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Regional Sales Manager of Elfa Distrelec A/S

Mike van Sneek,
CEO of the HVEG Fashion Group

Nicolas Bearelle,
CEO of Revive NV

Piero Manzoni,
CEO of NeoruraleHub

Paolo Gadotti,
Founder and CFO of Adeo Group Spa

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Invisible yet everywhere

Everyone knows the big names in the fashion industry; from haute couture to the high street, we are constantly surrounded by familiar brands. In contrast, some names are less well known or even completely obscure, but have an equally huge presence in our lives. The HVEG Fashion Group, headquartered in the Netherlands, is a company which most of us have never heard of, yet its clothing and accessories are all around us, sold under the brand names of a multitude of retailers around Europe. The group itself proclaims: “You don’t see us, but we are everywhere.”

With over 30 years in the business, HVEG Fashion is the number one private label player in the fashion sector in the Benelux countries, supplying everything from clothing and underwear, to shoes, spectacles and other accessories. The company serves four distinct customer groups – fashion retailers, online retailers, supermarkets, and discount retailers – and supplies a number of major chains in the Netherlands, Germany and France. “Every group has specific requirements, explains CEO Mike van Snek. “For fashion retailers, for example, we design and produce complete collections; for supermarkets, key demands are that the products are packaged and must fit the supermarket shelving. Our business managers have to be aware of new market developments, and continually innovate to meet emerging demands.” HVEG Fashion is proud of its huge expertise. “Our forte is that we make collections that suit our clients; we produce the goods and even keep stocks for our customers if required,” adds Mr. van Snek. The company’s stability is another huge advantage which customers value. “We are financially very strong, so retail partners like to work with us. We are regarded as a one-stop business partner; our business units cover the whole product spectrum,” continues Mr. van Snek, who was appointed CEO at the start of 2018. “What really fascinates me about this sector is that there is so much going on; the challenge is to find your own way forward,” he says. “Our core business is private label, but what we did in the past is not by definition the way we’ll work in the future. We are very proud that HVEG Fashion has no debts, and we are ready to make choices in terms of the way forward.”

One of the choices that HVEG has made is to diversify the business and use its expertise and know-how to create new brands of its own. The company has recently introduced Zense yoga wear and, in Q3 2018, it launched Bamboo Basics, a range of men’s t-shirts and boxer shorts which are sold both in-store and online. Bamboo Basics is booming, and HVEG Fashion is now in the process of acquiring some established
“If it feels good, we do it,” the CEO underlines. “We treat a new brand like a start-up that can be added to the group, a bit like ‘plug and play’. It’s important to find the right group of people to market a brand. New teams get all the support they need.”

Just as with other industries, digitalization is enhancing the fashion sector, and HVEG Fashion is embracing new opportunities to further improve its customer service. While the company offers a number of ‘speed concepts’, including production in Turkey with a time to market of just three to six weeks, in general clients have to predict fashions up to six months in advance. “We are digitalizing the entire supply chain and shortening the time to market,” notes Mr. van Snek. “By speeding up our processes, we can give clients more time to decide what they want.” This 2019 project will involve close analysis of every process to establish how digitalization can make things faster, and will integrate the whole chain by creating an information-sharing portal. “Our reason for being is to unburden our customers and support their success,” Mr. van Snek emphasizes. By improving the customer experience, this innovative project is likely to enhance customer loyalty; with great products and a fast supply chain, there will be no reason for clients to look elsewhere. “I tell my staff that you are only as good as your last delivery – we have to exceed expectations every day,” says the CEO. Not only customers are loyal. HVEG fashion prides itself on its stable team – rare in the fast-moving fashion sector, and no doubt due, at least in part, to the open communication culture at the company. Quarterly staff meetings keep staff up to date with new developments and encourage two-way dialogue between management and staff. “We want to understand the challenges our staff face, and how we can best address them – that is our role as managers,” Mr. van Snek stresses. HVEG is a somewhat unique company, which continually differentiates itself from the competition. “I think our business unit structure is hugely advantageous,” the CEO sums up. “It covers the whole spectrum, and every client is allocated a design team in each relevant unit. In addition, we only work with factories which offer ethical working conditions, and we actively monitor this. This is very important for consumers and our clients; not all suppliers can guarantee this. All in all, I believe our clients consider us a solid player in the market – a great legacy to take forward.”

If it feels good, we do it. We treat a new brand like a start-up that can be added to the group, a bit like ‘plug and play’.

