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Could you describe the way in which the aerospace industry impacted RTM Breda's activities?

RTM Breda is a testing laboratory that was founded in 1917 in Milan, with a long-standing tradition of testing and metallurgy. Since 2006 it is part of Forgital Group, which in the last 10 years has invested substantial capital in the aerospace sector.

The laboratory has two sites in northern Italy and employs more than 100 people. We have a customer base both within Italy and internationally. We are one of the largest laboratories in Italy

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thanks to the growth in the aerospace industry, which today represents 20% of our business. We forecast that it will increase to 40% by 2020. We have invested to obtain several approvals and we are looking outside of Italy for international growth.

Could you outline the key services you offer across your aviation segment?

We carry out testing on materials following approvals and we have an engineering consultancy department performing finite element analysis and engineering services. Technical competence is only a starting point. Third party accreditation and customer approvals are strategic for this kind of business. Holding more than 50 Nadcap approved tests is a solid base for us, but we have also achieved approvals from GE Aviation, Snecma (Safran Group), Pratt&Whitney and Rolls Royce. It has taken several years to reach this target, along with investments in machinery and staff training. Approvals are the way to reach customers; I would say it is the best form of marketing.

In the last two years, we managed a global Creep PTP (Proficiency Testing Program) for GE; results were used by them in order to approve the laboratories worldwide. It was a sort of gold medal for us.

What are the advantages of being a member of the Lombardy Aerospace Cluster?

The Lombardy Cluster has allowed RTM Breda to be known as a test facility. However I feel that there should be a next step forward: an Italian Cluster. There is too much of a regional mentality in Italy, slowing down possible growth. I am trying to develop customers outside Italy and I think that we all should work to give a stronger image of Italian aerospace companies.

What trends do you see in the international market?

Eastern Europe is investing a lot in the aerospace field, and we have good opportunities in countries such as Poland, the Czech Republic and Turkey, where some of the primes have production activities. The aerospace industry is very strong in both the UK and France but it is difficult to gain entrance. In the United States, you will see that there is a large amount of testing laboratories but at the same time, there is a huge demand for testing from the aerospace industry. There are good opportunities there.

How are you looking to grow in the next years?

We had a €11 million turnover in 2015 and the company is running well. We aim to achieve €15 million in three to four years, mostly through testing in the aerospace field but also with our materials and engineering services. We would like to grow organically, together with the outsourcing of services, the possibility of developing a laboratory within the customer's organization.

Do you have a final message for our readership?

RTM Breda has accepted the challenge of being a reference in materials science, from testing stages to engineering solutions. Aerospace applications are the market where we want to be. A European laboratory has to face and overcome the competition of strong US organizations. We are working and investing many resources to be the Italian player in the aerospace market. —