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Opening photo: Coating remains a crucial sector in the production of manufactured goods and it can improve its efficiency also thanks to flexible hanging systems.



ANALYSIS

A Look at the Near Future

Adriano Antonelli

Tecno Supply - Ibox Srl. Santa Maria in Fabriago (Ravenna) – Italy ✉ adriano.antonelli@tecnosupply.com

We are still in an uncertain situation, in which many factors can influence the stability of a market that has recovered only recently and, at least in the Euro area, not completely homogeneously. One of these is Brexit. Despite the upcoming deadlines, the English situation still appears complex and unclear: there seems to be no way out. The impression is that the post-referendum choices have not been strategically managed and that a smooth withdrawal plan was not

created. An agreement on the terms and conditions for the UK leaving the EU has never been reached. The Parliament is divided and the Brussels leaders seem to have lost patience. A “Hard Brexit” could heavily influence trade relations between the EU and UK countries. Italy is a net exporter, an important trading partner that could be heavily affected by the consequences of the Brexit deal. We could say, “Fog in Channel; continent cut off.” Other uncertainties concern the confused

relationship between China and the United States. The recent summit did not result in a clear trade agreement and the markets fear dramatic backward steps, despite some signs of easing of tensions. Customs duties raised by the US administration, on the other hand, have not brought benefits to the American economy, as the balance of trade reduced against forecasts. Tensions and uncertainties inevitably cause a reduction in trade and a slowdown in economy.

Italy's economy is suffering the slowdown of the European and global one and its situation is also uncertain. The few improvements of the last few years seem to have given way to a new recession and the current year's growth is expected to be stagnant or even negative.

Private and public investments are virtually at a standstill. A slight recovery in domestic consumption and export is keeping the weak Italian economy afloat, but it is not enough to boost growth. Such slowdown, in any case, is involving the whole of Europe, so much so that even the German economy is not growing as expected.

As for industrial production, in particular in the automotive sector, which has always driven the manufacturing industry, further signs of precariousness and uncertainty can be found, especially in Italy. For example, the perhaps premature abandonment of diesel vehicles will damage the Italian economy, which was a pioneer for this type of engine at the expense of the electric one, a technology for which it is clearly lagging behind the Asian giants. A plus point are the interest rates that remain low in the United States and negative in the European Union. The European Central Bank is ready to stimulate the economy, if necessary. However, the problem is that this huge liquidity unfortunately fails to reach the real economy.

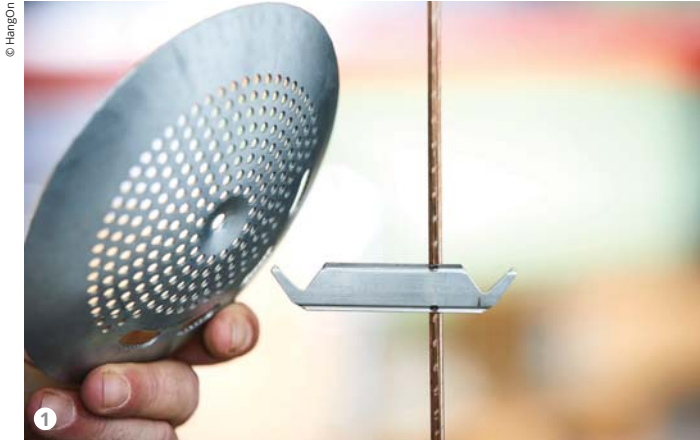


Figure 1: The hook-releasing heads must have reduced dimensions to prevent corrosion from starting and spreading over the entire coating.

the production of manufactured goods and it must be efficient in order not to burden with additional costs products with a significant added value. In this framework, the best hanging systems are flexible and non-dedicated frames, which avoid occupying a frame with only one component and enable to distribute their cost among different range products (ref. Opening photo). The hook-releasing heads must have reduced dimensions to prevent corrosion from starting and spreading over the entire coating (Fig. 1). The frames' limited weight is another important factor for reducing cleaning costs and for

easy handling (Fig. 2). The last crucial aspect is hanging density: while preventing the workpieces from shadowing each other, it is possible to hang as many components as possible per square metre and thus significantly reduce costs (Fig. 3). This can sometimes require an off-line pre-hanging operation.

Some products available in stock and ready for use from the HangOn range, a brand distributed by Ibox Srl division Tecno Supply, are functional to this goal.

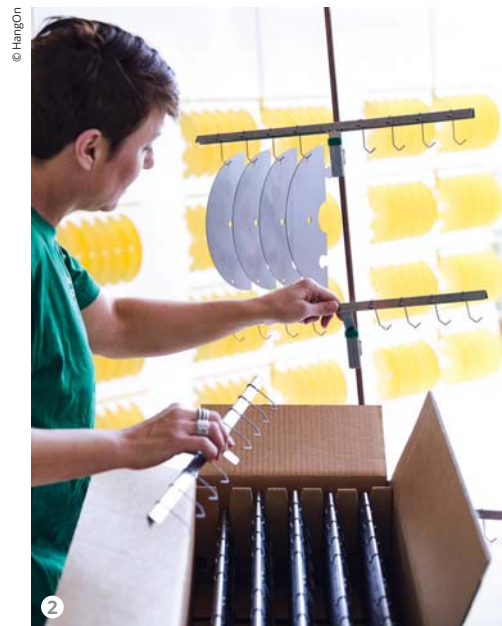


Figure 2: The frames' limited weight is another important factor for reducing cleaning costs and for easy handling.

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Figure 3: Hanging density is essential to significantly reduce costs.

The HQL bar is produced completely automatically in order to reduce its cost to that of a disposable item, if desired. There are two hooks with a diameter of 1 mm on the bar, so as to make it possible to hang the parts symmetrically (**Fig. 4**). For example, the HQL 800X33 bar features 46 hooks within a length of 800 mm. The bar can be integrated into the universal system HCF. In this way, the system becomes modular and it is possible to insert the bars based on the length of the product. The HQL G6 cap also guarantees a perfect electrostatic field.



Figure 4: The HQL bar allows inserting a double hook so that the workpieces can be hung symmetrically.

A more solid version of this bar is the HQC type: it houses hooks 1.5 mm in diameter, but only on one side. It is possible to insert the bar coupling into a central hook with a diameter of 10 mm. The R 58 bar-holder guarantees stability and the possibility of removing the bar easily also thanks to the BHG 20 cap.



Figure 5: Hanging small components.

The frame is economical and flexible, since it allows skipping levels. The hooks have a pitch of 50/75/100 mm.

Another flexible and economical system that can be used for small parts and profiles is the HQS frame, featuring metal slats for hanging individual parts and profiles (**Fig. 5**).

The hook with a diameter of 4 or 5 mm guarantees an overall frame resistance up to 100 kg. The HQS frame has been recently launched on the market along with various types of hooks, thanks to which each customer can create the most suitable configuration for their specific use. The shaft length can reach 2400 mm; the sheet thickness is 1.0 mm and its height is 18 mm. It is possible to choose different configurations: sheets on one side only (i.e. sheared), zigzag-shaped, or bent from 0 to 180°.

In addition to the HangOn standard range, manufactured in an automatic and standardised way, it is possible to build *ad hoc* frames, hooks, and systems based on customer needs. The construction of piece-carrying trolleys also makes it possible to manage industrial surface treatment processes more efficiently. ○