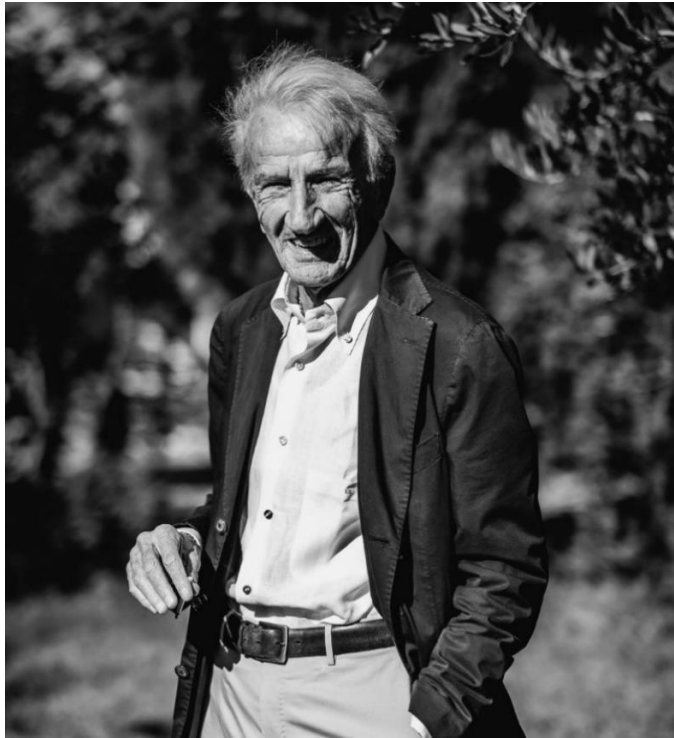


In memory of Ivano Zucchiatti, founder of Italian adhesive tape manufacturer Sicad



Ivano Zucchiatti, the visionary entrepreneur who founded Sicad S.p.A. in 1972, has passed away at the age of 84, leaving behind a legacy that transformed the adhesive tape industry. Under his leadership, Sicad grew from a modest Italian enterprise into a global powerhouse, renowned for its Eurocel® brand of adhesive tapes.

The genesis of Sicad and the Eurocel® brand

In 1972, Ivano Zucchiatti established Sicad S.p.A. with a clear vision: to produce high-quality adhesive tapes that could compete on the international stage. The Eurocel® brand quickly became synonymous with innovation and reliability, earning recognition worldwide.

Pioneering innovations and expansion

By 1977, Sicad introduced its first coater, marking a significant advancement in coating technology. This innovation set the stage for the company's future growth and its reputation as a pioneer in the European adhesive tape market. Over the ensuing decades, Mr. Zucchiatti's strategic vision led to the establishment of subsidiaries in France, Croatia, South Africa and Brazil, transforming Sicad into a global entity. The company's product line expanded to include a diverse range of adhesive tapes tailored for various industries, including packaging, masking, double-sided applications and surface protection.

Commitment to quality and innovation

Mr. Zucchiatti instilled a culture of quality and continuous improvement within Sicad. The company's dedication to excellence was recognised early on when it became one of the first in its sector to achieve ISO 9002 certification. This commitment ensured that Sicad's products consistently met the highest standards, fostering trust and loyalty among clients worldwide.



Family and legacy

Mr. Zucchiatti is survived by his wife, Rosetta, and their children, Marco, Valentina and Silvia. Both Marco and Valentina have followed in their father's footsteps, dedicating their professional lives to Sicad. Marco Zucchiatti serves as the Managing Director of Sicad S.p.A., bringing his expertise to the company's strategic direction. Valentina Zucchiatti holds the position of Purchasing Manager, overseeing procurement operations and contributing to the company's operational excellence. Their continued involvement ensures that Mr. Zucchiatti's vision and values remain integral to Sicad's ongoing success.

A legacy of excellence

Today, Sicad Group stands as a testament to Mr. Zucchiatti's entrepreneurial spirit and unwavering commitment to quality. With over 700 employees and a presence in multiple countries, the company continues to lead in the adhesive tape sector, upholding the values and standards set forth by its founder. Mr. Zucchiatti's passing marks the end of an era, but his legacy endures in the company he built and the industry he helped shape. His vision, leadership and dedication have left an indelible mark, ensuring that Sicad remains synonymous with innovation and excellence in the adhesive tape industry.