Panorama trade fair in Berlin: a great opportunity for HVEG Fashion’s staff to meet current and prospective clients, and for its own teams to learn from each other

The largest private label spectacle specialist in Benelux: HVEG Fashion’s reading glasses, contact lenses and sunglasses are sold in drugstores and supermarkets

Headquartered in Amersfoort, the company has offices in Eindhoven, Gronau and Asia, and a distribution center in Heerenberg; production is outsourced

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More than a half of the world population lives in urban areas. The ongoing urbanization is one of the central challenges of our times – costs of space to live in the cities are on the rise while the average size of it is decreasing. Against this backdrop, new innovative concepts of urban living are in demand. Revive NV from Ghent is a real estate developer that puts great emphasis on building society, not real estate. The company makes the difference – by developing vibrant living communities where people can live happily.

Revive follows a clear vision – creating high-quality, sustainable and affordable residential areas, transforming old industrial sites into attractive urban neighbourhoods, making things in a different way. “When we founded the company ten years ago, we believed that time was ready for change,” says CEO Nicolas Bearelle. “Our main ambition was to make the difference in the real estate sector; a traditional sector where innovation is hard to find.”

Together with Piet Colruyt, Nicolas Bearelle established Revive in 2009. In 2010, they started the first investment fund and collected 20 million EUR and in 2012, a second fund with 60 million EUR was set up, followed by a third – ‘The Good Life Development Fund’ – in 2016 with 100 million EUR. Depending on personal ambitions and capital, the company offers different investment opportunities – large investors buy whole blocks to rent, smaller ones more homes or apartments to rent out or to live there themselves. “We have a long-term vision guaranteeing safe investments,” points out Mr. Bearelle. “The decisive factor is that we are interested in the balance between social, ecological and economic added value. We are a purpose-driven company in a capital-intensive market. We can raise the capital to create opportunities in answering some of the great challenges of our time – the creation of affordable, sustainable housing. Our investors identify with this philosophy. They are people seeing the big picture, looking at the whole world.”

Revive’s innovative approach captures the spirit of the times. Today, with a headcount of 35 employees, the company has projects in all major cities in Belgium, in Gdansk, Poland, and is searching for
new opportunities in France, the Netherlands and Portugal. “We always look at urban areas that are dynamic, have a good geography, high education and enough economic growth combined with innovation, a good public transport infrastructure and policies that support those elements,” sums up Mr. Bearelle. “We operate in the niche market of urban regeneration and typically buy real estate like old factories with polluted soil, construction problems, located in an environment that poses problems. We purchase so called distressed assets and add value; we give non-places a place – a good and liveable place. We start with polluted industrial sites, revive the whole area and create a new contemporary city district with the smallest possible ecological footprint.”

Revive is keen to create places where people meet each other, where private space and open space go hand in hand, where whatever the area needs is on offer – shops, child care facilities, co-working spaces or an adequate mobility infrastructure for walking and riding a bike. “Basically, it is very easy,” sums up Mr. Bearelle. “We want to develop urban areas that make inhabitants happy, that spread a positive spirit. We tackle problems in easy ways; simplify problems, see opportunities and solve the problems.” So far, Revive has developed 17 projects of which six are finalized. Sites are large – 3 to 4 ha and up; the largest one has a size of 16 ha. “We looked at 1,000 dossiers and bought 17 of them,” states Mr. Bearelle. “And I am proud of all 17. We are one of only three companies in Europe – and we are growing by 20% each year which is huge. We are an ambitious lot. Our mission is to create added value for everyone. We generate urban areas, building CO₂-neutral and sustainable areas and helping cities to manage the transition into a new era. At the end of the day, we are successful because of the way we work. It is all about doing well by doing good.”
Allowing agriculture and biodiversity to co-exist through innovative solutions

Agriculture has left an indelible imprint on the landscape, transforming formerly wooded areas into open fields and pastures where modern monocultures have had a detrimental effect on biodiversity, fertility and environment. Are we sure this is the only feasible model to be followed? NeoruraleHub has demonstrated in Italy that biodiversity can exist alongside agricultural production and a return to a natural landscape is possible. By partnering the rural areas with urban development, it is possible to create synergies to transform agricultural suburbs into environmental services providers for the cities, where energy is recovered, waste recycled and the resulting enjoyable environment can become the place for promoting innovation and start-ups. NeoruraleHub has created the first real-scale project just 18 km away from the center of Milan.

The term ‘neorurale’ has been coined to refer to agricultural land that is repopulated with wild areas to encourage biodiversity and the resulting positive effects on soil fertility and fight against desertification. The concept has been applied to an 1,500 ha area of rural land known as La Cassinazza. “The project was initiated in 1996,” says CEO Piero Manzoni. “When land used for rice cultivation in a series of paddy fields and nothing of wider ecological value was set to return part of the landscape to its previous natural state and still retaining rice cultivation.” Over time, trees and hedges were planted and water channels, wetlands and the ecosystem was rebuilt to encourage native plants and fauna to repopulate the area. The result is a new ecosystem where ducks, deer and many other animals co-exist peacefully with modern agriculture. “The success of the project can be explained by the philosophy of a circular economy used by nature,” says Mr. Manzoni. “Many of the problems with modern agriculture arise from the intensive use of fertilizers. With our methods, we can increase harvests by as much as 36% per hectare while preserving soil fertility.”

