

LA VITA È AVANTI

The refrigeration and air conditioning industry has experienced a long period with very few changes. For 5 years, however, it has been facing the effects of international climate agreements and more stringent regulations on the use of refrigerants with greater environmental impact. The F-gas regulation has forced the industry to move towards refrigerants with lower GWP in Europe, making the refrigerant fluid a decisive factor in the decision-making process underlying the purchase of a refrigeration system, whose service life is about 15/20 years. Against this background, the uncertainty about the future of synthetic refrigerants, in terms of prices and availability on the market, has brought about a strong interest in natural refrigerants, which have significantly increased their share for the overall new installations at this time of boosting demand. The fact that natural refrigerants have a zero or negligible GWP and have reached levels of energy efficiency equal - or even higher in some applications - to those of HFCs has played a major role in favour of a widespread use of CO₂, hydrocarbons and ammonia. Moreover, it should not be overlooked that HFCs may no longer be available in Europe by 2030 at the latest, and that the production of new equipment with HFCs as primary refrigerants could cease as early as in 2025, as a result of what we mentioned above. The selection of refrigerant fluids for the future will be based on energy efficiency and low environmental impact.

AC&R (Air Conditioning & Refrigeration) has responded to these changes by investing in innovation as well as engaging in the study of technological solutions capable of operating with low GWP refrigerants and low energy consumption. Energy efficiency has become an important competitive factor, it being a significant item in the operating costs of refrigeration and air conditioning systems. Faced with these goals, manufacturers have begun, jointly with component makers, to develop solutions that could operate their machines, thus ensuring high design standards. Against this backdrop, the supply of components for refrigeration and air conditioning systems is tending towards polarisation: on the one hand, manufacturers who offer standardised products at low sales prices, as a result of industrial processes that leverage relocations and economies of scale; on the other hand, manufacturers who offer products with a high level of innovation and quality of materials, as a result of flexible manufacturing processes that enable a high level of product customisation.

Refrigeria Industriale has positioned itself in the range of high quality and high performance products, investing huge resources in the renewal of industrial processes and product innovation. Our company has designed customised products and integrated solutions for the main European manufacturers of air conditioning and refrigeration systems.

By the end of 2020, our company will market new valves with a longer product service life than equivalent valves currently available on the market, thanks to the use of advanced materials and processes that reduce friction and wear of internal components. In addition, we are completing a new range of valves suitable for systems running on ammonia, as we expect ammonia to be increasingly used in cascade systems with CO₂ and in low temperature applications.

The technological headways by manufacturers of refrigeration systems and refrigerant gases are spurring component manufacturers' innovation processes. Along these lines, Refrigeria Industriale has defined an investment plan for the next 3 years by monitoring the critical factors of the industry and looking ahead to the future.