

CSD 2021 press release

COMPANY PROFILE

A leading supplier of furniture for the caravanning and boat-building industries, Tecnoform was established in 1965 by Federico Kerkoc. During its 50-plus years in business it stands out for its design and style, its careful choice of materials and development of cutting-edge and state-of-the-art industrialisation and manufacturing processes. At the beginning, only 11 people worked for the company, but its founder soon realised that production of furniture for use onboard recreational vehicles would develop rapidly, moving from an artisan process – where style and functionality are rarely taken into account – to a more modern industrialised manufacturing process. At that time, furniture tended to be linear, with sharp edges and no attention paid to design; Mr Kerkoc, meanwhile, was fascinated by curved lines, more geared towards ergonomics, harmonious shapes and safety.

1960 - 1970

From working with manufacturers that were beginning to establish themselves in the 1960s in the caravan market (such as Digue, Kip, Caravelair, Cardigan and Trigano), during the five years from 1970 to 1975, the company started partnerships in the home and office furniture sector and in the construction of wooden prefabs. The synergies arising from such product diversification proved advantageous in the caravan industry, which thus benefited from a wider range of furnishing possibilities. In 1973, as a result of this innovation, the company decided to embark on computerisation, the first of its kind in Bologna province. It partnered with major firms in the lightweight prefab and construction industries, while still maintaining its focus on furniture for the caravanning industry. During those years, when the first motor homes started to be manufactured, a significant partnership started with FIAT to supply the furniture for the motor-caravans designed by the Turin-based company.

1980 - 1990

Founded in the 1980s, Tecnodesign, the company division responsible for research and design, which devised and inspired many of the trends that came to characterise the recreational vehicle market in terms of functionality and style. In 1983, when the Azzurra

team competed in the America's Cup, Tecnoform, partnering with the French company Caravelair, outfitted a caravan village to host the Italian yacht's crew and staff. In the second half of the 1980s, the company started to produce furniture for luxury yachts, and this ended up becoming the company's second core business. During those years, thanks to the purchase of high-tech equipment, it designed some products that proved to be groundbreaking in the industry: the yacht table and the Artikina (a registered trademark) door (an easy-to-assemble modular door). In 1988, the company took part for the first time in the Essen Trade Fair, an event now held in Düsseldorf, at which Tecnoform is among the headliners every year.

1990 - 2000

In the early 1990s, Tecnoform began to work with one of the largest companies in the industry, based in Germany, which required radical upgrading of manufacturing processes and substantial financial investment. There was plenty at stake but success was guaranteed, and the start of one of its most important partnerships coincided with the launch of what has since become one of its most widely imitated products: the P15 profile door, also a registered trademark. During those years, solid partnerships were built with some of the most prestigious brands in Italian yachting, including Azimut, Della Pasqua, Ferretti, Pershing, Mochi and Riva; once again Tecnoform made the most of the synergy with the caravanning industry for an effective exchange of skills which proved beneficial for both brands. In the second half of the 1990s, resulting from its collaboration with Smev, another successful product with registered trademark was launched: the flush kitchen unit, which combined aesthetic design with space-saving. In the yachting sector, thanks to a partnership with the Bertram boatyard, the brand entered the American market and, in 1997, Holzform, a new company division manufacturing semi-finished products for caravanning and yachting, was established in Pordenone, in the heart of the solid-wood processing district.

2000 - 2010

In the new millennium, Tecnoform achieved ISO 9001:2000 quality certification and joined the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC), an organisation that guarantees the provenance of wood from forests managed according to sustainable development principles. Moreover, a life-cycle assessment project was developed, which aims to reduce the environmental impact of manufacturing processes to ensure that products are recyclable. A collaborative

venture with Mercedes Benz led to the Black Office van, a futuristic vehicle outfitted as a mobile office. In the first years of the millennium, the company entered the Australian market as a major supplier of caravan furniture and started a partnership with the American manufacturer Fleetwood to make the first European-designed transatlantic motorhome. Tecnoform teamed up with BMW Work Design, a BMW Group company whose design offices are based in Los Angeles, and started a collaborative venture that led to supplying motorhome furniture to the giant US corporation Winnebago.

