

MAPPI and mindset: Putting the customer first

GLASS-TECHNOLOGY INTERNATIONAL:

Giulio, can you describe your approach to furnace design?

GdC: Listening is definitely the basis of all our work. You can't design a furnace if you lack daily experience of the glass factory from inside - if you haven't fully understood its needs. Whenever recruiting a new staff member, the first thing I

look at isn't the curriculum but the passion and desire to understand, to learn, to innovate.

GTI: How does one become a Mappi designer?

GdC: Your knowledge of the mechanical and electrical parts must be perfect - which also extends to the production process and all its variables. You have to experience the environment of the glass factory, go

several times around the world with the teams that take care of assembly and participate in customer training. Only in this way, and always factoring in a training period ranging from four to five years, can s/he qualify as a Mappi designer.

GTI: Does it really take so long?

GdC: Sure it does. And that's one of the reasons why a Mappi solution is

always so simple, solid, reliable, free of bugs and without any nasty surprises for the customer. This isn't a world of improvisation.

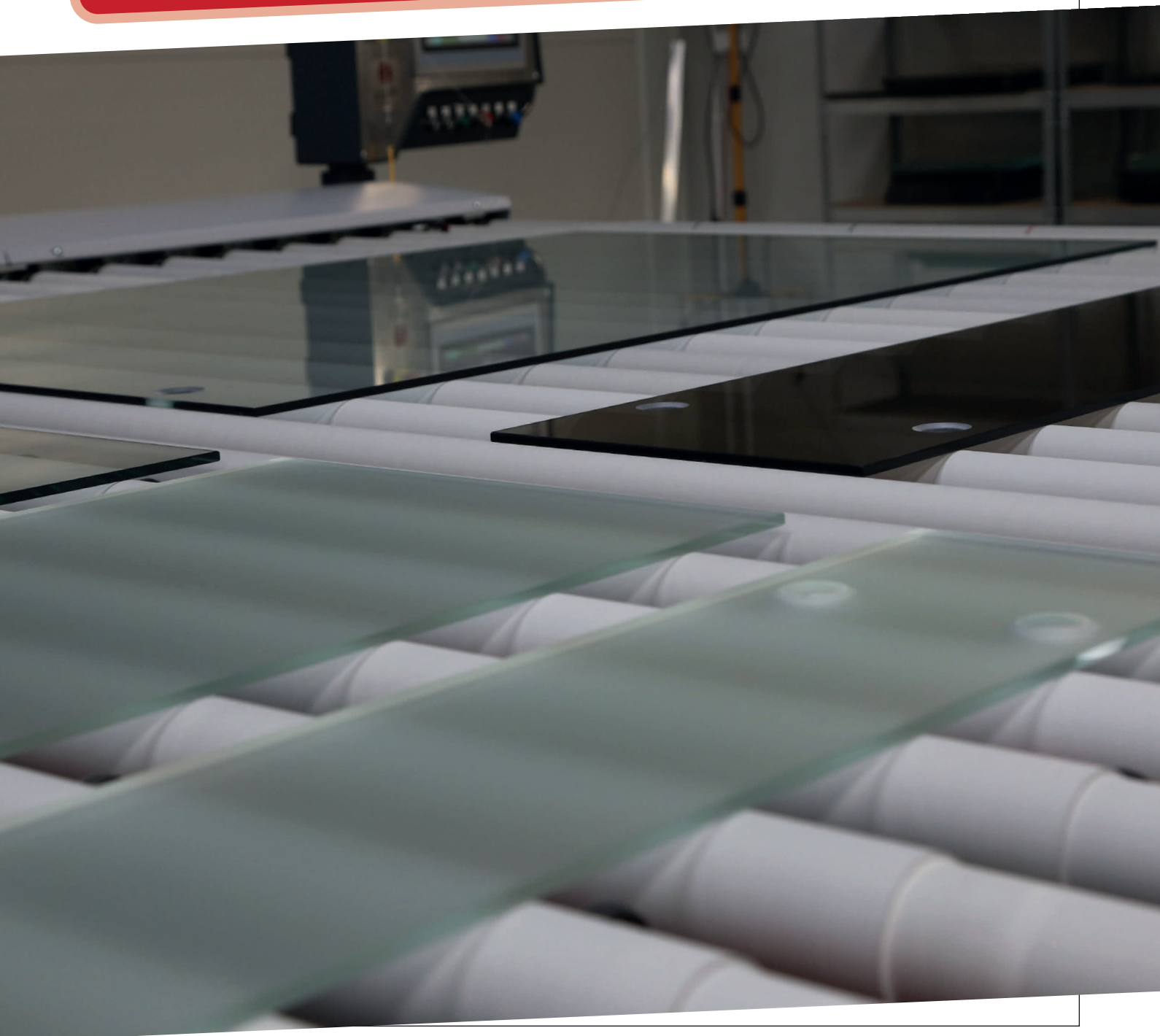
GTI: How would you describe the design sector as a whole?

GdC: As a sector it's complex. There are many skills to coordinate, and even more variables to consider. Some dedicate themselves to mechanical design, others to the electrical part, others to electronics or dedicated software. Still others can interact perfectly with existing structures. If we can manage all these in the best possible way then that's thanks to the training I mentioned earlier. Here we all speak the same language. And everyone shares just one goal: to improve the life of the glassmaker.

GTI: As we're aware, the glassware system has many elements of variability, which include great areas for improvement. Firstly, we know for instance that between 30 and 50 different glass types are created an-



Tempering furnaces summon to mind production, technical characteristics, reliability and costs. To know more about what lies behind the results, years of work and experience, specific skills and constant attention to customer needs, GTI recently spoke to MAPPI's freshly-appointed head of design Giulio dalla Costa, who's been with the company for 22 years.





into savings in energy, raw materials, time and labour costs. You hardly need me to tell you that these are truly significant considerations.

GTI: Looking back at your 22 years at Mappi, what most comes to mind?

GdC: It's a job that absorbs you 110 percent. It has to be your passion. Here I consider myself very lucky and indeed my greatest satisfaction is to see that what I do actually helps people from all over the world to live and work better.

nually - each of which requires specific treatment and hardening. Secondly, every day you touch, firsthand, what it means to manage an energy-intensive supply chain, as well as 'what' and 'how many' benefits can be gained from optimizing consumption. A third consideration: the glass factory has five to ten percent waste owing to breakages and defects in the quenching phase. How do you juggle all these challenges at Mappi?

GdC: As to the first, we respond with customer training. That's a pathway which, over five days, enables customers to personally understand how to write a 'recipe' - that is, how to programme their furnace to temper that glass type

in the right way. It's not enough -as many do- to simply hand the customer a package of ready-made recipes only to then abandon him to his own devices. Instead it's far better to train him and render him independent - all the while giving him maximum support. Even after ten or fifteen years a Mappi customer knows s/he can call on the company to find answers and solutions to potential needs, whatever they may be. To respond to your second point, Mappi takes a series of precautions in the choice of materials, mechanical design and software - all of which minimize energy consumption. For years, a saving of at least 30 percent has distinguished our furnaces from those of the com-

petition. Here we've calculated that, according to current energy prices spread over the furnace lifespan, this represents savings of more than half the purchase cost. Finally, and as regards your third consideration, we estimate that those who use a new generation Mappi furnace will have a waste percentage of 0.5 percent during the tempering phase - which tallies as ten times below the normality. Now, when speaking about constant tempering quality, this is what we're referring to: quality which translates

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