The La Cassinazza project is home to 20,000 ducks, seven species of birds of prey, 20,000 pidgeons, all the European airons and 650 free-roaming deer and much more.
to increase harvests by as much as 36% per hectare, while reducing costs and environment impact.”

“By treating organic matters in an innovative way and rebuilding ecosystems, we enrich the soil, allowing crops to grow strong and well balanced and saving biodiversity,” says Mr. Manzoni. “Together with technology, around the agricultural fields we created conditions that encourage the proliferation of protecting ecosystems.” This method is called Environment Field Margin.

What NeoruraleHub achieved has been possible with the smart application of the EU’s Common Agricultural Policy. The imminent change in the CAP should encourage such an approach and foresees incentives not just for production but strictly linked to the contribution, while producing food, to create positive externalities such as better CO₂ sequestration in soil, less soil degradation and landscape regeneration.

"Despite the challenges, we remain very optimistic about the future," insists Mr. Manzoni. "We have a steady stream of visiting academics coming to see what has been achieved here."

In NeoruraleHub many other challenges have been addressed such as energy saving in a very innovative way, utilizing the heat content of the water traditionally used for irrigation saving about 40% compared to traditional technologies. Innovations are also studied and developed along the whole agri-food industry, up to industrial transformation and distribution. This is done at the Innovation Center Giulio Natta, within the NeoruraleHub area where renovated agricultural buildings have been converted to host value-added companies, start-ups and laboratories to cultivate and test innovation.

NeoruraleHub also initiated a similar project in Kenya where it is supporting the local population and helping them to cultivate crops preserving natural habitats, and keeping the wildlife safe.

NeoruraleHub is even involved in companies in North America. “It is no secret that we are at an environmental tipping point in so many areas,” says Mr. Manzoni. “We know that we are doing our part to improve things – there is no better feeling.”

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**La Cassinazza**

**EVOLUTION OF BIODIVERSITY AND SOIL FERTILITY IN 20 YEARS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>n° of species</th>
<th>1996</th>
<th>2016</th>
<th>VARIATION</th>
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<tr>
<td>n° Birds</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>217</td>
<td>+170%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>n° Nesting Birds</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>+160%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>n° Mammals</td>
<td>16</td>
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<td>+81%</td>
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<td>21</td>
<td>45</td>
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<tr>
<td>n° Dragonflies</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>+146%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>n° Grasshoppers</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>+90%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>n° Mushrooms</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>+150%</td>
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<tr>
<td>n° Flents and Flowers</td>
<td>255</td>
<td>%</td>
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**Soil fertility**

| O.E.O.C. | 7    | 17.7 | +132%   |

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Trees and hedges planted in the margins between the rice fields encourage native plants and fauna to repopulate these spaces.

La Cassinazza is a green oasis of biodiversity amid intensive monoculture farming all around. The picture shows the result in biodiversity and fertility in 20 years.

Insects are in decline across Europe with grave consequences for the environment. The La Cassinazza project shows a way to grow crops without decimating fauna.

Consumers are looking at agricultural production methods and their impact on the environment and are choosing to pay for food that has been produced ecologically.
Producing profitably in these parts

More and more medium-sized enterprises are relying again on Germany as a manufacturing location instead of expanding to the Far East. With cost benefits getting smaller, other factors such as quality and flexibility are receiving more attention. One of the mid-size companies that makes everything at home is Georg Schünemann GmbH. The valve and filter specialist relies on optimum batch sizes and maximum product availability to achieve a sustainable competitive advantage.

Georg Schünemann GmbH – also known as SAB, an abbreviation of the company’s former name Schünemann Anlagen Bremen – designs, produces and markets high-pressure valves, special filters and complete filtration systems for marine and industrial applications. The company supplies shut-off valves, flow-regulating valves, safety valves, distributors, pressure reducers and complete valve systems to the German and international navies, shipyards, the gas industry and offshore installations worldwide. The filter portfolio comprises single and duplex filters, self-cleaning automatic filters, marine filters and special designs made to meet technically challenging projects or individual customer requirements. Customers include shipyards, chemical and petrochemical firms, municipalities, paper mills, power suppliers, steelmakers and many other industrial clients. Originally founded as a tobacco trader in 1937, SAB was newly established as a mechanical engineering business in 1946. “At the start, the company focused on filters,” says Managing Director Wolfgang Linster, who joined SAB eleven years ago after having worked for one of the company’s customers. “Later, it started developing valves for military ships.” Particularly in the last decade, SAB has grown tremendously. “Today, we employ 70 people and have a turnover of 12 to 16 million EUR, depending on project size,” explains Mr. Linster, whose leadership style is based on partnership and flat hierarchies. “I am in close touch with our staff, at every level of the company. A cooperative
We want to acquire new customers through unique product solutions that add value to our customers’ processes.

atmosphere is very important for a motivated workforce. It is important to analyze existing procedures and improve them if necessary, but it is even more important to involve each individual employee in this process. We have a very informal work climate, which is appreciated by most but not everyone. But I believe it is better to be authentic than a pretender.”

