

Environment policy in the Fantoni Group.



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1. The Fantoni Group

Leader in the production of MDF and chipboard panels and office furniture, it has based its activity on the vertical organisation of the production process, on total design, research and technology. An income of more than 400 million euros, an international market and more than 1500 employees among the eight companies that compose the Group are the result of more than 100 years of experience in woodworking activity. Novolegno, Lesonit, La-con, Flooring, Spik Iverika Patt and Xilopack together with the leading company Fantoni have constituted an independent production system that transforms the wood as raw material into finished product. Laminates, melamine papers, glue, pre-finished flooring, fruit boxes in wood fibre (MDF), panels (MDF and chipboard), sound-deadening panels, office furniture and self-production of electric energy build up a system oriented to the improvement of its performances.

In the development of its activities, the centre of the Fantoni philosophy has always been the balance between production and nature. This choice reflects both in the architecture of its plants designed by Gino Valle and in the offices and working places, from the attention to the management of the human resources to the selection of the production technologies at low environmental impact, from the research of sources of alternative and renewable energy to the study of natural processes for the production of the raw material, from the planning of ergonomic products to the use of end-of-life recyclable materials. A concrete path in the respect of the environment set in the industrial dynamics.



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2. Architecture



The Fantoni architecture reflects the wish to take part in the surrounding nature harmonically, and in the meanwhile the choice to create new modern and innovative working places, that favour the wellbeing among their users.

The planning of the site was given to Gino Valle, main architect of the XX century, whose work is quickly connected to the change of his motherland: Friuli. Between the 50's and the 70's this region experienced the passage from a rural economy to an industrial system. However, differently than in other regions, the North-east planned a sustainable development, in which the new infrastructures are inserted in the environment and respect its identity. In 1972 the architect started to plan the working structure, thought to receive 800 workers and 120 employees. The creation of the Fantoni "industrial campus" is the first step towards the continuous growth of the complex, always in dialogue and balance with the surrounding environment and with its previous realisations.

The former centre of Fantoni includes the plant planned by the architect Carlo Lucci (1963) and Alberto Dondolo (1964 – 65). Gino Valle added the new buildings for the offices and the canteen: a very big structure in two levels, in which the freedom of use of the internal spaces is connected to a total communication with the outside. The large glasses enable the eye to lose itself in the external landscape and the inner garden.

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The plant, which was reconstructed after the earthquake of the 1976, is characterised by a colour – the deep blue, which aims to get in harmony with the sky and the mountains surrounding the area.

The architectural development of the Fantoni plant was also determined by important changes in the business strategy, such as the production of panels. Besides the chipboard, in the 80's Fantoni started to produce another innovative product, the Medium Density Fiberboard, becoming one of the world-leaders in this sector.

Between 1985 and 1990 Gino Valle planned a building suitable for containing a very big vertical press: taking inspiration from the form of a cathedral, the architect transforms a "company need" into a new expression of "industrial landscape".

In the north side of the Fantoni plant, beside the wood storage in the open air, two "huts" with a metal covering contain the wooden chips used for the production of Medium Density Fibreboard. Their geometrical perfection idealizes the form of the mountains in the background, but it is also studied to achieve an optimal storage of the material. The chips are introduced inside the huts from their tops, go down naturally and arrange in a pyramidal mass.

In 1995 – 1996 the plant in Osoppo enriched with a new element: an auditorium for 120 people, thought as a connection between the Fantoni Know-how and the world of design, industry and research. The polychrome ceiling was made by the painter Carlo Ciussi.

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At the main entrance of the Campus Fantoni, in the reception, which was enlarged in 1995, there is a remarkable anemometer. The movement of this distinctive element, wanted by Gino Valle, reminds the presence and the action of nature. If it is true that the work of Gino Valle is inspired by a sense of greatness and largeness, which can be rarely seen in the industrial architecture, it is also true that observing the multitude of details that characterize the plant in Osoppo, the perception of a lived and vital space is completed, a space combined with the nature forces and the activity of men. Green plants and concrete, industrial spaces and familiar feeling join together in a harmonic match, that remembers how the “feng-shui” has been one of the main inspirations for the architect since the 50's.



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3. Management of the human resources.

The philosophy of the company has always been oriented to the wellness of the person in his whole being and this becomes evident in the innovative technical solutions and in the quality of the product. Not only. Great attention is given to the internal dynamics among the employees: the turnover in the company is very low and there are many family groups that work inside. Fantoni is a reality strictly connected to the surrounding community, and has with it a continuous exchange thanks to the activities organised by its Research Centre.

