

Press release

ITALIAN MURDACA KEEPS AHEAD WITH QUALITY COACH EXPERIENCE

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A family owned business for generations, Autoservizi Murdaca located in southern Italy, offers top quality coach services for tour operators. With Volvo Financial Services, they got the support needed to maintain their high standard.



Francesco and Antonio Murdaca in front of a new Volvo 9700 at Volvo Buses headquarter in Italy. From left: Vera Puliero (VFS), Francesco Murdaca, Antonio Murdaca, Alessandro Verdecchia (Volvo Buses), Cristina Brignoli and Stefano Testa (VFS).

When Francesco Murdaca returned to Italy in 1957, after a decade spent working in the transportation industry in Argentina, he drew on his experience to open a transport activity in his hometown of Portigliola in the province of Reggio Calabria in southern Italy.

Francesco gradually began concentrating on tourism, providing coaches and qualified drivers to agencies in the growing travel industry. From the outset, he emphasized quality in his business dealings to distinguish himself from competitors and attract a higher-end clientele. When Francesco died in an accident 20 years later, the eldest of his three sons, Antonio, took over the family business.

“I was too young to drive a bus, so I had to wait a year to do that,” recalls Antonio, the general manager of Autoservizi Murdaca. “I really took full control of the company in 1979 when I turned 21.”

Focusing on quality

Antonio maintained his father’s strategy of high quality and small size. In 1984 the company bought its first Volvo bus. In 1988 his two younger brothers joined the business and Murdaca began working with Globus, a well-known international tour operator with high-quality standards. Two years later the company had its first experience with Volvo financing.

In 2005 Murdaca acquired a bus transportation company in Rome and in 2006 the brothers split the business, with Antonio and his son Francesco re-establishing the business in Reggio Calabria as Autoservizi Murdaca.

Today Autoservizi Murdaca has six buses, of which the two newest are Volvos bought in 2018.

“We had been in the market for new equipment because Globus requires its bus suppliers to change buses every six years”, says Antonio.

Plant visit led to order

In the spring of 2017, Antonio was invited to visit Volvo’s plant in Poland, an invitation that Volvo extends to clients and prospects twice a year.

“Industry colleagues had been praising Volvo coaches, so I decided to see for myself. I was favorably impressed, and we put down an order for a 9700 and a top-of-the-line 9900 a few months later,” says Antonio.

Efficient financing through VFS

The purchase was financed through Volvo Financial Services (VFS).

“VFS understands our needs better than banks do; they are specialized in our business and are very professional. This means they follow us very well,” Antonio explains.

Also, the process with VFS was considered simpler and faster than with a regular bank.

“They were able to process our application quickly. Banks are more bureaucratic; they require more paperwork and documents than VFS. Although we are a small company, we felt comfortable and at home with Volvo,” says Antonio.

Benefits with new models

The 9700 is a two-axle 12-metre bus with a capacity of 51 passengers plus driver plus guide and is used for local and regional routes. The 9900 is a three-axle, 13-metre vehicle with a 49-passenger capacity plus driver plus guide. It is used for long-distance itineraries all over Europe.

“One feature unique to Volvo coaches is the inclined floor, appreciated by Globus customers since theatre-style seating means better visibility. In addition, the seats of the 9900 are well padded, spacious, and very comfortable. Plus, the 9900 lasts a season (i.e., a year) longer than most of its competitors, which more than makes up for its higher initial cost,” Antonio reports with satisfaction.

When Murdaca purchases a new coach, it is assigned to one driver and becomes a second home to that person for the full six years. So, it must be comfortable for the driver as well as the passengers. Each vehicle clocks about 60,000 km a year, not a great distance for a bus built to demanding technical standards, but Murdaca’s focus is on overall profitability, not on distance *per se*.

Quality over quantity

Globus, which represents 65-70 percent of Murdaca’s annual revenues, exemplifies quality over quantity, as do the company’s other revenue streams: Murdaca runs its own trips to Lourdes and Fatima, for example, and works with a Canadian agency for regional and national tours.

Looking to the future, the company plans to enlarge its fleet as tourism expands. Meanwhile, Antonio and his son Francesco have been eyeing the newest version of the 9900, with its sloping window line and a “Z” profile, 12 centimeters of additional height, larger baggage area, and plusher seating.

“We believe that a business is rewarded when it offers quality over quantity,” says Antonio. “More business doesn’t necessarily mean you are better off financially. Less can be more in the long run.”

About Autoserviza Murcada

Founded: 1957 by Francesco Murdaca

Management: Antonio Murdaca, general manager

Location: Portigliola, Reggio Calabria, Italy

Product lines: Transportation for tourism with different coach brands

Why Autoservizi Murdaca chose Volvo and Volvo Financial Services

- *Specificity.* Because vehicle financing is not a major business of a bank, its loan officers don't understand the specific needs of a company like Murdaca. "VFS understands our needs better than banks do; they are specialized in our business and are very professional. This means they follow us very well," explains Antonio Murdaca, general manager.
- *Size.* A smaller company is not treated like a second-class account. "We are a small company, but we felt comfortable and at home with Volvo."
- *Speed.* Because of Volvo's knowledge and experience, as well as technology, "They were able to process our application quickly."
- *Streamlining.* VFS offers advantages compared to bank financing. "Banks are more bureaucratic; they require more paperwork and documents than VFS."
- *Simplicity.* Clients like Murdaca normally have one contact person at Volvo, who handles all their questions about product, and financing.
- *Servicing.* Volvo offers a Europe-wide network of assistance, a great advantage for a coach fleet moving across the continent.

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