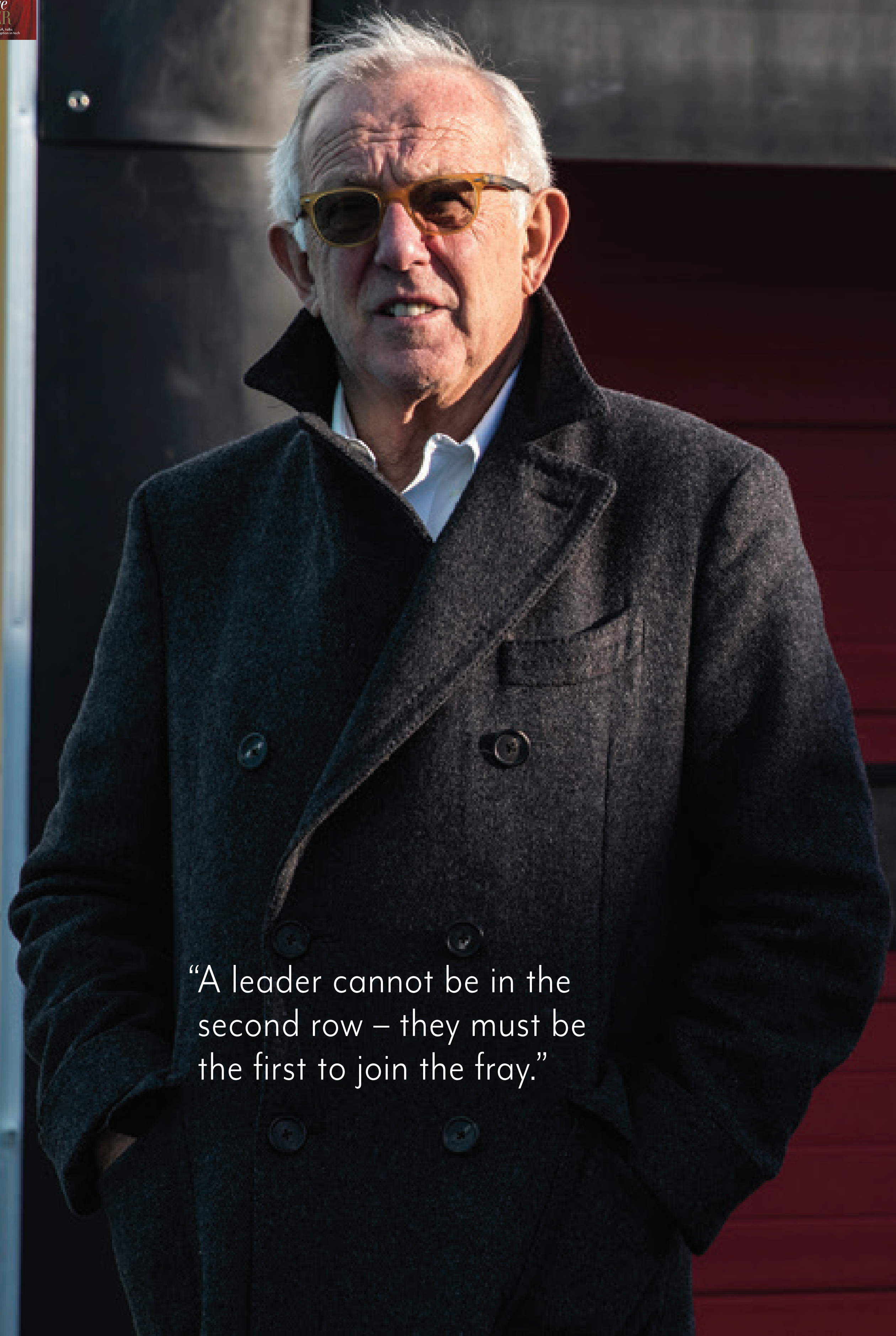

RUBBER *to* RICHES

Six decades of determination and commitment has seen Megadyne grow from a small family business into a global leader in power transmission belts.