The product offering of SAB is complemented by comprehensive services ranging from emergency repairs to periodical maintenance through to spare parts deliveries and continuous research and development. “We help our customers design new products, develop customer-specific solutions and create new, innovative valve and filter products to meet changing market demands,” Mr. Linster describes the company’s R&D strategy. In all new developments, first-rate quality is given top priority. “This goes for all our products but especially for our valves which are designed for pressures of up to 400 bars,” states Mr. Linster. SAB is a highly international business with customers across the globe. The company works together with international distribution partners and exports a lot to Europe, South Korea, India and the Arabian Peninsula. In contrast to this, it is firmly rooted in Germany as a manufacturing location. “We make almost everything at home,” says Mr. Linster. “With the right organization and the right decisions, you can run a profitable, competitive production operation in Germany. The secret of our success lies in batch size optimization. We define our lot sizes with the objective of attaining maximum profitability. In addition, unlike many of our competitors, we attach great importance to maximum product availability and have a rather large stock that enables us to meet customer demands at the shortest notice. This gives us a significant competitive advantage.”

SAB is also following up with robotics and additive manufacturing technologies such as 3D printing to enhance its competitive position further. “Our goal is to be among the frontrunners in these areas in our industry,” states Mr. Linster. “The challenge lies in keeping qualified jobs for our employees over the next ten or 20 years.” In the near future, SAB will implement several construction measures to adapt its production capacity to growing market demand. At the same time, the company will continue to modernize its manufacturing equipment and push new product development. “Particularly in the filter segment, we want to acquire new customers through new, unique product solutions that add value to our customers’ processes,” explains Mr. Linster.

Made from high-strength spheroidal graphite iron, SAB duplex filters are ideal for continuous operation.
Mastering SAP in digital transformation

For countless companies worldwide, one software solution has been an absolute godsend: SAP. It structures and streamlines company processes, no matter the area of business or the size of the company. Due to SAP’s market presence over the last four decades, other companies have been developing in line with it to support SAP users with advice and customized solutions. One such company is 2BM A/S, headquartered in Copenhagen. Since its establishment in 2000, 2BM has grown to become the largest privately owned SAP consulting business in Denmark, but SAP is not the only feather in 2BM’s cap.

The Danish consultancy 2BM is a leading specialist for SAP enterprise solutions and software, throughout Scandinavia and is a preferred partner for SAP. The name 2BM actually comes from its driving concept: to be mobile. “We have focused on mobile software from the start,” says Lars Bork Dylander, CEO and founder of 2BM. “We then created an SAP consulting group, and over the years, that has become our primary focus. SAP accounts for 70% of our revenues today.” 2BM is a full-service SAP partner, covering all aspects of the core of SAP, including HR. The company’s 100 highly skilled specialists know how to combine business acumen with digital expertise to offer the right solution. “When push comes to shove, we put business first,” notes Mr. Dylander, describing the priorities. “The technology has to suit the people using it and how they need to work, not the other way around.”

In the field of digital solutions, 2BM especially focuses on maintenance and facility management. “One of our references here is Danske Statsbaner, the Danish Railways, whose employees manage track maintenance all over the country via tablet computer,” Mr. Dylander notes. “We also offer facility management solutions for enterprises to maintain its factories.” In addition, 2BM provides apps for warehousing and stock management. Another field of expertise is in qualification audit. “The national grid in the US has to know that the people working in high-voltage areas or with direct access to back-end systems have the right qualifications to do the work or even have access to the area,” the CEO cites an example. “It’s a matter of both safety and security, especially in the energy and rail sectors.”

Active solely in the B2B market, many of 2BM’s mobile solutions relate to Industry 4.0 or the Internet of Things. “Digitization is driving immense change. Every day, there are new breakthroughs that each contain the potential to alter the world as we know it. Many companies have experi-
enced the digital transformation. New technologies and services continually demand more of us as human beings, which requires companies to focus more on the employees in the process. They’re really changing the game,” Mr. Dylander emphasizes. “We need to help our clients understand what they gain from digital transformation, exponential mindset and Industry 4.0. It’s important for them to understand why the change is necessary, why they can’t stick to the way things used to be.” Two major skill sets are required for this undertaking. First of all, 2BM has to listen to its clients carefully to understand how they work and what they need. Direct contact and open dialogue are the two tools at work to master this task. Once 2BM knows how the company works, it can advise the client on where it would benefit and what can be upgraded. The consultancy also has to provide the means with which its clients can operate at the next level, so 2BM exerts the innovative strength essential to staying at the forefront of technology.

