

## Adelio Lattuada: specialized glass processing machinery



Thirty years of activity is an important milestone for any company and when this occasion is coupled with the official entry of the second generation of the family all the better. Glass-Technology International went to speak to owner and founder of the historical company that bears his name – Adelio Lattuada – to find out how the future will be.

Our first machine - a Delta model



### THE BEGINNING

Adelio Lattuada was set up in 1978 when Mr. Adelio Lattuada was involved in maintenance service of machinery for the glass sector, which makes this year the company's 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary. The idea of setting up his own company to make machinery had already begun to form in his mind at that time and, after speaking to clients, he realized that there was a real need for specific machinery. In fact, at that time, there were no machines to process corners, and when he was asked to make a machine to carry out this work he decided to try. Another fact that convinced Lattuada was that there was the trend to process in large series – up to 1,000 pieces.

The need for this kind of machine was so great that in the design stage – the *Delta*, as the machine was called – had already been sold.

This first production series created two machines – more or less the same but one with more grinding wheels than the other. And with these machines, Lattuada understood, thanks to his mechanical background, that corner grinding machines were specific machines but that could not be limited to just “corners”. Production and development, therefore, did not stop there and Lattuada began to develop his own straight-line edgers, a more universal machine.

### SPEAKING TO ADELIO LATTUADA

“At that time,” said Mr. Adelio Lattuada, “straight-line edgers did not have many wheels. In fact, there were machines with six wheels and those with two peripheral wheels. In my opinion, there was no machine to “fill the gap”. And this is where I came in, and I created the only machine with five wheels - the first *AL 5*. The machine was also intermediate as far as price is concerned, but was closer to the six-wheel machines if we speak about technology, performance and production capacity.”

#### Why five wheels?

“Because in my opinion, there was the six-wheel machine which was, at that time, a large machine, or a two peripheral

wheel machine which was small and there was nothing in between. Our machine had three polishing wheels compared to the two wheels of competitors, but the price of our machine was similar to competitors' machines. This was an important advantage for clients.

And to differentiate these machines from others they had a different name: *AL 8 Special*, for example, and *AL 7 Special*. Now, of course, the names of our machines have been unified to make things simple, but one of the main characteristic has remained the same, and that is their robustness. In fact, we have recently substituted one that we presented at the *Vitrum* fair in 1989, which had worked well for 20 years!”

#### Standard but flexible production

“During these first years we had to try to standardize our production but also to be flexible with regards to the requests of our clients. We therefore started with straight-line edgers – creating three large lines. First the small- to medium-sized (the *AL* series), then the *TL*, which was first created in 1986-87, and which, at that time, was considered a large machine. The next important machine was the *TLR* in 1999, created to handle large glass sheets when glass started to be used on a large scale for architectural purposes. It was the only machine at that time to be able to handle the large glass sizes that were being used.

The next step was that of about three years ago with the creation of the *TLS*, due to the fact that the weight and thicknesses (up to 100 millimetres) of the glass sheets were continuously increasing.” (Two examples of the *TLS* were being assembled at Adelio Lattuada's premises when *Glass-Technology International* was there, equipped with six-metre ‘arms’).

#### Bevellers

We now have to go back again to 1989, when bevellers were highly requested. Also for these machines, Adelio Lattuada applied the same theory as with his other machines, since the market only had two types of bevellers: small or large. Adelio Lattuada, therefore, created the *Gamma 8* beveller, which had four



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beveling wheels, then the arisring wheel, and had three felt wheels just like the larger machines.

“The machine was slower than big machines but a lot more agile also because it processed up to 20/25° with the same quality as the larger machines. We then expanded the range and we now have a series of bevellers which have always maintained good sales levels.”



Designing phase

## CONTINUOUS EXPANSION

Expansion has also been carried out and is still ongoing as far as company premises are concerned. The company moved its own technical office to the first floor so that it was also possible to have some new offices and entrance to the company. This brings the total area of the company to 4,000 square metres.

Plans are now to create a bigger commercial office, and a further acquisition of a factory building for more offices and representative areas.

## SALES AND PRODUCTION

“We have seen good years and periods in recent times, such as 2005-2006, but now, due to the exchange rate of the Euro and Dollar, machinery manufacturers have had to modify

their business strategy a little. Areas that do business in Dollar, such as the Middle East, for example, have undergone considerable changes.

Adelio Lattuada does not concentrate much on the ‘Dollar’ areas and we have not seen a lot of difference in sales, while Russia is maintaining its position, with some sales but not on a regular basis.

We have also sold in countries such as the United States, but these are not our main markets. Brazil was an important market for us in the 90s, while at present the main markets are in northern Europe. Spain is the country where we began to enter the international market and where we have always had a considerable market share.

At present we are seeing good results from Germany, The Netherlands, Austria, Belgium and England, especially for special machines. We are, in fact, concentrating a lot on these special machines for large glass sizes and this, for Adelio Lattuada is the market where it can be first in supplying the machines and where new buildings use glass in incredible quantities.

The north, however, is where double-glazing is used the most and where production of special glass is ahead of the rest of Europe.”



## DEVELOPMENTS

“At present, we are concentrating on bilateral machines, which will become just like the rest of our machinery with their own family and series. Our bilateral machines will have to become a line, which requires a certain amount of effort, because each client has his own details to be inserted into the line.

We have been able to develop four lines of machines for straight line edging, we have most parts and also the foundation/base of the machine that are standard.

