

Lifestyle

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Spotlight on Fiac



Compressor



MLL has been working with Fiac since 2005. Fiac develops, manufactures and markets MICHELIN air compressors and air tools. But who is Fiac?

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working as
contractors.

Fiac is a market leader in the manufacturing of air compressors and was formed in 1977. It is an Italian-based company with its headquarters located in Bologna and a manufacturing plant in China. Fiac employs 140 people at the Italian plant, with around 100 people working as contractors. At the Chinese factory, based in Guangdong, there are 200 employees.

Fiac specializes in semi-professional and professional air compressors designed for home users and for professional environments such as building sites, workshops and tyre stores. The Company manufactures air compressors as original equipment for many "Blue Chip" international brands, with 20% of the business in Italy and 80% through exporting to more than 110 countries around the world. In 2010, between the two factories in Italy and China, 800,000 air compressors were manufactured. Fiac distributes the MICHELIN air compressors and accessories to major DIY retailers such as Leroy Merlin, B&Q, Screw Fix, OBI and Rona. It also sells large scale air compressors (for use in tyre outlets) via its dealers around the world in order to guarantee an excellent after-sales-service.

Research and Innovation



Fiac compressor under test



At the heart of Fiac's strategy is research, expressed in technological creativity and an orientation towards the future. All research is entrusted to strongly-motivated specialist staff who have launched various forms of experimentation: studies on alternative materials, trials on innovative structural processes, ergonomic tests and design. Experimentation takes place on prototypes equipped with processes which are alternatives to conventional compressor operation, all backed up by market surveys intended to identify the trend in the development of alternative forms of energy. This is the start of the fully computerized design process which divides into two fundamental parts: the design of prototypes for research and testing, and the structural and operational design to define the tested prototypes.

Working with Michelin

FIAC has been working with MLL since 2005. Fiac Managing Director, Fabio Lucchi said: "It was difficult at the beginning because we had to create a new "product category" under the MICHELIN brand. The Brand is definitely a premium brand and during the last seven years we have been able to build the MICHELIN air compressors as a reference high quality product in the market.

This has been a very important marketing decision and was against the requests of our retailers who wanted us to reduce prices and specification. Thanks to the excellent relationship that we have built with the MLL team, it has been a good experience for FIAC and we are still growing in market share. There are also still plenty of business opportunities to capitalise on."

What is the Air Boutique Concept?



Air Boutique

The Air Boutique has been a very successful marketing idea that was launched in various countries with the DIY specialist, Leroy Merlin. The Air Boutique is essentially a large MICHELIN branded merchandising unit which is highly visible in-store – it can best be described as a shop in a shop! It includes a package of different MICHELIN air compressors and accessories to be used with the compressors, such as; spray pistols, impact wrenches, air dusters and air hoses. It was developed and put in place by the FIAC marketing department and was an exclusive proposition for the Leroy Merlin retail chain.

What are Fiac's short and longer-term goals?



Compressor from the RSX range



FIAC continues to introduce NEW products every year with some unique features. The most recent air compressors launched were the RSX range. This product range has been designed with the latest available, state of the art technology in terms of NOISE reduction, increased performance in terms of compressed air delivery and increased maintenance intervals. Each product within the range is a complete air station which is easy to use, suitable for continuous and constant operation over time. Each compressor within the range also includes an independent electric fan which is thermally controlled by an electronic dashboard to keep constant air and oil temperatures to ensure durability of the components even during heavy duty working conditions. These units have been designed for the automotive sector such as; tyre shops, mechanics garages, panel shops and small workshops.

Fabio Lucchi, Managing Director of Fiac, says

"We always try to be ahead of the competition in terms of product development and innovation but our long-term goal is to now start working more closely with Michelin's tyre distribution channel and network to increase our distribution opportunities."

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