

# Stara Glass celebrates award

Italian glass furnace supplier Stara Glass recently won the award for Excellence of the year, innovation and leadership in the glass market at the Le Fonti awards 2019. Its CEO Massimo Panetta discusses the company.

**Q: Stara Glass won the Le Fonti Awards 2019 award for excellence of the year, innovation and leadership in the glass market, I imagine you're happy with the recognition?**

CEO: I consider this award as a recognition to an entire company that has been on the market for more than 60 years. In the last two years I have launched a transformation programme focused on two dimensions, namely innovative solutions and the enhancement of human capital and I believe that this award gives value to this transformation, which will continue in the future. I believe part of the significance of this award is due to the positive market response regarding our vision.

**Q: What relationship do Italians have with glass?**

CEO: In general they have a very good relationship. The Italians consider it aesthetically beautiful, easily usable, for example it is more pleasant to drink from the glass bottle than from the can, in short I think that this is the essence of glass. In this era, considering the current campaign

in favour of glass, it undoubtedly continues to have greater value.

**Q: Your company is committed to Research and Development activities. Among your most successful projects is the Centauro furnace. Can you discuss this further?**

CEO: The glass is made with furnaces and Centauro is a furnace; not traditional, but a hybrid. There are two macro types of furnaces, the recuperative and the regenerative ones. Centauro does not belong to either of them because it is half recuperative and half regenerative. Its performances are superior to those of a classic regenerative furnace and, among the specificities, it has an integrated SNCR system for the abatement of NOx, therefore it satisfies the principle of environmental sustainability.

Compared to a classic glass production furnace, it has less stringent constraints in the layout, in fact the recovery part, which is behind the furnace, can be positioned quite freely. Finally, it has the ability to re-use preheated clean air, channeling it

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From Left: Daniela Messina, Technical Office Director; Giulio Barbieri, Head Of Project Management; Massimo Panetta, CEO; Simone Ferraro, Technical Director; Temistocle Fabbri, Head of Maintenance and Customer Support.



◀ Stara Glass CEO,  
Massimo Panetta

into other energy forms. For example, in a factory it can be used for heating, for compressed air, in other words it allows for further energy recovery, making the production of glass more sustainable.

**Q: Is this possible through steam?**

CEO: Not exactly, or at least not yet. The idea was to guess the possibility of reusing this quantity of energy that was not recovered; in fact the quota we recover with Centauro, in the classic furnaces goes to get lost. We have had the aim of recovering it and we have created the technological solution to be able to actually do it.

**Q: Stara Glass has recently expanded its activity to include non-European countries as well as European nations. What do you consider to be the recipe for success?**

CEO: As I always say my people, we are a small and medium-sized company that has a seat in the table of the greats, we operate directly with the big producers of glass around the world.

The recipe we are applying is to do business by meeting the customer's needs. In recent years we have identified four: environmental sustainability, energy sustainability, performance improvement in terms of production quality and improvement of the furnace life cycle, or have a broader life cycle possible to have a business case of return on investment of a certain effect.

These dimensions are those that respond to real needs, so in our proposal we do not sell a furnace but we sell results, we position ourselves on a path aimed at the expected target. The customer sees us as risk participants, so the value is seen not so much in a supply, but in a measurable service, certified and aimed at achieving the required performance. So it makes sense to talk about a complete package.

**Q: What are the emerging markets?**

CEO: From our market analysis, as emerging markets we note that there are Africa and India. Besides the importance of the investment flows that are affecting Africa, everything is linked to the population growth because the two countries that will have a very large population increase in the next few years will be India - which will overtake China - and Nigeria. So in these countries the need will increase and obviously it will be balanced with an adequate production.

## About Stara Glass

Stara Glass began in Pisa in 1960 as a company that specialised in the demolition and recovery of refractory materials from industrial furnaces.

The initial activity has been integrated over time with design, reconstruction and hot work services and agency contracts with specialist companies in the production of refractories (it is the exclusive agent for Sefpro in Italy) and production process control systems.

It is headquartered in Genoa and has operating offices in Parma, Savona, Venice, Alessandria and sales offices in France, Portugal, Spain, Central America, Chile, Brazil, India, South Korea, Thailand, China, Russia and Kazakhstan.

Its President, Giorgio Fasolini, said: "We help customers achieve growth and high performance goals, leveraging on the strength of analysis, relationships, interactions, internal and external collaborations at national level and international to offer and support the best possible service."

Stara Glass is the holder of patents for the construction of sustainable, energy-competitive plants, able to comply with quality standards and meet the legal limits on environmental emissions.

These include its Centauro technology, High Efficiency Air Staging and Waste Gas Strategic Recirculation. The activities of its Research & Development & Innovation department are supported by a combination of corporate investments and European funding.

The Prime Glass project in 2016 was an important European LIFE+ project. It saw Stara Glass as leader, together with Stazione Sperimentale del Vetro and the University of Genoa.

Thanks to this project Stara Glass has developed, engineered and patented two new primary technologies for the abatement of nitrogen oxides (NOx) finding an immediate response and interest from the market.

Stara Glass, in collaboration with the University of Genoa, has established two start-ups: SGRPRO and Sirela. In June 2018, its engineer Giorgio Ministrini received the Michael Garvey Award 2018 award at the SGT's Furnace Solutions training day and conference.

Stara Glass is also committed to promoting training courses outside in the academic field, participating actively in the teaching modules of university masters in industrial plant engineering and as a support to the teaching activity in degree courses. This contributes to the spread of the glass culture and which also trains the process engineers of the future on the particular aspects and principles that characterise the glass industry. "Attracting, developing and growing our people is the basis for achieving high performance," said Mr Panetta. ■

Stara Glass, Genoa, Italy [www.staraglass.net](http://www.staraglass.net)