

# At home in Europe



**DR. PAOLO BOSSO** HAS A REPUTATION IN SOUTH AND CENTRAL EUROPE AS AN EXPERT IN DOUGH PREPARATION. IN THE PAST SOME NORTHERN-EUROPEAN COMPANIES HAVE TAKEN ADVANTAGE OF HIS SERVICES AS WELL. IN FUTURE, DR. BOSSO WILL BE WORKING FOR DIOSNA, PRODUCER OF MIXERS FROM OSNABRÜCK, GERMANY. HE WILL BE IN CHARGE OF THE SALES AND SERVICE ACTIVITIES IN SOUTHERN-EUROPE

**+ bbi:** Dr. Bosso, you are a highly reputed expert in the field of dough preparation. It seems that now you have looked for and found a new field of activity. What should the bakery trade expect from you in the future?

**+ Dr. Bosso:** I have been working in this industry for almost 13 years and I still find it very interesting. There is much room for new inventions. With my change to Diosna, I see a chance to pursue a broader European approach and to bring my international experience into this company. But I also see an opportunity for my professional development.

**+ bbi:** Which customers and markets will you be taking care of in the future?

**+ Dr. Bosso:** My main focus will still be the Southern-European markets. In Europe, we are currently experiencing an increasing economic integration of markets. For all market-leading machine manufacturers, all EU countries are considered to be their home market. At the same time, bread is a part of the European culture with all its variations and I am glad to be able to accompany the development of the bakery culture in South and Central Europe and to contribute to its modernization. I will also assist in introducing this culture into an internationally operating company and represent it for example in product development.

**+ bbi:** What are the most important topics for you and what will you focus on?

**+ Dr. Bosso:** As I just said, bread is part of the European culture. In my opinion this is about respecting the culture and with that the experience, processes and expectations of the customer. Technology must assist in answering technological queries. The bakery technology field today is highly developed and absolutely capable of adjusting to regional and national peculiarities. The combination of both and the fine tuning will be one of my main topics.

**+ bbi:** Most countries in Southern Europe are still dominated by craft bakeries, although this tendency is on the decrease. How do you think the market will develop over the next 10 years?

**+ Dr. Bosso:** The adaptation of these countries to EU standards will increase the pressure on these markets. The development of the trade will play a decisive role here and also raise the question of whether the consumer will base his buying decision on mass products or not. Take Spain for example. At the end of the Franco era in 1973, "Barra" an Iberian type of baguette, was one of the ten most important regional types of bread on this peninsula. Today you can find this bread as a frozen product in all bake-off stations of the supermarket chains and it dominates over all other types of bread.

On the other hand, the markets in many Southern European countries are divided into simple bread (e.g. pane in Italian) and everything that is eaten with it (companatico). This has been the case since the beginning of the ancient world.

This area of conflict between traditional markets on the one side and the ones increasingly characterized by Northern European influences such as the Iberian market, determine the European market for baked goods today.

**+ bbi:** How about the sales via food retailers? What role will this sales channel play?

**+ Dr. Bosso:** This is different from one country to the next. But the tendency is clear. The food retail industry in Italy or Greece is not (yet) as concentrated as the one in France or Spain. The concentration of the trade and its increasing significance for the consumer supply will be advantageous to the baked goods industry.

**+ bbi:** What is your opinion on the development of out-of-home markets in the different countries? Will the snack re-

place the traditionally comprehensive lunch in Italy, Greece and Spain in the future?

**+ Dr. Bosso:** Please allow me as an Italian to say that I have experienced this progress with mixed feelings. Of course we see this adaptation of the mainly working population to "international" lifestyles. This can be seen not only in Milan, Athens, Istanbul and Madrid but also in the provinces where lunch breaks are becoming shorter and shorter. It is only in traditional companies that the time for "siesta" is set to two hours. The employees want to or have to get home earlier in the day. The average distance from home to the office is increasing, almost taking up American dimensions. In this "lunch-unfriendly" environment, international eating habits will prevail. In Italy currently, the Kebab in the North-African variation with pita bread is coming into vogue and even pizza is adapting to this trend and becoming a snack.

**+ bbi:** In the past years there have been a number of approaches for automatic dough preparation: mixer carousel, linear conveyor, Konti-mixer and finally RapidoJet. Which of these systems do you think will be the most successful one in the future?

**+ Dr. Bosso:** In my opinion, automation solutions are just like a made-to-measure suit. The wearer feels comfortable in any situation but not everybody has a perfect body. The success is based on the modulation of the processes to the customer's technology. Solutions such as the carousel or a Konti-mixer which have been on the market for several years will still be good amongst others for unproofed mono-products as well as for large performance lines. The latest innovative trend at bakers who are market leaders from the technological point of view is today to mix less but with more focus. This means differentiation between different mixing and resting phases in order to reduce or even eliminate the addition of baking improvers while still increasing flavor and fresh-keeping of the products. For these processes, specialized mixing systems such as the RapidoJet will be useful.

**+ bbi:** If these systems are not competing with each other but rather standing on their own individual merits next to each other, please allow the question which system would be the optimum one for the countries you will be servicing?

**+ Dr. Bosso:** The flexibility of a linear conveyor allows the implementation of traditional resting periods depending on product and recipe almost without restrictions. Mixing plants, possibly with bottom discharge, could be a technical alternative for special products requiring a long batch proofing time, among others because of the cost to performance ratio. ▶



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RapidoJet by Diosna

Industrial bakeries with high performance plants, which for example dominate the Spanish industrial market, are primarily interested in sturdy, continuously and permanently operating mixing plants.

**+ bbi:** In Southern Europe there is the tradition of working with sponge doughs. This tradition is diminishing with increasing industrialization of the bread production. Do you see the possibility of reversing this trend for example by applying technologies such as the RapidoJet?

**+ Dr. Bosso:** A well-known bread producer from Switzerland has the motto in all of its meeting rooms that only the consumer decides whether the company is geared to market requirements. Many producers would like to present themselves as premium producers simply for the prime reason of just saying good-bye to the ongoing price war. In this case optimized sponge dough processes are much more helpful than for example the use of liquid yeast or bread improvers. The RapidoJet

belongs to that trend and in my opinion this technology will have interesting possibilities.

**+ bbi:** Sponge dough is something that is not just produced but must also ripen. Do you think that complete dough preparation systems including sponge dough processes, dough ripening stations, etc. which are completely controlled by electronics may become standard one day?

**+ Dr. Bosso:** You are addressing a well-known economical problem: operator costs and operating efficiency versus line performance and market shares.

In my opinion, the near future will belong to hybrid solutions such as bottom discharge plus computer-controlled, sometimes even the manual movement of bowls. Fully integrated systems will be mainly used for more concentrated production. One example is a market-leading bread company in Western Switzerland where in 2006 six manually operated production plants were remodeled into a computer-controlled integrated distribution center.

**+ bbi:** One last question. In the past, part of your interest was also in mixers for aerated products or whipped masses. Such mixers do not play a large role at Diosna. Will this possibly change with your work, Dr. Bosso?

**+ Dr. Bosso:** Who knows? My first task will be to get thoroughly acquainted with my products to be able to take optimum care of our many customers. Nevertheless, specialized manufacturers of mixers have the tendency to develop horizontally. Many producers of dry baked goods already know the Wendel mixers by Diosna. It must not be the end of the line. Commercial and technical innovations are constantly asked for in our highly competitive environment. But at the end of the day, the consumer decides which company and which products will be fit for the market. This is also true for the manufacturers of machines and equipment.

**+ bbi:** Mr. Bosso, thank you for this interview.+++