Leadership and industry recognition

Beyond his role at Sicad, Mr. Zucchiatti was an influential figure in the broader adhesive tape industry. He served as Chairman at Sicad France, reflecting his hands-on approach and dedication to the company's international operations.

In 2008, during Afera's 51st Annual Conference in Florence, Mr. Zucchiatti was featured in the European Adhesive Tape Association's 50th-anniversary book, *Tape: An Excursion Through the World of Adhesive Tapes*. This recognition highlighted his significant contributions and the esteem in which he was held by industry peers. In honour of his passing, we are republishing this interview below:



Captains of Industry Speak: Part I of a Special 50th Anniversary Series

Ivano Zucchiatti, founder, owner and managing director of Sicad

How did you enter into the tape business? A few years out of secondary school, I started buying and selling adhesive tapes. I saw in the budding tape industry opportunity and an interesting and innovative product. In 1965-66, tape was a relatively new product. In 1972, I set up my own tape company, Sicad. At that time, 70-80% of the business was buying and selling tape, and 20-30% was the production of small roles of tape, because in the beginning I only had one small machine for this purpose.

One of the relatively unique aspects of Sicad is that it is a family-owned company, which was built from the ground up. I am glad that two out of three of my children are working within the company. My son, Marco, was named Managing Director in early 2007 and my daughter works in Sales. While I founded my business with my own ingenuity—my two hands—my children have been educated as managers of today's business generation.



How have you seen the tape business change since the late 1960s? There have been a lot of changes, more in the technology of slitting than that of coating. Coating performance has changed a lot.

Do you see the changes as positive? Yes, but today's market is extremely competitive. It is hard to predict the future. My idea is that a company in this industry must reinvest much of its profit into technology, equipment, sales, personnel and R&D in order to remain successful. It

is better to make two products than 100. Now we are making 100 products. Our organisation is growing and therefore we have to adjust our mentality. Different salespeople are needed. If you remain solely a manufacturer of packaging tape, I don't see how you'll survive up against the Chinese producers. We have a range of products which I hope will ensure our future—I hope not just for myself but for my children.

What do you think has been the secret of your success? Sicad's success? I have always put the needs of the company ahead of my own needs for personal prosperity or success. Of course, I established the business in order to make a living, but over time it became apparent that that was not my sole purpose in running Sicad. For every €100 profit I have made, I have reinvested €80 for the good of the company.

Basically, 95% of my success is due to hard work and motivation. Today Sicad is prosperous, but nobody could imagine 30 years ago what it was like to start a business with nothing, from nothing, just a dream. I have ingrained in me a great respect for money, because times were hard in Italy and especially for my

family following the War. Today, however, nothing can beat the satisfaction I get from seeing a role of tape bearing our logo in a shop in Sao Paolo, Brazil. I appreciate the success of something I have built much more than a €1.000-note in my pocket.

Are you concerned with raw materials availability in your business? *We make materials using three different technologies: hot melt, solvent and water-based. Last year, the cost of synthetic rubber was higher, but we didn't lose in output because we produced more solvent and water-based based adhesives. The problem is the competition in technology, and the real owners of the market are the producers of raw materials, large petroleum companies.*

In which direction do you see the tape market moving in the future? Where will it be in 10-20 years? *Business has become more globalised and competitive, and it will continue to do so in the future. In the past, we mainly concerned ourselves with domestic competition in the tape market. The competition in the European tape market in the future will come from Asia: China, Taiwan, Malaysia, Indonesia, etc.*

Our subsidiaries are experiencing the same in Brazil and South Africa. The Chinese can sell their products 20-30% under our prices. This could spell a difficult future for the European self-adhesive tape industry, which will require investment and imagination. For the packaging tape segment in particular, how will European manufacturers be able to compete with 35-hour work weeks compared to the Asian 60-hour work weeks?



At the moment, I think European tape products are appreciated for their high quality and enjoy significant brand recognition over many Asian products. But this could change in the future, as it did for the Japanese following the War. They were very motivated to work hard—were hungry for prosperity—and eventually achieved this by increasing both their quantity and quality of output. I think the same may prove true for the rest of Asia over time. In this generation, the Asian work ethic is much stronger than that of the European.

