

All under control

Nordpanel is an innovative platform designed to be fitted as original equipment to control various on-board devices even remotely with major advantages for users, rental fleet owners and vehicle manufacturers alike.

Words Andrea Cattaneo



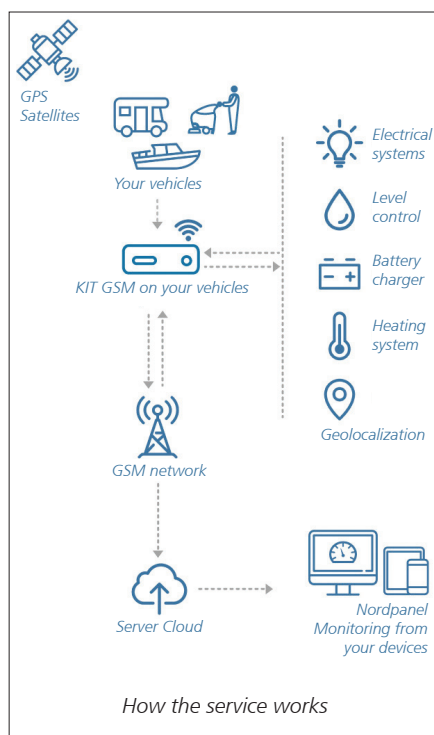
Operating in the RV sector since the 1980s, Nordelettronica has tied highly collaborative partnerships with many vehicle manufacturers to supply miscellaneous electronic equipment, spanning from battery chargers for camper vans and low-voltage distribution module to electrical wiring and control panels. It is precisely on control panels that the Italian company has focused the most resources over the past years. The Nordpanel platform, which expresses the very best in Nordelettronica expertise, will be introduced at the Caravan Salon in Düsseldorf.

Capitalising on decades of experience and continuously updated manufacturing systems, Nordelettronica today is exploiting LIN BUS technology, which is crossing over from the automotive world to that of RVs. This is allowing Nordelettronica to modernise products, simplify vehicle systems and foster more advanced camper van device management. Even more interesting, a remote communication system which interfaces with on-board systems has also been created. The Nordpanel platform has real practical advantages for direct users and for sector operators alike. The system can be used to manage the vehicle locally using a smartphone or a tablet by exploiting a Wi-Fi connection and even remotely via a GSM phone link. More specifically, the camper van can be geolocated and it is possible to interact with it to receive information from on-board devices and even impart remote controls.

Nordelettronica is a CIVD member and coordinates activities with other component manufacturers through the CIBUS Consortium.

The Nordpanel platform can interconnect with Truma and Alde heating systems and with the A/C function of the Truma and will soon be able to interface with Thetford refrigerators and Dometic A/C units. The Nordelettronica catalogue already features systems capable of interconnecting with electronic devices made by other manufacturers but today the company is making an important leap forward by offering a common platform which can be implemented across different vehicles of different manufacturers to end users and sector operators. The advantages for camper van rental customers and fleet managers are clear. They can control various devices remotely, prevent faults and manage issues without needing to be on-site. For instance, they can control the temperature of the Truma systems with different timing over the day to ensure effective heating and smart consumption. The system currently works in 28 countries in Europe at no additional cost but is designed to work worldwide with no problems. The goal for the near future is to implement the platform, connecting it with the computerised system of the base vehicle chassis to manage information on the state of mechanics and transferring information and alarms which are usually not displayed directly to the control panel on the dashboard of the camper van. It is always worth remembering that camper van use differs from that of cars or delivery vans and having key information always under control can be extremely useful.

The goal of Nordelettronica is to provide as much information as possible using the control panel as a single instrument. The benefits can be enjoyed by end users, by rental fleet managers and by vehicle manufacturers, the latter for instance to implement



more and better customer care services, be closer to their customers and retain them. For instance, information on the manufacturer's service network may be displayed together with other key information.

Users can save their credentials using an app and directly access the control panel in four languages. Fleet managers on the other hand can select which vehicle in their fleet to control from a computer. Camper vans can be geolocated and various control panel functions can be operated remotely, such as lights, connection to the external electrical mains, turning the heating system on and

off and much more.

The Nordpanel system is the result of nearly three years of hard work. The first models were installed on Adria RVs and the panel is now being offered to other manufacturers. The system is new but has great potential for future development. Nordelettronica is the first in the camper van sector to offer such a high-tech system as original equipment. In the future, the company is planning on offering it after market, addressing vehicles made during the last five years. In this way, technology that was beyond the wildest imagination when the vehicle was originally built can now be implemented.



Company Profile

Nordelettronica established in Italy in 1978 has always been focused on electronic equipment for the RV sector from battery chargers for camper vans and low-voltage distribution module to electrical wiring and control panels. Outside of the caravanning sector, Nordelettronica makes wound components for industrial electronics, like switching and power transformers. Production has also focused on the industrial cleaning sector (floor cleaning machines). Study, design and manufacturing activities are performed in-house. This means considerable flexibility and solutions targeted to the customers' real needs. Having been re-organised in 2011 with the introduction of new partners, Nordelettronica has gained new momentum and the turnover has gone from 5.5 to 10.5 million Euro over the past seven years. Direct exports represent 30% of sales, with 70% of products sold to Italian companies, which in turn export at least half of their production.