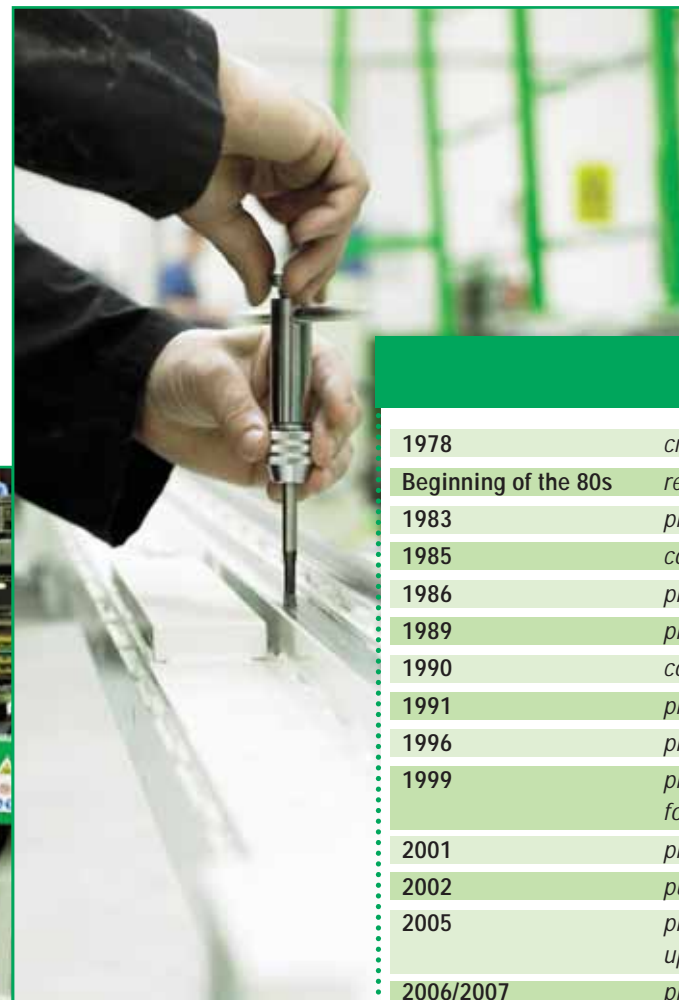
Assembly phase

When our clients ask for a personalized machine, we know that the changes in the machine can reach up to 20 per cent, while the remaining part – 80 per cent – remains standard.

We have also standardized the connection if we need to install a rack with an arm, which can be up to five or six metres, as per clients’ needs, compared to the standard size of three to four metres, there is no difference. We are now working on integrating some other parts to be able to install parts of the TL on the TLR. This means that if we install a part of the TLR, which is a high quality machine, on the TL, there is not such a big difference in price.”

Also for reconditioned machinery, Adelio Lattuada can substitute most parts, even on machines that have been up and running for even 10 years, without difficulty or problems in use for operators, giving the reconditioned machine a further lease of life.

This is also convenient for Adelio Lattuada as it means that there is no need for a large warehouse of spare parts.



Assembly phase

## MILESTONES

1978	creation of the Adelio Lattuada technical assistance service
Beginning of the 80s	realization of the first automatic corner grinding machines
1983	production of the first straight-line edging machines – AL series
1985	company enlargement and office relocation
1986	production of the first medium-big sized straight-line edging machines - TL series
1989	production of the first beveling machines
1990	company enlargement and office relocation to the first factory building of our property
1991	production of the first shaped beveling and edging machines
1996	production area enlargement
1999	production of the first straight-line edging machines - TLR series - for the processing of jumbo sheets and great thickness glasses
2001	production of the first vertical washing machines
2002	purchase of a second local unit which enabled us to double workshop space
2005	production of the first straight-line edging machines - TLS series - able to process up to 100 mm glass thickness and up to 1,500 Kg max loading weight
2006/2007	production of the first double edgers

Carpentry phase



Assembly phase



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**How many machines do you build a year and what can you tell us about turnover for 2007/08?**

“Adelio Lattuada makes, on average, about 100 machines a year, but we do not concentrate on numbers but on quality, which requires more time. And this, logically, leads us to the fact that the company is also looking to hire more personnel to work on the new special machines it is making. At the moment there are two of these machines being built: two 13-wheel variable angle machines with six-metre arms.

As far as turnover is concerned, it has always increased by 20 per cent year by year, and after a short period when we saw 7-8 per cent, we have gone back to our usual 20 per cent annual increase.”

## PRODUCTION ON SHOW

The company will have some of its machines on show at *glasstec*, and personnel will be available for all those who need to find out how these machines can help them. As with all Adelio Lattuada's production, all new machines are mainly characterized by technological flexibility, ease of use and limited maintenance. The functional planning and manufacturing standards used avoid long and expensive machine stops. ■

## ADELIO LATTUADA'S 30<sup>TH</sup> “I WANT TO BUILD MACHINES”

With this statement, in 1978 Adelio Lattuada started his path and after 30 years of development, we are proud to say that the evolution has been uninterrupted and accomplished through the achievement of many small targets, each time reached. Our wish is to keep on following the same philosophy with the same enthusiasm!

To underline and “visualize” these concepts we have chosen to use three glass spheres (green as our company colour) with three different sizes. From the smallest to the biggest one, these spheres symbolize the three decades of our company life: from the tiny workshop where Adelio Lattuada, who dealt with technical assistance at that time, during the evening mounted his first machines, to a factory which covers an area of more than 3,000 sq.m. From the first corners grinding machines to a production range which counts today more than 60 different models. From working alone to a staff with more than 30 persons, many of them working here since almost 20 years, who represent the company's hearth and who deal with all the designing, mounting, testing and assistance phases. Hoping that these spheres will keep on rolling towards the future, without ever stopping...

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New Website!



All the working phases are realized within our structure in order to guarantee quality, safety and precision