“We’re working on IOT and artificial intelligence concepts to be one step ahead of our clients,” the CEO continues. “That way, when the time comes to implement the solutions for them, we’ll already have several years’ experience and be better equipped to advise them.”

The company largely provides its consultancy services in Denmark, while its mobile solution activities are more international. Altogether, 2BM operates in 15 countries and eight languages, serving the United States and Europe in particular. It hopes to acquire its first client in China soon. “In the future, the Nordic countries will remain our most important region, which is good because they’re also the easiest for us to serve,” Mr. Dylander concedes. “Sweden, for instance, is a huge market for us for consulting. We even have an office in Malmö.” Nonetheless, 2BM is striving to gain a foothold in China and Singapore, and obtain greater traction in the US and Europe. “The German market is very appealing to us,” the CEO says. “There are quite a few major brands we’d like to add to our reference list.” In terms of sectors, there is no one industry where 2BM is at home. “Human resources solutions can be applied to any sector,” Mr. Dylander says. “Some solutions are better for certain areas than others. For example, our work with Industry 4.0 will be for production companies. Then there are businesses, like malls, which benefit from several of our solutions, such as security, maintenance and facility management.”

2BM’s greatest challenge this year will be the transition to the new SAP S/4 HANA system. “It can mean big changes for some companies, so it is important that we support them, not only during the transition itself but also before that, during the planning phase,” Mr. Dylander explains. Regardless of the actual work to be done, the CEO holds steadfastly to his vision: to invest in knowledge and expertise to offer clients the best advice possible.

2BM has a team of 100 highly skilled experts who know how to combine business with technology for the best solution

We’re working on IOT and AI concepts to be one step ahead of our clients. When it comes time to implement the solutions for them, we’ll already have several years’ experience and be better equipped to advise them.
A company on the move

From humble beginnings as a family-owned, Swedish based company, to the successful adoption into the Datwyler portfolio, Elfa Distrelec is now one of the leading electronics suppliers in Europe. Since 2008, the company has undergone rapid growth in response to the needs of their newly merged supplier and customer networks. Their promise: to deliver a truly personalised customer experience.

EB: Elfa Distrelec’s experience as an electronics supplier spans more than 70 years. How has your product portfolio changed over the last decades and what were the biggest changes and challenges to your business?

Leif Wartacz: Since 1945, Elfa Distrelec has grown from delivering primarily electronics and electrical components, to offering an extensive line of test and measurement tools, to now having the capacity to provide industry knowledge, application advice and expertise in the robotics and automation industry. With the business now six times its original size, the supply chain has had significant changes in order to sustain the rapidly growing product line and shipping demands across Europe. The product range has now shifted from the former focus of pure electronics, to a much broader range of electromechanical components, tools and automation equipment.

EB: You are part of the Swiss Datwyler Group, a global industry supplier. How does Elfa Distrelec benefit from being part of a major multinational group?

Leif Wartacz: The resources that became available have allowed for locally based, highly knowledgeable sales managers, guiding their teams in localised offices to deliver personalised customer support, as well as access to an industry leading digital platform, available in over 17 languages.

EB: Elfa Distrelec promises to deliver within 24 hours of receiving an order to most of Europe. What are the most important factors in building up a logistics system that makes this possible?

Leif Wartacz: Due to solid relationships with strategic courier partners, we are able to offer next day delivery to 90 to 95% of industrial areas across Europe. Elfa Distrelec benefits from a cohesive network of systems where sales, warehouse management and courier transport management processes are all aligned. Through significant investment in internal infrastructure, inclusive of our warehouse management system, Elfa Distrelec has the capacity to pick and pack certain articles from the warehouse within two hours of the order being placed.
EB: Your mission is ‘We are satisfied only when we know you are!’ How are you achieving this goal today and what are your plans to maintain this high level of customer service in the future?

Leif Wartacz: Through commitment to supporting our customers and their business at each stage of their procurement, understanding their bespoke requirements and treating them as partners, we can deliver a more personalised response to their needs. Key to this is providing customer support in the local language, with highly trained staff who can share local market knowledge to better understand project requirements. For us at Elfa Distrelec, it is not enough to offer the basics, our customers demand a more personalised experience, and it is our mission to provide that.

EB: The responsible treatment of resources is part of your company’s identity, you regard yourself as a pioneer. What are your ways of protecting our planet now and in the future?

Leif Wartacz: As an importer of large amounts of electrical equipment, such as batteries and accumulators, Elfa Distrelec is a member of waste management compliance schemes in each country it operates in. Each year, the business provides detailed sales information to the compliance schemes and, based on these reports, pays fees to ensure that in the next year, quantities of similar products are removed from the market and recycled appropriately. Elfa Distrelec also implements a supplier screening process, requiring written declarations and in some cases evidence of chemical testing to ensure the products sold do not contain any restricted substances.
Projecting success in audio and video systems

Hotels and businesses around the world count on projection equipment and audio systems to put on banquets and other larger events successfully. The Italian company Adeo Group Spa is an expert in professional audio and video equipment in addition to systems for home use. Not only does it sell and distribute these systems, it also produces the equipment through its Polish subsidiary, Adeo Screen.