Since the major part of the production takes place in Osoppo (Udine), this guarantees that there are no cases of child exploitation and that the working hours respect the personal needs. Moreover, every year the firm gives the opportunity to a large number of students to make a working experience and puts its structures and its know-how to their disposal.





4. Sustainable development

4.1. In the choice of the raw materials

In line with the importance that the Group gives to the environment, its productive choices are more and more oriented to the use of wood resulted from other working processes, always guaranteeing the quality of the products obtained. The recovery of wood is part of a programme of valorisation of a non-traditional raw material, which permits the use of wood not derived from forests and to protect them.

Always in coherence with the criteria of sustainable development and of ecological compatibility of its products, in 2002 Fantoni Spa obtained the permission to commercialize its panel production with the trademark FSC. This certification attests that the wooden based products are ecologic, guaranteeing that the raw material comes from forests or plantations managed according to the Principles and Criteria of the Sustainable Forest Management of the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC), subject to a strict supervision and control, and certified by FSC organisms. The strict rules that refer not only to the observance of the law but also the economical, environmental and social benefits of the forest, the attention to the environmental impact and the strictness of its control and evaluation make the FSC one of the most influencing and authoritative

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institutions in the field of the sustainable management of the forests. In virtue of the observance of these dispositions, Fantoni Spa can guarantee the quality and the origin of the material at the bases of its production. In fact, the FSC certified wood is obtained only from authorized and controlled forests and from trees not genetically modified. Moreover, the respect for the environment and the biodiversity, the protection of the forests with a high conservation value and the rights of the local people are guaranteed too. Considering these priorities, the wood never derives from areas in which the human rights are clearly violated.



4.2. In the logistics

Fantoni, that moves about 15.000 railway wagons every year, has always been very interested in the respect of the environment, and favours the use of transports included in a programme of sustainable development. The continuous increasing of the rail transport contributes concretely to reduce the road traffic with a consequent reduction of substance emission into the air.



4.3. In the energy supply

4.3.1. Self-production of electric energy

Thanks to the height hydroelectric plants located in the region, the company can cover most of its energy needs.

4.3.2. Integrated combustion cycle

By means of some cogeneration plants, the Fantoni Group re-uses the powders derived from waste wood that by burning supply the heat used in the production cycles.

4.4. In the production process

The Fantoni Group invests big resources to develop productive technologies at low environmental impact and to contain the air emission or the release of substances into the water. Such investments concern all the company processes, from the chipboard and MDF panel to the furniture production. The activities are checked by specific phases of internal control.

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4.5. In the search of new renewable sources of raw material.

During a cycle of meetings organised at the Research Centre, Fantoni – together with the Regional Direction of the Forests in Friuli Venezia Giulia, the garden centre “Vivai Alasia” in Cavallermaggiore (CN), the Testing Institute for Poplar Planting (ISP) in Casale Monferrato – has presented to the agricultural division of the region a project aimed at the creation of a new source of renewable raw material for the production of panels. This research is aimed at developing rapid growth tree species which can guarantee a fast wood supply directly in this area. In the 15 hectares in its possession, Fantoni has created a plantation, whose development will be checked by the University Faculty of Agriculture in Udine, availing itself of the cooperation of the Laboratory Institute for the Poplar Planting and of the Research Institute for the Industrial Crops (ISCI) in Padua, for what concerns the herbaceous plants. Six hectares have been assigned to the herbaceous plants, in order to obtain a production sufficient to make



industrial tests to evaluate the possibility to use the obtained material and its quality; the result of this test will be the concrete starting point for the future research. This initiative has been accepted with favour by the regional and national agricultural operators. Therefore, the strategic targets are the increase in the wood availability, the improvement of the quality, the search of new materials compatible with the environment, the energy recovery, the improvement of the efficiency of the system for the reduction of carbon dioxide.

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5. In the ecologically sustainable products.

The concept of eco-sustainability is widely developed in the products of the Fantoni Board and Furniture Division. It is expressed in the continuous search of new materials characterized by values aimed at improving the environment and in the development of their application fields.

The panel production is characterized by some particular typologies:

5.1. Production of panels with low content of formaldehyde. The board division has developed a line of products – named E0 – with low formaldehyde content.



5.2. Production of panels for powder coating. The research and tests for the production of Metalwood, a MDF panel fit for the technologies which are traditionally used for the metal coating, have given positive results. The panel developed by Fantoni improves this coating technology which allows to minimize the dispersion of polluting solvents with environmental benefits both in the process and in the finished product.

5.3. Production of sound-deadening panels. Considering the global attention paid to the ergonomic aspect, Patt – company of the Fantoni Group – has developed panels and false ceiling able to solve the problem of acoustics, reducing the noise inside the spaces. The used materials, from the profiles to the decorative papers, are produced by the companies of the Group in conformity with the institutional environmental principles.



