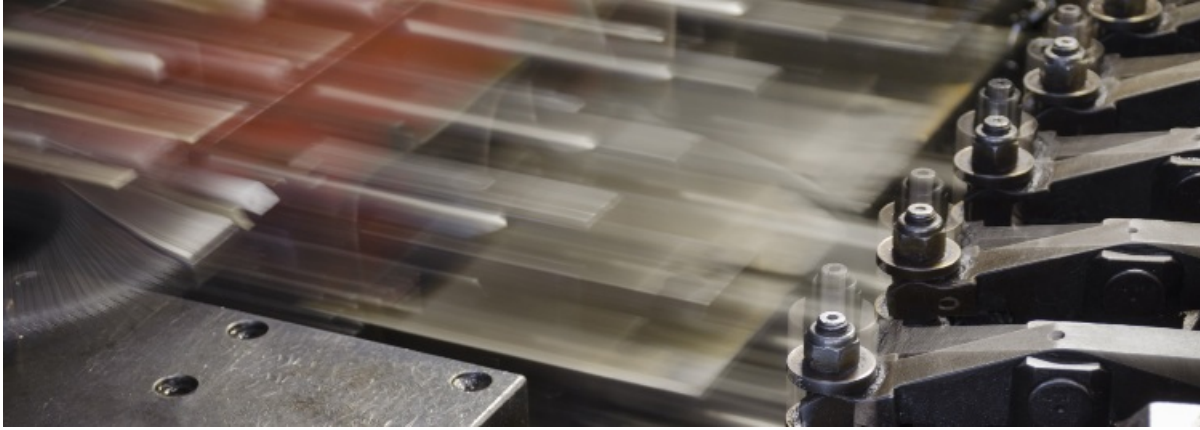


## Leonix: expertise and flexibility in an increasingly complex market

**The company focuses on production innovation, international development and IATF certification to support growth in 2026**



16 marzo 2026

2025 was a challenging year for much of European manufacturing, amid geopolitical uncertainties, fluctuations in raw material prices and new challenges. In this context, the stainless steel and special alloy fasteners sector also had to cope with less predictable demand and rising industrial costs.

For **Leonix Fasteners**, a company specialized in the cold forming of high-quality stainless steel and special alloy fasteners, 2025 closed with an increase in production volumes. However, this occurred in a market environment characterized by greater caution in purchasing and smaller average production batches.

Looking ahead, the company is preparing to face a 2026 full of challenges but also opportunities. We discussed this with **Laura Cattinori**, CEO of Leonix, who told siderweb how the company is continuing its growth path through technological and organizational investments, focusing on three main directions: the launch of the process for IATF certification, strengthening its presence in international markets – particularly in the United States – and further production efficiency improvements for forming increasingly demanding materials.

### **2025 was a complex year for much of European manufacturing. How did it close for Leonix Fasteners in terms of volumes and margins?**

Leonix's production is strongly focused on special parts manufactured "to drawing" in stainless steel (primarily austenitic grades, but also duplex and high-nickel alloys). In fact, we produce 90% stainless steel parts and 10% carbon steel parts. Raw material prices, after a slight increase in alloy surcharges in the first months of 2025, steadily declined. Despite a 5% increase in production volumes, revenue rose by 2.5%, with a slight reduction in operating margins mainly due to higher industrial costs related to smaller average production batches and increased tooling costs.

### **Looking at the market as a whole, which dynamics had the greatest impact on the stainless steel and special alloy fasteners sector?**

The uncertainty following the announcement of tariffs by the United States contributed to reducing market visibility, and industries scaled back scheduled orders. At the same time – and perhaps not by coincidence – the decline in raw material prices amplified the effect by encouraging companies to postpone purchasing decisions.

### **What factors made the difference for your company compared with the general context?**

Leonix's strengths are flexibility and high expertise, two distinctive traits that have enabled us to maintain a competitive offer in terms of price and service. Customers appreciated the possibility of having relatively short delivery times, in line with the limited visibility of the current economic environment.

With the aim of meeting customers' needs, Leonix has also completed new sample productions of components combining the advantages of cold forming and machining: the parts are first formed and then finished on a CNC lathe, one of the latest



technological investments introduced by the management.

### **What are your expectations for 2026?**

The year will certainly be challenging from many perspectives. Raw material sourcing, due to the CBAM and the upcoming reduction of import quotas, remains one of the most delicate aspects. The outbreak of the new conflict in the Middle East is already impacting energy prices and consequently transport, tooling and overall industrial costs. Concerns about a general slowdown in the economy are undeniable. At the same time, Leonix serves a highly diversified customer base, ranging from the chemical sector to oil & gas, logistics, automotive, construction and mechanical engineering. For this reason, we have set a target of a further 5% increase in production volumes.

### **Which markets are you focusing on most to support development in the coming months?**

We are leveraging the network derived from our Italian-American shareholders to pursue targeted penetration of the US market. It may seem somewhat counterintuitive, but the global geopolitical situation is leading to alternative strategic sourcing choices and, when it comes to stainless steel, Leonix is competitive for custom-designed fasteners.

### **Is the new regulatory framework affecting your procurement costs or the availability of raw materials? Have you had to revise purchasing strategies or supplier relationships to face this scenario?**

Both the CBAM and the reduction of import quotas starting in July have required a revision of purchasing strategies, with a penalty both in terms of price and in the possibility of selecting higher-performance grades for cold forming. During the transitional period we studied the operational mechanisms of CBAM and obtained the status of authorized CBAM declarant. We hope that the European Commission will soon clarify the uncertainties regarding the list of certification bodies, in order to allow a more reliable evaluation of emission differentials among steel mills.

This aspect still represents a significant risk factor, as emission values reported by steel mills cannot currently be certified and importers therefore risk being subject to the default value, which is higher and in some cases prohibitive.

The value of compensatory certificates will also only be known in February 2027, creating further uncertainty that weighs on purchasing decisions.

### **The automotive sector is also undergoing major regulatory and technological changes. Are you already adapting products or processes to meet the new requirements of the automotive supply chain?**

At the moment, automotive accounts for about 10% of our turnover, a share we aim to increase. For this reason, in 2026 we started the process for IATF certification, so that we can work directly with automotive customers without intermediaries.

### **From an ESG perspective, what innovations have you implemented in recent years in terms of production processes, materials or strategic choices?**

Since 2022 we have worked to reduce the environmental impact of our production by installing photovoltaic panels, which now provide 40% of our electricity needs, and in 2024 we obtained ISO 14001 certification.

Internally, we have introduced awareness initiatives to encourage responsible use of resources and recycling, and we have already decided to purchase a new machine for the filtration and recovery of mineral oils used in the production process.

### **What is the main challenge – but also the biggest opportunity – you see today for the future of the company and the sector?**

The main challenge is maintaining the competitiveness of European production, given the increase in costs resulting from both the implementation of CBAM and the reduction of import quotas for raw materials.

This concerns not only the competitiveness of Leonix's offer compared with extra-EU fastener imports, but more broadly the ability of our European customers to maintain their market shares and therefore the demand for fasteners.

At the same time, an opportunity may arise from the changing sourcing strategies of industry, increasingly oriented toward ensuring a shorter and more stable supply chain compared with Asian competition.

S. F.