



Azimut-Benetti plans to launch around 25 new models over the next three years, including new ranges.

On the plant development side, the group plans to expand the amount of production space it has by around 30 per cent over the next three years. At the moment it has around 452,000m<sup>2</sup> of site space, 195,000m<sup>2</sup> of which is covered area. Within three years that will have increased to 611,000m<sup>2</sup>, of which 258,000m<sup>2</sup> will be covered.

In Viareggio it is in the process of doubling the amount of space it has there. Then it will continue to add infrastructure to its massive Benetti site in Livorno. In Fano it will expand its moulding operations, which produces all the lamination work for the composite Benettis, and the fitting-out operations there that handle the Legend and Tradition navettas are also being boosted. And the Azimut operations in Avigliana are being augmented by another site next to its main facility. It will allow several new halls to be added. Similarly major expansions are also in hand at the group's Atlantis operations in Sariano di Gropparello, near Piacenza.

It also recently announced that it had started building some smaller boats with a joint-venture partner in Turkey.

Overall the Azimut-Benetti group now employs around 2,500 people directly, but it also uses several thousand subcontractors too. Certainly its employee count is growing slower than its turnover, which indicates improved efficiencies. In 2006/07 it claims to have invested in around 70,000 hours of training.

In all Azimut-Benetti supports around 40 'models' across just three brands. The Azimut range now extends over no fewer than 19 models from 11.9m-35.4m (39ft-116ft) and includes two distinct ranges — the Azimut-branded flybridge models and the 13m-31.4m (43ft-103ft) Azimut S

open/hardtop express cruisers. Its Benetti line-up runs from 24m-70m (80ft-230ft) — which includes five composite semi-custom designs from 24m-45m (80ft-148ft) and several semi-custom technical platforms for steel/aluminium and all-aluminium designs in the 50m-70m (164ft-230ft) sector. And of course Atlantis sports nine models from 9.5m-16.8m (31ft-55ft).

On the model development front we can also expect to see considerable investment. In all it plans around 25 new-model launches over the next three years. Those will be a mix of replacement models and new additions in existing ranges and a few completely new ranges.

"At the moment, we address around 75 per cent of the world power market," says Paolo Vitelli. "That leaves 25 per cent that we're not addressing... So for the future we are widening our net... You can expect to see us introduce several new lines of product, so that we end up building products for more like 95 per cent of the market... We intend to introduce 'new classic', 'open performance' and 'sportsfishing' models."

And the group continues to invest heavily in what it terms its advanced research and development programmes. It has a team based in Varazze Marina offices that focus on those. Projects include everything from fuel-cell research to new means of stabilization.

Across the board Azimut-Benetti is reinforcing its dominance in the superyacht sector. With its big Azimuts and Benetti operations combined, it rates as the world's largest builder of yachts over 24.4m (80ft). Amazingly that order book includes no fewer than 3,600m (11,800ft) worth of yachts in excess of 24m (80ft),

which equates to around 100 units!

As for unit production in 2006/07, the group did a bit more than the previous year — something like 580 boats in all — roughly 350 Azimuts, 215 Atlantis and 16 or so Benettis, of which 10 were composite motoryachts and six were 'metal' superyachts. This year the unit tally should grow by the same 10-15 per cent also.

Overall, Azimut-Benetti is now present in about 70 different countries and 140 sales offices. Roughly 49 per cent of all export orders hail from within Europe, 21 per cent comes from North America, 16 per cent from Latin America, 10 per cent from the Far East/Australasia and four per cent from the Middle East.

## Bioinox

- Passarelles, gangways, cranes and ladders

Borgoricco-based Bioinox is an interesting young daughter company of a larger industrial engineering operation. This two-and-a-half-year-old concern manufactures telescopic passarelles and gangways, cranes and bathing ladders with a workforce approaching 40. And there are plans to add to that with tender lifts and doors.

Its boatbuilder clients in Italy include the likes of Pershing, Raffaelli, Dalla Pieta, Dalla Pasqua and Scallino. It already exports 40 per cent of its production. To date Greece, France, Turkey and the UK are all taking product regularly. And a shipment recently went to Argentina.

Recent new products include its Polaris passarelle. Mostly 316 stainless steel and available with polished or powder-coated enamel finishes, it is not only telescopic, but it will also rotate through up to 110 degrees. It has a maximum reach of 3.8m (12.6ft). Also new is its first crane. The Alpha has a reach of 3m (10ft) and a capacity of 500kg. When stowed it measures 2m (6.6ft) and weighs 300kg. It comes with a smart ABS moulded casing.

## Cranchi

- D120 million and 700 boats
- Bigger models next year

Cranchi's turnover for the year to the end of August 2007 was around D120 million on the sale of some 780 boats. Much the same numbers as the year before and incidentally much the same as the target for the current 2007/08 year. The levelling off now, having had a number of years of very strong growth, is more about Cranchi

