

Chronicle

21. September 1904

- Foundation of a wholesale for paper products and stationery by bookseller Carl Herlitz in Berlin

1929

- Meanwhile the company ranks among the medium-sized-businesses in stationery wholesale of Berlin and employs 8-10 coworkers.
- The consequences of the First World War and the beginning of the world economic crisis substantially affect the wholesale. Only extensive economics and personal restrictions prevent the bankruptcy.

1935

- For health reasons Carl Herlitz retires from the business. His son Günter Herlitz takes over the leadership of the wholesale-business. The number of employees declines to six. Günter Herlitz rents an office and storage in the first Floor of Kommandantenstraße 68.
- In the 1930s adapted sales strategies lead to an increased sales volume and turnover reaches 100.000 Reichsmark again. At this time rubber bands -up until then only sold by kilo- are now available in small cellophane-bags of 20 pieces.
- Novelties are handcarved ink-pots and adhesive-tapes of the brands „Mellkleber“ and „Cellux“ by Kall & Co. As one of the first companies Herlitz offers these novelties to its customers.
- In the 1930's the purchase of a dark-blue OPEL P4 makes it possible to reach clientele beyond city boundaries.

12. February 1939

- Carl Herlitz dies shortly before the beginning of the Second World War.

1. September 1939

- Beginning of the Second World War
- Günter Herlitz and his brother Walter are conscripted to military service
- Mother Bertha Herlitz continues the business

1943

- The commercial building is destroyed

1945

- Resumption of the business activity with opportunity offers due to the fact that there has been no paper and stationery until to 1948.

1948

- Berlin-Blockade: As one of approx. 20 Berlin wholesale companies Herlitz imports goods by air. With the help of friends Günter Herlitz flies to England and charts air freight space. He gets the permission to bring products desired by Berlin population.

1949

- After the ending of Berlin-Blockade Herlitz expands to one of the most famous and important wholesale companies in Germany. In the area around Berlin almost 900 of altogether 2.000 stationery retailers are provided with the full range of stationery products by Herlitz.

1951

- A small bookbinder company manufactures the first books and pads for Herlitz. Employees are mainly from East-Berlin.

1960

- Constitution of an own sales-organisation throughout Germany. Now the penetration of the West German market is successful because of the launch of illustrated diaries and drawing-pads. The products are designed with pictures showing animals or sports.
- On 8-10 machines 150 t of paper are manufactured monthly. The company has 150 employees, 90 of it in the manufacturing and 60 in the wholesale business. The enterprise achieves a turnover of 4,2 millions DM.

1966

- Opening of a distribution center in the Rhine-Main-Area (Frankfurt)

1969

- Introduction of the brand KING for consumer markets and grocery chains
- Meanwhile the turnover amounts to 23 millions DM.

1972

- Transformation into an incorporated company
- Begin of the manufacturing of envelopes
- Opening of distribution centers in Munich and Hamburg
- Turnover: 38,3 millions DM

1974

- Start up of a fully automatic warehouse for finished goods in Reuchlinstrasse with approximately 6,000 places for pallets. The largeness size of the warehouse is unique for this time.
- Acquisition of a fully automated production line for standard paper books (A4) in addition to the already existing production line for standard paper books (A5).
- Herlitz changed from a wholesale company to a producing company. The turnover made with wholesale business accounts for only 11% of total turnover.

1976

- Manufacturing of writing utensils and lever arch files
- 06. May 1976: By resolution of the shareholders meeting "Carl Herlitz AG" now signs with the firm name "Herlitz AG"

1977

- Stock exchange introduction at the Berliner Wertpapierbörse
- Founding of „Herlitz International Trading AG“ (HIT)
- Opening of distribution centers in Austria, Switzerland and Netherlands

1980

- Opening of distribution centers in France
- Turnover: 170,8 millions DM

1981

- Establishment of a subsidiary in Dallas/ Texas (Herlitz Inc.)

1982

- Introduction Stock exchange at Frankfurter Börse in Frankfurt
- 45,000 t paper products were produced and sold.

1984

- Conception "Alles aus einer Hand": customized service packages consisting of articles, assortments, service and logistics are offered to the customers. Each distribution channel is based on regional needs.
- The whole assortment contains more than 7,000 items.

1985

- Purchase of the mail-order center in Berlin Spandau. According to Guinness world records this center has the highest high-rack-warehouse of the world with over 70,000 places for pallets.
- Turnover: 522 millions DM

1987

- Acquisition of the company Susy Card GmbH & Co. KG (greeting cards)
- During fair Paperworld Herlitz introduces its new fountain pen "Tornado SLS" which is a world-innovation.

1988

- Herlitz moves to the north of Berlin where an area of 82,000 square meters is available.
- Laying of the cornerstone for production and administration in Tegel
- Günter Herlitz leaves the managing board and becomes member of directorate.
- The color box "AC24" arranged by Emilio Ambasz wins the first price on World Design 88 in New York.
- Turnover: 642 millions DM

1989

- 75 millions books, 1 billion envelopes, 90 millions greeting cards, 280 millions transparent pockets, 20 millions lever arch files, 70 millions meters gift wrap and 80 millions writing instruments are produced annually.

