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IN DEPTH LIGHTING TECHNOLOGY

Olsa CEO Massimo Bravin : “We Are Now Producing Big And Cutting-edge Technological Parts”

Massimo Bravin was born in Milano in 1958. After finishing at the SDA Bocconi School of Management, he started in 1984 at Arthur Andersen; six years later he joined Bendix-AlliedSignal as Financial Director and CFO of their automotive business in Europe. When that activity was sold in 1998, he joined Bacardi/Martini as General Manager Italy before moving to Magneti Marelli in 2000 as CFO and in 2003 as President and CEO of Automotive Lighting, at that time a joint venture with R. Bosch, until 2006.



DVN: Can you tell us more about yourself and your job at Automotive Lighting?

Massimo Bravin: I am proud to have succeeded turning over the activity and achieving a double digit positive result versus a big loss when I arrived. I also built a solid business portfolio and launched Turkey, Mexico and Brazil plants. But the thing I'm most proud of is the successful integration between Bosch, Magneti Marelli and Seima employees creating a common vision and spirit. Part of this process was a strong change in management integrating new professionals with solid experience who shared a common vision. Four years after leaving Marelli, I started to work again in the lighting industry with Olsa, first as a consultant mainly to set up the JV with Murakami Corporation in China, and then in March 2011 I became CEO of Olsa.

DVN: Tell us about Olsa—the company, sales, employees, and customers.

M.B.: Olsa's 2011 sales of products are around €130m with a little more than 1,000 employees. The HQ is in Rivoli (Turin) while the plants are in Moncalieri, Italy, in Brazil, Poland, and Mexico and China since 2011. About the customers, we are proud to have most of the generalist car makers as customers, and also premium car makers including Audi, BMW, Mercedes-Benz, and Maserati. Headquarters, development and laboratories are regrouped in the Rivoli plant.

DVN: Tell us about your products.

M.B.: Olsa develop and produce rear lamps, side repeaters, and interior lighting.

DVN: What is the history of Olsa?

M.B.: Olsa were established in 1947 as a family company in Rivoli close to Turin, Italy. They were originally engaged in the production of plate-stamped components for the automobile industry. In 1958, they turned into a corporation, entering also in the manufacturing of rear lights and dome lamps for commercial vehicles.

In the 1990s a renovation and enlarging program is started and leads to a complete re-organization of production processes and to the modernisation of equipment.

In 1999 Olsa opened a plant in Brazil, then in 2001 a new plant in Moncalieri (Italy) and in 2006 a plant in Poland. Following a constant growth business approach, Olsa have consolidated operations over the years in the automobile market in Italy and worldwide, becoming a reference trademark in the vehicle lighting segment.

DVN: What is the mission of Olsa?

M.B.: We want to become a key supplier in the automotive industry for exterior and interior lighting through continuous growth. Our target is to double our sales to €250m in 2016. The shareholders have always invested the profit to sustain the company expansion. Now we have a solid financial position that will allow us to support the expansion in terms of new products development and worldwide presence.

DVN: What are the actions launched to achieve your mission?

M.B.: The targets are clear:

- To continue to be a reliable supplier with a good and solid reputation of product launches in terms of quality and timing;
- To have a global organisation with bases in Mexico, Brazil, US, and China;
- To be helped by exterior organisations and the work we are doing with the Torino Polytechnic university is a good example;
- To use the best tools in design and simulation with the best testing facilities.

As a result, we have the trust of our customers

DVN: Are you manufacturing in low cost countries? Do you have alliances with Chinese or East Europe?

M.B.: As I said, in terms of new initiatives we have China, inside the JV, the plant of 3,500 m² started in February this year in collaboration with our partner Murakami. In Poland, we have a plant of 400 employees working in 10,000 m² that now we're doubling. In Mexico where we have just launched our first product. But I would not forget Brasil, where we have a consolidated business and Italy, now not anymore considered a high cost place where we have experienced people and very good professionals.

DVN: Is your business growing? What are the strengths of your company?

M.B.: Our business is growing very fast. Our main strengths are a worldwide organisation, an experienced R&D team, development and simulations tools, modern facilities, partners in Universities/labs and a solid financial status.

DVN: So Olsa are known for supplying small lighting parts for signal and interior lighting. Do you envision producing bigger parts or complete systems?

M.B.: Producing only the small part is an old history. Olsa are producing today big parts and mainly cutting-edge technological parts as on the Fiat 500L with a perfect positioning for 2 LED light guides; BMW's Mini and X1, and Audi Q3 without forgetting the new innovative products to be launched in the next months.

DVN: What is your vision on interior lighting?

M.B.: It is exactly what DVN recently reported in their report on interior lighting. We want to put power of innovative interior lighting to create enjoyment for the potential buyer from incandescent bulbs but more and more by LEDs, OLEDs, and light guides.

DVN: And what do you think of the application of OLEDs?

M.B.: We believe this technology today is feasible for exterior rear lights and interior lighting. We want to develop cutting-edge products in line with the needs of car makers. About styling differentiation we consider OLEDs are a good lever.

DVN: How would you describe the kind of relationship you establish with your customers?

M.B.: As I said, we want to be a key supplier in rear and interior lights proposing innovative solutions to car makers mainly considering styling differentiation. What we are starting to produce in rear lighting for Fiat 500L, Mini and Audi, and in interior lighting for Maserati show that we are moving fast towards that goal.