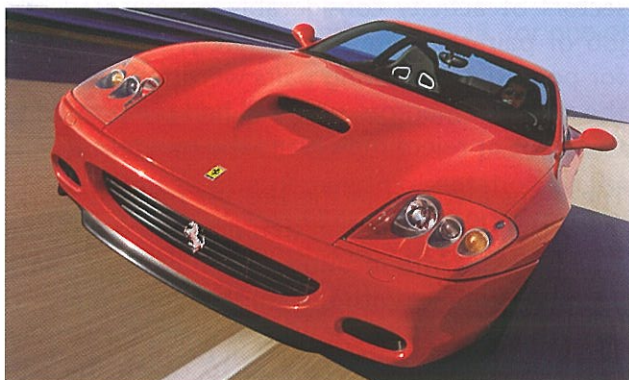


Meeting with Andrea Castronovo (CEMS 1990) General Manager of Ferrari Maserati Western Europe

On a sunny June afternoon, a stunning red Ferrari parked in rue Royale welcomed a group of Parisian CEMS alumni to the Espace Paul Ricard. They were there to attend a conference by Andrea Castronovo, an event that had been jointly organized by Alub France (Bocconi Alumni in France) and EM Lyon. Andrea Castronovo, head of Ferrari Maserati for Western Europe, had been invited to talk about the strategic marketing issues that make luxury products different from their mainstream counterparts.



The encounter turned out to be much more than a mere conference, and we were told several of the inner secrets of the company. A particularly amusing anecdote illustrated the difficulties of being married to a Ferrari manager, for whom getting a call on Christmas eve and spending the following hours trying to locate a specific model for a suddenly craving customer is all part of the job...!

We got the impression that, more than the fabulous cars they make, it is also secrecy and a sentiment of belonging to a select group of individuals that Ferrari sell to their customers. The brand is so exclusive that in some cases, years can go by, between the time a buyer pays his purchase, and the moment he actually gets his hands on his new car. But once they are in the inner-circle, the owners of Ferraris can enjoy their regular meetings in clubs and social gatherings, more often than not nearby a race track where they can finally get to use their cars to their full potential!

Andrea, humble and friendly in spite of the scale of his professional responsibilities, easily managed to captivate the audience's attention and to make himself clearly understood. Be it the man or the cars he represents, more than a dozen young girls were hanging around him (and his wife) after his speech!

Andrea graduated from CEMS during the program's first year, and he has since been very active within the alumni community, helping to shape the CEMS alumni identity. He took the reins of his division of Ferrari at the beginning of January 2005. We wish him good luck in this new challenge, and hope that he will never stop smiling...

Claudia Belli