Do you think the Asian market holds opportunities for the European tape industry? *I don't know. It certainly holds opportunities for the makers of high fashion and luxury goods. But I don't think the same is true for commodity products. Europe cannot stop producing goods and base its future solely on the offering of services. It must produce something in order to offer those services.*

In the case of China, I think the capacity created by local manufacturers will be able to satisfy the increasing local demand for commodities such as packaging tapes. The opportunities for the European tape industry lie in the demand for more specialised adhesive products, which require specialised technology which may be unique to (or at least at a higher level of quality with) European producers. For the European tape commodities market, I don't see a bright future.

Do you think the Asia Pacific region will continue with almost half of global production volume of adhesives? Yes, the packaging tape segment is the core commodity segment of the industry and will remain so. The Chinese don't sell a lot in Europe at present. Taiwan sells a lot of semi-finished/non-converted products to Eastern Europe—this is not our market. I think future production figures depend very much on the real owners of the market, Exxon and other producers of SIS. For the rest, tape is a very competitive commodity. In general, it doesn't matter how it is manufactured, just as long as it can close a cardboard box at the lowest price. So I think in the future Asia will continue to produce at the same or higher rate.

And the Americas and Europe will continue together with around a quarter of production volume? Presently, there is a lot of competition in the tape market among European producers. Within Europe, tape makers could produce 2½ times the capacity needed to satisfy the present demand. We have two problems: 1) Internal European competition, and 2) China with its decreasing prices. Chinese traders—not just producers—are also becoming extremely competitive as well. I think the future of the European industry lies in clever market strategizing, including consolidation of companies. I do hope that the European tape industry will consolidate. If it doesn't, it has no future. It will be impossible for smaller European producers to survive if they don't turn a profit over even a short span of years.

Do you think solvent technology primarily based on natural rubber (and/or acrylics in the case of speciality tapes) will continue to be the most-used coating technology in Europe? This depends on the availability of raw materials, which determines the cost of production of tapes. I think the type of technology and quality of tape produced, especially in the case of packaging tape, is not as important as the cost of production which determines the end price.

How important is the exchange rate of the U.S. dollar versus other currencies to your business and the European tape industry in general? This can be a big problem, but the exchange rate reflects the reality of the market. For me, the rate of the dollar and the cost of materials is the same thing. You have to compete not only in materials and products, but in exchange rates. There was a time when the dollar was very strong, so we had better opportunities to export in greater quantities. But we didn't increase our profits, because we were up against a lot of European competition for the same market. You must compete with the reality of the market. Now that the euro is stronger, we must compete with a weak dollar. Of course, it may all change tomorrow.



What do you think are the implications of REACH and any other environmental legislation for the tape industry? I think the levels of violating toxins in materials should be even lower, but the policy should be applied properly and evenly across the global industry. The problem is that the European Chemicals Policy makes business more expensive for European producers who must compete with foreign producers who are not subject to the same laws.

Foreign importers into Europe should at least be subject to the same chemicals registration policy as domestic producers. If a consumer saves money but loses his health, there is no point. I think this is also

an issue for producers in Asia: Poor working conditions and dangerous pollutants characterise many of the factories there, just as it they did the European industry about a century ago. This will have to change—hopefully sooner rather than later. I am very much in favour of strict environmental legislation in general.

In your view, what will be the European tape industry's greatest challenge in the future? *The challenge is to keep companies in Asia from producing all of Europe's commodities. Many European companies are relocating their facilities to produce tape commodities in the East and retaining production requiring high technology concentrated in the West. I think some of the production of commodities should be kept in Europe. What will we have left to develop and produce in Europe otherwise?*

I think Europe will not be able to survive solely on the services it offers and its production of specialty products. With an economy still based on the production of commodities, Italy cannot compete on a global level with its technological R&D. But in terms of the tape industry, we still hold the key technology to the industry in Europe—the designs, the trends in tape manufacturing are set here. Our greatest challenge lies in maintaining this.

What are your views on the possible formation of a 'World Tape Council'? *I think we should first improve the role and activities of our current European organisation before creating a larger, more complex global organisation.*

For more information, visit www.eurocel.it.