in contact with Hauser and physical vapour deposition (PVD) technology, we decided that this was a good direction for Lafer. We bought our first PVD unit, a Hauser machine, in 1991.”

Establishing a Reputation for Innovation

The second Hauser machine followed quickly, in 1993, and many more after. “One of the key points in the Lafer story,” Primo explains, “is that we participated in the Superlattice Coating Project from 1995 to 1997, a large European project to coat aeronautical components. This was the real start to our specialisation in coatings with wear-resistant properties.” In the late ‘90s, Lafer bought another Hauser unit dedicated to just that kind of coating.



Gabriel Jordan, Hauser Manufacturing Engineer, and Primo Civardi, Lafer Technology Manager.



Rik Smabers, Hauzer COO, and Primo Civardi, Lafer Technology Manager.

Teamwork Inside and Outside the Company

Lafer has an excellent R&D team to create these highly specific coatings. Their 10 R&D engineers are all specialists in their own right. Primo: “But more importantly, it is a true team, motivated to make things better. Technology-wise, we need to keep our eyes open and urge all our suppliers, Hauzer and others, to develop the upcoming technologies. At Lafer, we are kind of a collector of new things. That is why we value our long-time relationship with Hauzer so much. If you know each other in such detail, it is easier to ask for new features, modifications, coating properties – the elements that ignite new research.”

Celebrating 27 Years of Collaboration

In the spring of 2018, Lafer and Hauzer celebrated their long history together in Piacenza. Primo: “It is important to spend time together outside of work, outside the technical issues. We arranged some surprises for our guests from Hauzer. Lafer’s owners have a high-powered road-legal prototype sports car that we took for a spin. In addition, we arranged a flight with an ultralight aircraft. Flying over the Lafer plant and surrounding area on a sunny day definitely gives you a new perspective on the industry!”

Prepared for a Bright Future

Primo’s perspective on the future is equally high level. “Nobody knows what the future will bring, really. We prepare through specialisation and innovation, working on automotive, industrial and medical applications and more. There are so many different possible coatings, and so many problems that can be solved with the right coating. We need our machines to be as flexible as possible, and our people to be even more so.” In a competitive market where time can be of the essence, Lafer stands out with its excellent quality in innovative applications. As Primo says: “We are in a good situation. Every day, we meet new clients who are looking for something extraordinary.”



The specialised component coating hall at Lafer with two Flexicoat® 1200 and one Flexicoat® 1500 PVD/PACVD systems.

