



## Tannery to perfection

*Dr Toni Polato, president of Italian tannery machinery manufacturer Cartigliano, explains how contract drying has helped its facility in Mexico become an important player in the automotive leather market.*

“There is no structure in the world equipped like Cartigliano de México,” claims Dr Toni Polato, president of Italian tannery machinery group Cartigliano, of the company’s Mexican subsidiary. The Vicenza-based company became the largest shareholder in this tannery in León in 2006. Since 2007, it has specialised in the production of automotive leather, with a capacity of 3,000 whole hides per day.

Cartigliano de México operates as a contractor for some of the major automotive leather manufacturers. These partnerships have helped it achieve all the necessary certifications related to leather drying that are required in the main automotive-producing regions. This has led Cartigliano’s methods to become the automotive industry standard for leather drying, according to Dr Polato. “Our know-how, experience and technology in Mexico are available for all those clients who need a qualified and certified drying specialist,” he adds.

“Cartigliano is dedicated to the study and research of all the operations that follow dyeing and precede the finishing of the leather,” he explains. Drying is a key stage in this process. The group’s newest vacuum dryer, known as CNS (standing for Complete New Story), works on the leather at very low temperatures, meaning it is dried quickly but via a very gentle process. This preserves the “natural qualities of the product”, according to the company. It then passes into a conditioner to bring the leather to the desired residual moisture level of around 10%.

### Knowledge shared

Cartigliano ensures its Mexico operation has access to the latest technologies and innovations being developed back in Italy. These can then be implemented within its automotive

*Cartigliano has been the largest shareholder in the León-based tannery since 2006. IMAGE: CARTIGLIANO*

leather production processes. “This structure represents the highest expression of technology and guarantees great yield, high quality and absolute consistency for all types of leather,” Dr Polato says.

He adds that the support of Cartigliano has helped Mexico to become “one of the most important leather technology centres in the world”. The personnel at its facility in León, from production managers to those responsible for quality control, are supported by a combination of the company’s ‘Made in Italy’ technology and its extensive experience in leather processing.

In return, Cartigliano de México offers the ideal testing ground for new ideas, giving its parent company the opportunity to try out new technologies before formally bringing them to market. Cartigliano has also learned a great deal from the automotive-specific work being done in León. “The Mexican experience and the accuracy required by the automotive industry have allowed us to understand the problems related to drying in the field and we are therefore able to continuously improve and update our systems,” Dr Polato says. This has allowed Cartigliano to anticipate the needs of its partners. “For us, the greatest satisfaction is solving a problem before the customer knows he has it,” he states.

Dr Polato succinctly sums up Cartigliano’s mantra, which runs through all its operations, regardless of where they are located: “We started in 1961, but yesterday and today our intent has always been to ennoble the leather, giving added value. This is what we offer, along with continuous systems, reliable production times and traceability of the product.”