Businesses are not the only ones who require top-of-the-line audio and video systems. Where would modern home entertainment be without state-of-the-art audio and video systems? There would be no pleasure in Super Bowl or World Cup parties, no at-home cinema experience, no music to set the mood for dates, dinners or holiday get-togethers. The latest ultramodern audio and video equipment is in high demand at home and in professional settings.

Adeo Group spa is a provider of both professional and home audio and video systems and through its subsidiary Adeo Screen Sp z.o.o. in Poland is a leading manufacturer of projection screens. “We offer all sorts of professional projection screen systems, many different projection surfaces, necessary for presentations and video projections at universities, companies and professional-grade home cinemas,” says Paolo Gadotti, Founder and CEO of Adeo Group Sp Z o.o. Poland.

Among its more recent innovations, Adeo Group has designed and developed an innovative professional home cinema system, which will be implemented and offered in hotels as an entertainment service for guests. “We have agreements with film studios, film production companies in Hollywood and streaming services for the development of small cinema packages to create hotel movie theaters for about ten viewers,” Mr. Gadotti describes the new creation: “These private movie theaters, which we’ll be offering to hotels under the brand Adeum Cinema Suite, will allow them to offer current films at the same time as cinemas throughout the city.”

Adeo Screen produces a huge variety of rolling screens, projection surfaces, framed and fixed screens. “We are a leading producer and distributor of home and professional solutions throughout Europe,” Mr. Gadotti points out.

Adeo Screen is a leading producer and distributor of home and professional audio and video systems and home cinema equipment in Italy and Europe.

“Our biggest direct customers are distributors and system integrators for professional grade home cinemas, audio and video systems. Our projection screens are very popular and successful among famous film companies, wealthy clients and famous directors.”

Adeo Group Spa Italy was established in Lavis, Italy near Trento in 1989 as the exclusive distributor of the brand Sanyo, a leading specialist in video products, which was taken over by Panasonic in the 1990s. In 2006, Adeo Group sought to expand its production site and made investments. Trento proved unsuitable for the group,
however, so it looked abroad and found Zlotoryja, Poland, where it still operates its production facilities as Adeo Screen Sp. Z o.o. a 100% subsidiary of the group. The acquisition of the French company Screen Research in 2010 allowed the group to broaden its horizons even further. “The company was and still is a leading provider of state-of-the-art video projection screens designed for custom home theaters and commercial and professional cinema applications,” Mr. Gadotti notes. “All of the projection screen systems we design at Screen Research, are produced at our Polish facilities.” The group’s R&D and design activities take place at the headquarters in Italy. The vast majority of its suppliers are Italian, a decision made after comparing other suppliers from other countries in Europe. “The best design and the best quality equipment is still produced by our long-standing suppliers in the domestic market,” Mr. Gadotti says. 25% of Adeo’s projection screens are exported to Italy, 25% stay in the domestic market Poland, and the remaining 50% are sent to international customers, largely in Europe.

The best design and the best equipment of the highest quality is still produced by our long-standing suppliers in the domestic market.

With 25 employees at the group’s headquarters in Italy and an additional 23 at Adeo Screen, Adeo is confident about its future endeavors. “All of my partners and I needed great passion and a lot of effort to invest in and establish an important production facility for video projection screens in Poland,” Mr. Gadotti says. “We are happy and proud of this investment and that the equipment produced there is of the highest quality with huge success. We are also pleased that we can count on our young, well-trained Polish employees.”
High performers in compact shape

Its products can be found in every other ground fault circuit breaker in Germany and Europe, its main activities are in fast evolving markets such as renewable energies, e-mobility and smart meters, and its customers comprise automotive industry leaders, including electric car pioneer Tesla. As an expert in electromagnetic compatibility, MAGNETEC GmbH supplies soft magnetic tape wound cores for all types of power electronics applications. Made from a special nanocrystalline material NANOPERM®, the cores are exceptionally high in performance but very low in weight and compact in design.

