



INTERVIEW

THERE IS NO EASY SALE AROUND

MR. STEFANO ALBAROSA, CEO, AIC Trucks

1. You started your first truck business in Romania 23 years ago and in just ten years of activity you became the most important Iveco Trucks dealer in the world. Now you are applying the same success recipe to Ford Trucks. Where are you? What has changed throughout these years for the truck market in Romania?

We are glad to report that in 2019, our second full year of activity as Ford Trucks Dealer, Romania will become the largest export market for Ford Trucks. There are still a few established Ford Trucks dealers, in Turkey, that will sell larger volume than us. Having said this, we have considerable room for growth left and being the leading dealer of Ford Trucks within the following 24 months remain a realistic target.

In these years everything accelerated and become less predictable. Information on our trade offerings and benchmarking with our competitors is practically instant and this create the need to remain very re-active, flexible and fight for our market share every day. There is no easy deal around in our industry.

2. You are considered a master of crisis, having been able to work out a miracle recovery in the years that followed the financial crisis of 2008-2012. How should we

interpret the fact that globalization is slowing down and many businesses are taking precautionary measures?

Among the (many) lessons learned from the crisis is the fact that change, even toward the worse, create opportunities. In fact there is more room for margin growth in a fast changing and unstable business environment. Today's success relies more on the the ability to change and react than on the ability to optimize the business operational flows. Thus I see opportunities in the upcoming slowdown and I am putting in place strategies to take advantage of them.

3. In light of the signs of a slowing economy and the real possibility of an incoming economic crisis, what are, in your opinion, the perspectives for the truck distribution market and AIC Trucks?

Romania, as a Country, is today much more ready to tackle slowdown than it was in 2009. In particular it is much less reliant on cross border financing so I do not see the risk of a new liquidity squeeze that caused the economic contraction of 2009 (from + 8% GDP growth in 2008 to - 10% in 2009).

In a liquid market there is always room to move. Economic slow-downs normally reflects on pressure on margins and thus the need to minimize company cost. Here I see a clear opportunity for our offering as we are able to provide very competitive

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proposals with Ford Trucks, fully integrating the best trade terms (price, financing, trade in, buy back) with professional after sales services and parts.

4 ■ What are your goals for 2020 and what will be the main challenges for the next 3 to 5 years? Do you have any specific plans to address these challenges?

We are committed to continue to grow our market share. We are today market leader in the construction segment (> 27% MS) and second brand in the specialized vehicle segment (>26% MS). Having said this our market share remain very limited in the Tractor Heads segment of the market (+/- 2%). This is due to the fact that we have launched our International Transport tractor head, the FMAX, only this year. We expect to finish 2019 with an overall Market Share of 7-7.5%.

Our goal in 2020 is to consolidate a double digit Market Share thanks to a consistent growth in the tractor heads segment of the market whilst maintaining our leadership in Construction vehicles and remaining among the top 3 players in the specialized vehicle segment.

We will achieve this deal by deal and working hard to prove the added value of our offerings for our customers.

5 ■ What are the most innovative products that you are offering and what are your plans for the following years (in terms of

innovation)? Can you name one which you think will disrupt the logistics industry?

We will launch in 2020 a fully electric garbage collector vehicle. Electric power and assisted driving are the main disruptive elements in our industry and are both advancing really fast. Ford Trucks is investing considerable amounts of money on both and we are confident it will be on the leading edge of the industry offering on both.

6 ■ What is the most valuable lesson you, as head of a leading truck distribution company in Romania, have learned throughout 2019? Based on this, what will be the best advice you can give to people working with you?

There is no easy deal anymore. It's about having all the enthusiasm, tools, willingness to sacrifice and work as a team that will make the difference between gaining or losing market share. I am committed to making AIC Truck excel at this. We should not take anything for granted. Every day brings an opportunity to make a new sale; let's not loose it.

7 ■ What is the most important thing businesses should pay attention to the most in 2020? What are you doing to address it?

Changes. Remain very aware and promptly react to take advantage of it.