1990

- Completion of the new center in Berlin Tegel
- Foundation of „Mc Paper GmbH“ together with Rewe-subsidary Christ
- Ending of the commitment in USA, business is concentrated on Europe
- The assortment covers now 12,000 articles
- Receipt of the "Deutscher Logistik-Preis" of Bundesvereinigung Logistik e. V.

- Turnover: 888 millions DM

1992

- Foundation of subsidiaries in Poland, Hungary and Czech Republic

1993

- Subsidiary in Finland
- Completion of the subsidiaries in Poland and Hungary
- Turnover: 1,175 millions DM

1994

- Start-up of production and logistics center in Falkensee (Brandenburg)
- Relocation of the warehouse and the picking, file as well as gift wrap manufacturing to Falkensee

1996

- Transformation of Herlitz AG into a holding company and separation of Herlitz PBS AG as an independent company
- Acquisition of Landré GmbH (paper products)

1997

- Acquisition of Diplomat / Imco (writing instruments)

1998

- Sale of Mc Paper AG to Deutsche Post AG
- Establishment of "Pro Office" in Czech Republic
- Turnover: 1,232 millions DM

1999

- Award „IT-Anwender des Jahres 1999“
- Optimisation of manufacturing: now Herlitz has production centers in Peitz (lever arch files), Most/ Czech Republic (transparent pockets), Berlin (paper products and envelopes) and Falkensee (writing instruments)

2000

- Selling of the Landré GmbH to the Hamelin Groupe. Herlitz owns now 24 %.

- Joint Venture with the company group Fiege: Fiege eCom GmbH & Co. KG and Fiege eCom Verwaltungs GmbH. Fiege holds %1 % at the new enterprise and Herlitz 49%.
- Joint Venture with the Dr. Schmidt-Group: Outsourcing of Herlitz IT and creation of the Dr. Joachim Schmidt IT-Holding GmbH. The Dr. Joachim Schmidt & Co. AG holds 74% and the Herlitz PBS AG 26% at the new enterprise. The Mercoline GmbH is a 100% daughter of this holding company.
- Commutation of Herlitz preference to equity share
- turnover: 958 millions DM

2002

- Take over of the contingent of the Dr. Joachim Schmidt & Co. AG at the Mercoline GmbH, Herlitz holds now 100%.
- Abolition of the joint venture with the Fiege Group and purchase of the companies Fiege eCom Verwaltungs GmbH and Fiege eCom GmbH & Co.KG.
- The new name of the companies are now eCom Verwaltungs GmbH and eCom Logistik GmbH & Co.KG.
- 03. April 2002: File of insolvency for Herlitz AG and Herlitz PBS AG at the local district court Charlottenburg.
- 10. April 2002: File of insolvency for Diplomat Schreibgeräte GmbH and Susy Card GmbH & Co. KG at the local district court Charlottenburg. Herlitz PBS AG buys Diplomat Schreibgeräte GmbH and Susy Card Papeterie GmbH of the relative insolvency proceeding.
- 05. June 2002: Opening of the insolvency proceeding at the local district court Charlottenburg.
- 17. July 2002: Acceptance of the insolvency plan by the creditor. The insolvency plan was made by Peter Leonhardt, insolvency practitioner.
- 16. September 2002: Closing of the insolvency proceedings for the Herlitz AG and the Herlitz PBS AG. Herlitz is so far the first listed company which succeeded in closing insolvency proceedings by going concern in record time.

2003

- Spin-off of service skills and establishment of eCom Logistik GmbH & Co.KG
- Production of 83. Mio. folders. Herlitz became the market leader in the production of folders worldwide.
- Foundation of BildungsCent e.V. in order to support teaching and learning in Germany.

2004

- 100 years Herlitz: Slogan at the Paperworld 2004
- The assortment comprises approx. 15.000 products.
- Starting lever arch file production in Great Britain
- Sale of Diplomat brand
- Subsidiaries in Finland, Benelux, Greece, England, Czech Republic, Slovakia, Hungary, Poland, Rumania, Bulgaria
- turnover: 335 millions Euro

2005

- Herlitz succeed search for an investor - Advent International acquires majority stake in Herlitz
- Acquisition of lever arch file and filing production in Romania
- turnover: 318 Mio. Euro.

2006

- Reorganisation phase is more or less completed
- Move of production from Berlin-Tegel to Falkensee
- Kindergarten project „Herlitz-Hasenbande“ (Herlitz-Bunny Gang) starts in Germany

2007

- Implementation of a new Corporate Design with new Herlitz logo
- Introduction of design mark BOON & BANE
- Herlitz receives branded seal „Brand of the century“
- Product innovations: Writing instrument sky.pen, school bag MastersSL, ribbon dispenser

2008

- The OneTip is launched – a lever arch file which allows a quick right-left filing with only one tip of your finger.