MAGNETEC is a medium-sized enterprise specialized in magnetic engineering and power electronics. Based in Langenselbold in Hesse, Germany, the company develops and manufactures high-permeability tape wound ring cores for industrial, automotive, energy and safety applications. The product range comprises a wide selection of standard cores as well as custom-engineered solutions for special applications. MAGNETEC cores are used in frequency converters, switching power supply units, air conditioning systems and a broad range of industrial manufacturing equipment. In the automotive industry, they safeguard the electromagnetic compatibility (EMC) of the vehicles’ electrical system and are part of residual current devices for personal safety in stationary and mobile charging devices for electric cars. The company’s cores also support the transformation of the energy system as integral components in wind turbine generators, photovoltaic plants and electronic energy meters. The fourth major market segment served by MAGNETEC is safety where the company’s cores are built into all kinds of residual current devices to ensure personal safety. All MAGNETEC cores are made from NANOPERM, a special nanocrystalline, soft magnetic, iron-based alloy that offers several benefits. “The material ideally combines high permeability and low losses at high frequencies,” explains Dr. Martin Ferch, Director of Business Development. “These characteristics make it suitable for many applications.”

Established in 1984, MAGNETEC is celebrating its 35th anniversary this year. “We started with cores for ground fault circuit breakers, a very common product found compared to conventional ferrite solutions, MAGNETEC single and multiple phase common-mode chokes are up to 60% more compact in design. Current transformers for energy applications used in smart meters, wallboxes and charge couplers for e-cars.”
in every household,” states Dr. Ferch. “Today, we have 50% of the European market in this segment.” MAGNETEC employs 700 people and generates revenues of 40 million EUR. “The goal is to double our sales within the next five years,” says Dr. Ferch. Owned by the second generation of three families, the company has a long-term orientation and focuses on achieving healthy, sustainable growth. In addition to the headquarter in Langenselbold, MAGNETEC has manufacturing plants in Hungary and China and sales representatives in Denmark, Finland, China, India and the USA. “We want to be the world leading provider of value adding solutions in the field of soft magnetic products,” Dr. Ferch describes the vision of the magnetic engineering specialist. In particular, MAGNETEC aims to achieve its vision of our products, their nanocrystalline structure, their compact design, light weight and superior energy efficiency, make them ideal for e-mobility applications,” states Dr. Ferch who was one of the first Tesla drivers in Germany and Europe. “Four years ago, we helped Tesla solve a specific technical problem. Since then, we have been supplying the electric vehicle pioneer. Not a bad achievement for a medium-sized enterprise. We are now an automotive supplier and see great potential in this market because we offer very short times to market, from designing a new core to making it ready for serial production. In an almost disruptive market like e-mobility where everything changes so quickly, this is a major competitive advantage.” Another differentiating characteristic of MAGNETEC is that the great majority of the company’s cores are individually tailored products. “We are a problem solver and solution provider,” Dr. Ferch describes how he sees the company. The strengths of MAGNETEC are probably best summarized in the company’s slogan ‘Small size – big performance’. “We are hidden champions,” says Dr. Ferch. “You cannot see our components. But you can see when they are not there because something critical is missing then.”

Operating in a niche market with very specific requirements, MAGNETEC is one of the technology leaders in this segment worldwide. “In many cases, we define new
Interview with Dr. Martin Ferch, Director of Business Development, and Marc Nicolaudius, CEO of MAGNETEC GmbH

In brief
Core Competence
Magnetic engineering and power electronics

Facts & Figures
• Founded: 1984
• Structure: medium-sized enterprise
• Branch offices: Hungary, China
• Employees: 700
• Turnover: 40 million EUR
• Export: 60-70% (Europe, North America, Asia)

Products & Services
High-permeability tape wound ring cores (standard cores, CoolBLUE toroids, NANOPERM line absorbers (NaLA), NANOPERM low mu-cores, single/multiple phase chokes, CoolTUBE core sets, low cost cores, cut cores)

Target Groups
Industry, Automotive, Energy, Safety

Fairs & Exhibitions
PCIM Nuremberg, electronica (worldwide)

Philosophy
Small size – big performance: highly efficient magnetic cores in compact design

Future
Sustainable development and technological progress in four defined market segments: Industry, Automotive, Energy and Safety

market trends and are the first to develop solutions for new applications,” explains Dr. Ferch. “We are constantly questioning ourselves and looking where we can shape new developments in magnetic engineering and power electronics,” adds CEO Marc Nicolaudius. While being in a niche industry, MAGNETEC is increasingly expanding its presence in some of the most dynamically evolving markets in the context of the energy revolution, especially in the automotive sector. “We are an Aston Martin that is becoming more and more a Volkswagen,” Dr. Ferch makes an apt comparison. “We are committed to actively contributing to the transformation of the energy system. Renewable energies, e-mobility, the smart grid – that is our common theme.” “It is all about sustainable market development, making an impact on technological progress in a sustainable, positive way,” concludes Mr. Nicolaudius.
Interview with Bengt Ahlqvist, Area Sales Manager for Europe at Swedish Lorry Parts AB

As good as new

Swedish Lorry Parts AB sources and produces spare parts, suitable for Volvo and Scania, that are as good as or better than original parts. The company is headquartered on the outskirts of Stockholm. With 45 employees and a flexible base of 20 agency staff, SLP realizes a turnover of 19 million EUR and supports customers all over the world.

