

A range of beds for every requirement

Beds are ST.LA.'s real forte: they make all kinds, standard or according to specific client requests, knowing they can count on an endless series of modular elements created in the last twenty years.

Words Giorgio Carpi



Paolo e Sergio Milianti
ST.LA. owners

Tecnometal's move to new premises is now complete, with a marked increase in the spaces covered, 2000 m² on top of the nearly 5000 m²

of external compounds. A sign of the vitality of the Milianti Group, of which Tecnometal is part together with Forma s.r.l. and ST.LA. And ST.LA. is definitely the brand best known to the public, the one which best identifies the activity of a company that has been working in the camping and recreational vehicle manufacturer supply sector for more than 40 years, putting in play its great experience in metalworking (remember that ST.LA. stands for Sheet Metal Forming in Italian).

"We're in a stage of great expansion," affirms Paolo Milianti, General Manager of ST.LA. "The three companies of our group have increased production and we're making important investments. Tecnometal's new premises are the clearest signal of the positive juncture that we're

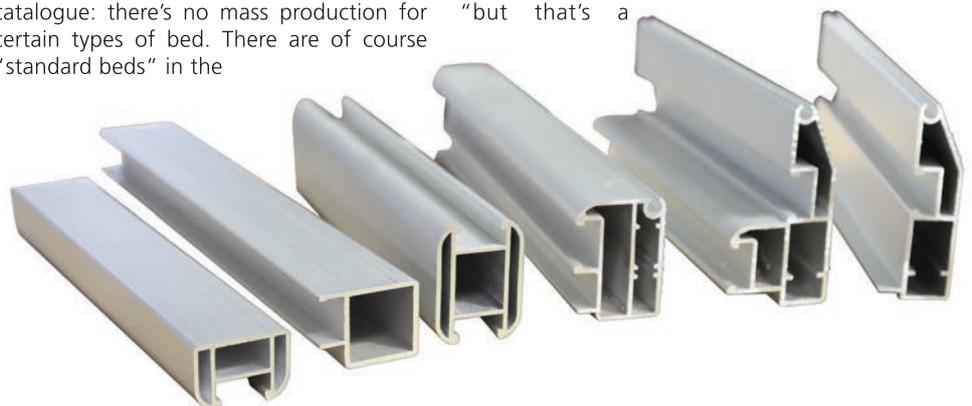
experiencing: as well as dealing directly with the production of ladders for motorhomes, the company has laser-cutting machinery that works non-stop to prepare the various components used by the three companies. But thanks to the new spaces, it's also about to launch a project that's been in the pipeline for years, the creation of a research and development department capable of satisfying our clients' wishes in particular projects."

The lion's share of ST.LA. production involves motorhome beds: they make all kinds, and the catalogue is vast. In reality, it's reductive to talk about an actual product catalogue: there's no mass production for certain types of bed. There are of course "standard beds" in the

catalogue, but in practice each type of bed is specially designed according to the specific requirements of the client, who has to fit it on motorhome models that are always different.

It starts from the simplest beds, kids' beds from 170 cm in length and 60 cm in width, or for adults with greater dimensions. The structure mustn't necessarily be made up of very thick sections: if the bed is supported, only a simple structure is required, permitting a weight saving.

"Many think that strength and long life for a bed are always and only guaranteed by heavy structures," Paolo Milianti explains, "but that's a



Modular beds

“As far as bed construction is concerned, the strength of ST.LA. lies not only in its capacity to welcome markets trends with innovative projects, but also in its extensive experience in this area, which results in a catalogue of elements that can be combined as desired.” Paolo Milianti, General Manager di ST.LA., explains: “Over the last twenty years we’ve created hundreds of dies, both for structural sections and coupling elements. This means that we can create, with limited time and costs, any kind of bed, drawing on what has already been achieved and interpreting it in new contexts.”



mistake. Today more than ever the question needs to be studied case by case: why use an oversized structure when you don't need to? As far as beds are concerned, you can act on two fronts. On one hand, it's enough to use lightweight structures when the bed already has adequate supports. On the other, you need to study specific solutions and innovative materials where self-supporting structures are required. It's also to study advanced solutions and optimise costs that we're about to inaugurate our Research and Development department.”

To create a new type of bed, ST.LA. takes the indications of the manufacturer (shape, dimensions, location in passenger compartment...), analyses them and transforms them into a 3D design: once approved by the client, a prototype is produced and finally, in an extremely short space of time, mass production can be launched. An extre-

mely diverse range of beds appear on recreational vehicles today, single or double: lengthwise, bunk, wall, twin, island, over-cab... Some are fixed type, while others adopt movement mechanisms, like the variable-height beds that permit the volume of the rear garage to be increased. The ST.LA. catalogue also contains beds concealed in a chest, which come out when required through a dedicated manual mechanism. A considerable proportion of ST.LA. production involves folding beds, with either a pantograph mechanism or straps. The pantograph versions are certainly heavier; they are less and less in demand, but they continue to have their advocates. The metal arms that enable raising and lowering are assisted by gas springs: the manufacturer submits a precise requirement concerning the weight that the bed must bear and ST.LA. uses an algorithm to find the perfect



calibration for the gas springs, which must be neither too heavy nor too light. The metal arms may permit vertical lowering, or lowering with rotation to move the bed towards the vehicle's windscreen, freeing up part of the dinette. Finally, the cable-based solution also makes an appearance among folding beds, recently perfected and an alternative to the arm-based system.

Company Profile

An Italian company with its head office in Tuscany, ST.LA. started its business in 1975, as metal stampers (it gets its name from the Italian name for this industry – STampaggio LAmiere) for accessories and spare parts for tents. Pegs and poles, therefore, but in a short time the company began its interest in caravans, collaborating with major Italian constructors such as Roller, Mobilvetta and Caravans International in the production of various components, in steel or in aluminium, starting from wall supports for tables and expanding their horizons to campers when the market moved in that direction. Today it is dedicated to the recreational vehi-

cle market and prevalent (supplying the nautical sector is minimal) and decisively varied, spanning from metal elements to those in plastic. Beds represent a considerable percentage of ST.LA.'s current production, together with table supports, with wall brackets or a central leg. The company collaborates with the main companies in the sector, with a client base that in Europe ranges from the Hymer Group to Rapido, from Trignano to Pilote. ST.LA. srl is one of the three companies that make up the Milianti Group, together with Technometal srl and Forma srl: an enterprise with an annual turnover of Euro 15 million, developed over various plants. ST.LA. can count

on 4,800m² of covered surface and 7,000m² of service area. The founder, Sergio Milianti, has gradually passed the baton onto his sons Paolo, general manager of ST.LA. and Francesco, product manager of the family-run firm.

