

**INSIDE PARMALAT**  
MANY KNEW, NO ONE  
TALKED. WHY? (P.16)

**DAVOS A CHANGE IN  
ATTITUDE TOWARD  
AMERICA?** (P.20)

**THE EURO MORE  
THAN THE DOLLAR  
SCARES EUROPE** (P.57)

The McGraw-Hill Companies

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## HIDDEN CHAMPIONS

### Antonio Zamperla

Altavilla Vicentina, Italy

Manufacturer of amusement-park rides

**Secret of Success:** Ability to customize rides to adapt to the culture of each customer



2003 SALES  
**\$69.5 MILLION**

ITALY'S ZAMPERLA FAMILY entered the amusement business more than a century ago as circus impresarios. Today, Antonio Zamperla, along with its affiliates, is one of the world's top five producers of amusement-park rides, with annual sales of some \$70 million, and control over 17% of a \$400 million global market.

Founded in 1960 in Altavilla Vicentina, Zamperla made its name by turning

rough rides like bumper cars into gentler versions geared for kids. Today, says CEO and President Alberto Zamperla, 52, son of founder Antonio, the Italian company is the largest provider of rides to Walt Disney Co. worldwide. Zamperla machines can also be ridden at Six Flags,

Universal Parks & Resorts, and Warner Brothers parks in the U.S. and more than a dozen other countries.

The company offers more than 50 original attractions ranging from the \$95,000 "Mini Avio," which sends young aviators up in tiny planes, to a \$3.8 million "lie-

down" roller coaster called Volare. Annual sales have increased over 40% in the past five years, despite the global tourism slump and the slowdown in Asia, a key market. "At a difficult moment for the market, we said let's get even more aggressive," Alberto Zamperla explains. "It's a moment for acquiring share."

Zamperla's chief executive takes particular pride in his knack for adapting to different cultures.

Human figures are a no-no in the Muslim world and the Asian market has only gradually developed a taste for thrill rides. But cultural adaptation can bring big rewards. In Saudi Arabia, where amusement parks have separate sections for men and women, "instead of one machine, [we] sell two."

—By Francis X. Rocca in Rome

**VERY AMUSING**  
The Disko roller coaster

## Companies that are conquering the world

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CZECH REPUBLIC	420 220	
FRANCE	33 1 1 20	
GERMANY	49 30	
HUNGARY	36 1	
IRELAND	353 1	
ITALY	39 444	
JAPAN	81 3	
KOREA	82 2	
NETHERLANDS	31 20	
NEW ZEALAND	64 9	
NORWAY	47 22	
POLAND	48 22	
RUSSIA	7 495	
SPAIN	34 91	
SWEDEN	46 8	
SWITZERLAND	41 41	
TAIWAN	886 2	
UNITED KINGDOM	44 20	
UNITED STATES	1 212	
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