2010 - 2017

In 2015, Tecnoform celebrated 50 years in business with pride and satisfaction. Over the years, the company revolutionised construction models and related assembly, reducing the weight of components in order to maximise space and provide end users with the highest level of comfort, as well as fine-tuning design and developing innovative materials. It has continued to invest its creative effort in designing and manufacturing modular furniture using novel solutions, partly inspired by home furniture; this fusion has also led to using light as an integrated design element of the furniture, thinner sides and tops, as well as high-gloss decorative surfaces that are unusual in the industry. Strong growth of the campervan sector led the company to intensify its activities in this direction. Tangible evidence of the development of this sector is the design and manufacture of new complete items of furniture for the main platforms in the recreational vehicle industry, including Fiat Ducato, Mercedes Sprinter, Mercedes Vito, Ford Transit Custom, and Volkswagen T6.

2017 - 2019

Tecnoform was very proud for its name to be featured alongside that of Winnebago when it won the **RV Business Magazine Innovation Award**, announced on 29 November 2017, during the RVIA Show in Louisville. Thanks to Tecnoform, which was responsible for the furniture, Winnebago won a prestigious award for the design and manufacture of the interiors of the new Class A Horizon[®] motorhome. Through constant commitment and with considerable investment, Tecnoform has created a new conception of Recreational Vehicle furniture. It did this first in Europe and is now doing it in the rest of the world. The long-standing partnership, which began when Winnebago chose Tecnoform as a partner for interior furnishings, outfitting its Class A diesel motorhome, continues to grow stronger.

Every year, the main European trade magazines reward innovative solutions, products and concepts with the **European Innovation Award**. An international jury assesses caravan and camper manufacturers' products in a total of 13 categories and rewards them at the CMT trade show in Stuttgart. Hymer won over the jury with the **Duo Car** concept created by Tecnoform. After Horizon® and the 2017 RV Business Magazine international innovation award, once again Tecnoform showed its innovative expertise on an international level, in terms of quality and design. Another well-deserved success thanks to the commitment and passion of our excellent Tecnoform Team!

2019 - 2021

Since the 2019 edition of the Caravan Salon in Düsseldorf, Tecnoform has been offering increasingly innovative furnishing solutions, which are flexible and able to optimise the space inside vehicles, especially vans, a sector that Tecnoform expects to grow. It is therefore planning multifunctional furniture, capable of being transformed when needed, such as large tables and worktops that “disappear” into small drawers. Everything is becoming accessible, convenient, extendable, easy to use and easy to close up when no longer needed. Whether the vehicle is being used for travelling, eating or working, the aim is to provide customers with a unique experience, offering maximum comfort in small spaces. Tecnoform is acting as an ambassador for a new idea of habitability, a new way of living in a campervan. This is expressed in the new line for 2021 “Flexible Solutions – More than you think!” with its extendable and folding items of furniture, which are easy to transform and make the most of the space available in a vehicle. Tecnoform provides comfort and functionality marked by the timeless elegance that characterises the personalised shape and decoration of its products. Therefore, in early 2021, it began a partnership with Atim, a well-known Italian company that specialises in making ingenious sliding and folding mechanisms designed to create dynamic spaces for furniture.

Meanwhile, the 2020 pandemic confirmed Tecnoform's predictions and witnessed the exponential growth of the RV industry and especially the van sector. Despite global supply chain issues caused by the pandemic, Tecnoform's manufacturing flexibility enabled it to adapt quickly to the new situation, even helping it to reduce its vehicle manufacturing clients' time to market.

Unable to take part in the various global RV trade fairs in 2020, Tecnoform invented a new way to keep in touch with its clients – in October 2020, it launched the first Tecnoform Digital Event – five days of online meetings streamed worldwide to clients. Tecnoform set up a physical space “at home”, a large, completely new space for clients, set up with the

technology and cabling needed for digital events and meetings. During the event, it showcased its flexible solutions integrated into the various furniture items presented. The feedback on the event was so positive that the company was convinced that this was a format that it should repeat. The second edition will be held during the week from 18 to 22 October 2021.

Today, Tecnoform aims to consolidate its leadership in designing furniture for the recreational vehicle industry, from a stylistic and technological point of view as well as in terms of design innovation. It intends to keep on encouraging even deeper collaboration with its clients from the very first stages of a project, creating strong connections in terms of co-design and co-engineering. These activities will make it possible on the one hand to develop and optimise a product inside the vehicle, rationalising manufacturing costs in addition to finding the best way to manufacture the product from an aesthetic and functional point of view. This skill set will ensure maximum product personalisation for clients and the design and manufacture carried out in tandem by the client's and Tecnoform's design offices.

Thanks to this, Tecnoform is now a global partner of recreational vehicle manufacturers worldwide, especially in Europe, the USA and Australia.