VAM

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EIGENAARSCHAP

Inspecties

NVDO
Nederlandse Vereniging voor Doelmatig Onderhoud

Afvalstromen
Shutdown
(grootschalige) Onderzoeksfaciliteiten

AWARD WINNER



European Maintenance Manager Award 2026

A recognition for maintenance leadership that shapes the future

“Maintenance is no longer about fixing equipment. It is about creating value for the entire business”. That message resonated throughout EuroMaintenance 2026 in Luleå, Sweden, where the European Federation of National Maintenance Societies (EFNMS) presented the European Maintenance Manager Award (EMMA) to Alessandro Spadini of the Barilla Group. The award honours individuals whose leadership has fundamentally strengthened maintenance within their organisations while contributing to the development of the profession itself.

Presented every two years during the EuroMaintenance Congress, the EMMA recognises far more than technical expertise. Candidates are nominated by their national maintenance societies and evaluated by an international jury on their professional achievements, leadership, innovation and contribution to the maintenance community. Previous winners have demonstrated that successful maintenance managers not only improve reliability and availability but also influence corporate strategy, sustainability and organisational culture.

Who is the winner? Alessandro Spadini embodies that evolution. Nominated by the Italian maintenance society A.I.MAN., he has dedicated more than thirty years to the Barilla Group, one of the world’s best-known foodmanufacturers. After graduating in Aeronautical Engineering from the Polytechnic University of Milan, he joined the company in a technical role before progressing through maintenance, engineering and manufacturing leadership positions. Today he serves as Global End-to-End Process Redesign Leader, where he helps shape business processes across the company’s international production network.

Who is his employer? That network is impressive in every respect. Barilla operates 26 manufacturing facilities worldwide with a replacement asset value exceeding €7 billion. More than 700 maintenance professionals are responsible for keeping those assets safe, reliable and productive, supported by annual maintenance investments of around €250 million. Managing maintenance at this scale requires much more than technical knowledge. It demands the ability to connect people, processes, digital technologies and business objectives into one coherent strategy.

Throughout his career, Spadini has consistently promoted maintenance as a strategic business function rather than a support activity.

Under his leadership, reliability, continuous improvement, digitalisation and cross-functional collaboration have become inseparable. Maintenance decisions are linked directly to production performance, product quality, sustainability and long-term competitiveness. It is precisely this integrated vision that impressed the EMMA jury.

People Drive Maintenance Excellence. Accepting the award, Spadini emphasised that the recognition belongs not only to him, but to the many colleagues with whom he has worked over the years. He described maintenance as a profession undergoing profound transformation. Digital technologies, advanced analytics and artificial intelligence are changing the way organisations manage physical assets, but technology alone is never the answer. Success still depends on competent people who understand equipment, collaborate across disciplines and are willing to challenge established ways of working.

He also addressed one of the greatest challenges facing European industry: attracting the next generation of maintenance professionals. Spadin; “tomorrow’s engineers will need a unique combination of technical expertise, analytical thinking and digital capabilities. Maintenance is becoming increasingly attractive because it sits at the intersection of engineering, sustainability, innovation and operational excellence”.

The scale of Barilla’s operations is substantial. The choice of Alessandro Spadini as European Maintenance Manager 2026 therefore reflects more than an impressive personal career. It illustrates how the role of the maintenance manager has evolved across Europe. Today’s maintenance leaders are expected to be business partners, transformation managers and ambassadors for sustainable industrial performance. Reliability remains essential, but its real value lies in enabling organisations to operate safely, efficiently and competitively in an increasingly complex world.

For the European maintenance community, the EMMA is therefore not simply an award. It is a statement about where the profession is heading. Alessandro Spadini’s career demonstrates that the future of maintenance belongs to leaders who combine engineering excellence with strategic vision, who inspire people as much as they optimise assets, and who understand that maintenance is no longer a cost to be controlled but a capability that creates lasting value.

About the European Maintenance Manager Award (EMMA)

The European Maintenance Manager Award (EMMA) is jointly organised by the European Federation of National Maintenance Societies (EFNMS) and the Salvetti Foundation and is presented every two years during the EuroMaintenance Congress. Established in 1988, the award recognises outstanding maintenance leaders who have made a lasting contribution to their organisations and to the maintenance profession across Europe. Candidates are nominated by their national maintenance societies and evaluated by an international jury representing both organisations, recognising excellence in leadership, innovation and professional achievement.

‘Maintenance leadership turns technical excellence into lasting business value’



Alessandro Spadini

“I am deeply honoured to receive this award, for which I would first like to thank EFNMS and the Salvetti Foundation. This award represents an important recognition not only of my professional journey, but also of the people who work for the industrial maintenance and of the increasingly strategic role that maintenance plays in modern industry. Today, managing, optimising and innovating plants means contributing directly to companies’ competitiveness and sustainability. It is essential to convey to younger generations the value of this profession: a field in which technical skills and dedication, together with professional curiosity, are combined with data analysis and digital technologies. It is precisely from the convergence of these elements that the factories of the future are born”.