WORDS **HOLLY JOHNSON** • IMAGES **PAOLO CIABERTA**

In 1957 in a small Italian corner shop, Corrado Tadolini started a family business producing flat rubber drive belts for the local market. More than 60 years on, his humble store has blossomed into the world's leading manufacturer of polyurethane belts and a strong competitor in the rubber belts market. Building on his success in Italy, Corrado launched Megadyne's global expansion in the 90s by developing a network of sister companies from Europe to China to Brazil. In the early 2000s, the company acquired two facilities in Spain and Milan to complete its offering in synchronised belt drives; established a manufacturing plant in Qingdao alongside its Ningbo Rubber Factory in China to create a strong foothold in Asia; and acquired Jason Industrial in the US to guarantee a solid commercial and production presence in America. Over the past five years Megadyne has made seven more acquisitions, entering into the business of light duty conveyor belts and transport with modular belts, as well as increasing its presence with new distributors.

Spearheading these international crusades was Corrado's son, Giorgio, who joined the company more than 40 years ago with his brother Marco, now proud second-generation owners. "After graduating with a Bachelor of Architecture from the Polytechnic University of Turin, I joined Megadyne as a worker before gaining experience in the commercial side of the business. I identified growth opportunities and opened new Megadyne branches until 2000, when, during a company-wide expansion, I was named CEO, and Marco was named CTO," says Giorgio. "I knew that becoming international would bring us new developments and business stability. Going global in the 90s was a huge turning point for this company and, after entering all three American markets as well as the Chinese market, our turnover increased by up to three digits at a time. »

"A leader cannot be in the second row – they must be the first to join the fray."

MEGADYNE'S 4-PRONGED PHILOSOPHY:

- FRIENDLY
- FAST
- FLEXIBLE
- FLAT

"By opening subsidiaries around the world, we have turned small units managed by a couple of people into influential, medium-sized businesses within a short period of time. In the early days, we were a small company of 50 employees, while our competitors were bigger than us by dozens, if not hundreds of staff. Only with our international ambition could we overtake them and increase our opportunities for growth."

Headquartered in Mathi, Italy, Megadyne currently operates 15 manufacturing plants, 30 commercial branches and 23 subsidiaries around the world. Its product range encompasses thermoset and thermoplastic polyurethane belts, rubber timing and v-belts, pulleys, clamping plates, and timing bars – used for power transmission, linear positioning and conveying systems in diverse industrial applications such as elevators and machine tooling, and in the glass and ceramics, packaging, and food industries.

True to its vision, Megadyne remains committed to investing in the highest quality manufacturing, distribution and fabricating facilities in each of its major markets: America, Asia and Europe. But it isn't growing just for the sake of getting bigger – Megadyne is very selective about the firms it brings under its roof. The company acquires operations that not only complement its offerings, but also have strong management teams and experienced personnel. These include the recent purchase of Belt Corporation of America in 2014, Italy-based Sampla Belting in 2015 and Chennai-based Helicord Transmissions in 2016, as well as Southern Italy's Sacif srl and Spain-based AVE in 2017.

Megadyne has established itself worldwide not only through acquisitions, but also through the reliability and expertise of its staff, who offer personalised advice and solutions backed by years of experience. "In today's fast and aggressive business world, Megadyne is proud to value human resources and relationships as the most important part of the company. Whether they are customers, suppliers or staff. I believe a company must be young, able to adapt to market changes, and, above all, fast and dynamic in its decision making. We have created a company made up of people with these skills," explains Giorgio. "A leader cannot be in the second row – they must be the first to join the fray. We have many incentives and employee engagement schemes, but these are useless if you can't involve people emotionally."

Megadyne also creates strong and long-lasting relationships with industrial original equipment manufacturers and distributors worldwide. "By working with the same suppliers for decades, we have created real partnerships with them. This gives us access to the best products at the best price. We also rely heavily on external R&D centres, which have contributed enormously to our growth. R&D is needed to be able to think years in advance, and, to do this, we have to dream. Don't be afraid of the future – manage it."

Megadyne has achieved 30 per cent growth since 2015, with a current turnover of €320 million. The company aims to more than double this by 2019, with a target of €750 million. "The industrial world is changing at an incredible pace. Over the next 12–18 months, we will pursue significant organic growth as well as strategic acquisitions, in both production entities and distribution companies, to widen our offering for customers and to further penetrate the global market. In the long term, we are looking to double our turnover and hold an IPO." ■