5.4. Furniture production. The respect of the environmental values is clearly expressed in the planning and production process of furniture. The aspects promoted to obtain an eco-sustainable product are several: design, ergonomics, safety, recyclability, and packaging.

5.4.1. Ergonomics. The respect of ergonomics is clear in the study of the forms, in the proper organisation of the work stations, in the choice of the colour match in order to favour the wellbeing in the office.

5.4.2. Design. Design has always been a distinctive element in the production of Fantoni. It is a style that exceeds the mode and remains modern and functional in the years.

5.4.3. Safety of the materials. The materials (particleboard and MDF panel) used in the production of furniture have a low formaldehyde emission. The value observes the requirements indicated by the existing law. Any

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toxic substance is used in the production of furniture. The particle panels are produced with recycled wood.

All the components are tested and checked both by the trusted suppliers managed in quality system and inside the firm by following a pre-defined sampling plan. The manufacturing process is checked according to the criteria established by the quality system of the company, in order to guarantee the respect of the features planned for the product. Also the production processes observe the requirements for the environmental quality, aimed at protecting the wellness of the worker.

5.4.4. Safety of the products. The dimensions of the Fantoni products observe the indications defined by the UNI and EN norms in force. The products are tested in Labs recognized at European level, reaching the highest levels related to the performance norms, and the working stations have all the certifications that certify the respect of the criteria indicated by the CEE regulation about the pc-screens.

5.4.5. Lifetime. The Fantoni collections have been and will be produced for many years. The long lifetime of the product guarantees the possibility to get replacement pieces and additions also in the future. The materials are chosen carefully in order to assure the maximum resistance. The results achieved in the tests on the worktop surfaces, on the melamine coating, on the painting of panels and of metal elements.

5.4.6. Recycle. The choice of the materials favours the use of those that can be recycled at the end of the product lifetime. The possibility to recycle the several collections varies from 80% to 95%. Moreover, long-life products enable the final customer to save energy (the energy required to produce a short-life product is the same used for the production of a long-life product).

5.4.7. Packaging. Fantoni gives special attention to the packaging of its products. The packaging process foresees the use of recyclable materials (paperboard and plastic elements) disposed in the appropriate waste dumps. In case of big supplies, the company manages also the packaging recovery. If possible, the goods are delivered on pallets, which can then be recovered in order to reduce the use of paperboard at the source.

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Fantoni Spa, a company leader in the production of chipboard panels and panels in fibrewood, office furniture, partition systems, glues and resins for impregnation, has always been a conscious supporter of a management sensible to the environment problems.

Such awareness is performed in projecting the plants and the production processes which prefer the re-use activities, recycle, reutilization of materials and energy, using renewable or similar sources and encouraging the reduction of specific energy consumptions with the most advanced technologies.

To guarantee the constant improvement of its own activities and products, Fantoni therefore engages itself in the following points:

1. **Complying with every law**, rule and provision applicable to its processes, products and remains. Where such requisites do not exist or are not adequate, internal standards will be followed.
2. **Encouraging the use of renewable sources**, as well as reducing the production of waste materials and the emission – with pipes or diffused – into the environment. Such targets will be reached with interventions of renovation of the processes, plants and management and organization of the production in view of a constant improvement of the environment performances in the production site.
3. **Producing, storing, transporting**, using and directing to the due place the waste materials coming from the production activity, in order to keep safe the environment and the health of the workers and of the public.
4. **Taking active part in the initiatives of the associations it belongs to** – both at national and international level – that aim at the protection of the environment and at a sustainable development, also by means of technical comparisons with companies of the same field for a more rapid and effective achievement of the objectives.
5. **Promoting the activities that aim at the evaluation of the environment impact** of its own products during their life cycle and contributing to the identification of the criteria for the environment certification of the products of the sector.
6. **Developing an environment management system at company level** according to the norm ISO 14001:2004. Such system has to identify regularly the relevant environment aspects, to plan the objects to be achieved for the constant improvement of the environment performances of the site and to schedule the audits.
7. **Keeping constantly updated the environment policy and the Environment Management System** also with reference to the development of the best technologies available and applicable.
8. **Encouraging the most suitable actions** in order to give to each person the responsibility of the safeguard of the environment in his/ her department and stimulating the awareness of the all the people present in the plant.
9. **Guaranteeing the availability** of both human and financial suitable resources for the achievement of the mentioned objectives.

fantoni

Fantoni Spa

I-33010 Osoppo / Udine

t +39 0432 9761

f +39 0432 976266

info@fantoni.it

www.fantoni.it