“In the last five years we have enjoyed a continuous increase in our turnover, with growth of around 10%,” says Bengt Ahlqvist, who is responsible for European sales as Area Sales Manager. “60% of the spare parts we sell are sourced from different suppliers, while the other 40% are produced according to our own drawings.” At present, SLP provides spare parts, suitable for Volvo and Scania, heavy goods vehicles, trucks, busses and off-road vehicles. Most heavy goods vehicles have a Volvo motor, as the brand has a long history, while the market for Scania parts has great potential to keep growing. The spare parts sold most are motor components, like cylinders, repair kits for overhauling motors and so on, but SLP also provides parts for transmissions, mirrors and accessories, and is continuously expanding its range. The company offers between 13,000 and 14,000 items, 95% of which are mostly delivered from stock. “We provide a high level of service in combination with high quality products,” Mr. Ahlqvist notes. “Our founder always insisted on a quality level that is comparable to that of spare parts by the original manufacturer.”

Founder and owner Mr. Lars Hedlund started his activities in spare parts in the 1970s, at first with parts suitable for Volvo passenger cars. In 1991, he founded SLP with its current focus on heavy goods vehicles and trucks, expanding it later on to include off-road and construction vehicles. In 2014, SLP decided to develop spare parts for Scania as well. The company has a particularly strong presence in Europe and South America. Close to home, the Nordic region and Russia are the most important markets. “North America is a huge market and is one of our main target markets for further expansion, along with Germany and Italy,” observes Mr. Ahlqvist. The global political situation is important for the company’s activities. “When a particular region slows down, we do have the opportunity to focus elsewhere, because we serve customers in over 90 countries in the world.”

We are one of the strongest independent suppliers of high quality spare parts for heavy vehicles.

Mr Bengt Ahlqvist and his colleagues at SLP provide clients all over the world with great service and spare parts of a quality comparable to that of OEM parts.

SLP is headquartered in the southwestern part of Stockholm and has an automated warehouse about 200 km to the west in Kumla, with up to 14,000 parts in stock.
Interview with Leif Snellman, Operations Director
of Oy Karleby Limetec Ab

Making life easier

It is in a rather traditional line of business but among the fastest evolving competitors in the sector: Oy Karleby Limetec Ab aims to grow by 40% this year and by another 30% in 2020. The Finnish manufacturer of trailers and related transport solutions has ambitious growth plans and is increasingly expanding beyond Scandinavia to the rest of Europe. Its strengths lie in genuinely customer-specific vehicles and special solutions that make life easier, such as doors that open to the side or roofs that can be opened by remote control from the driver’s cabin.

Limetec designs and manufactures heavy goods transport solutions including trailers, truck superstructures and dollies. The trailer range includes full trailers, semitrailers, city trailers and center-axle trailers as well as trailers for temperature-controlled transports. The company also produces a wide choice of truck superstructures for bulk, refrigerated and dangerous goods transport applications and high-quality, low-weight dollies. The product range comprises two distinct lines: Limetec Next and Limetec Specials. “Limetec Next is our standard product line, and Limetec Specials offers individually tailored solutions,” Operations Director Leif Snellman describes the difference. At its factory in Kokkola in western Finland, Limetec has two separate assembly lines for its two product lines. Nevertheless, production is highly efficient because customization takes place only in the final stages of the assembly process.

In addition, the company provides maintenance and spare parts services. “We have dealers and service points across Finland, Norway and Sweden,” states Mr. Snellman. “Our biggest market is Sweden. Besides Scandinavia, our main markets are the Baltic countries, the Netherlands, Russia, Switzerland and the UK.”

Limetec was established only in 1994 but has more than 60 years of experience in the transport sector. “We started as a service for Ahola Transport, which is also based in Kokkola and was founded in 1955,” explains Mr. Snellman. “Ahola Transport is one of the largest privately owned logistics providers in the Nordic region, and we are now part of the Group.”

Limetec started manufacturing trailers and boxes for trucks and kept developing new solutions. “Today, we offer a complete portfolio,” says Mr. Snellman. With over 60 employees and a turnover of twelve million EUR for last year, Limetec is a medium-sized player in the Nordic market. “We expect this year’s sales to reach around 17 million EUR. The main growth comes from the dollies. We have special know-how and solutions in this segment. Our goal is to grow. In the past, we were limited by our size, but now we have paved the way for achieving a new market level.”
Our vision is to grow to 50 million EUR in revenues in the coming years.

Owned by the four founding brothers, Limetec is known in the market for its special solutions like trailers with doors that conveniently open to the side and thus are easier to handle. “We have our own special system that works better than other systems, and the back of the trailer is made of stainless steel,” explains Mr. Snellman. “And the floors are very heavy and among the best available in the market.” Of course, Limetec offers standard trailers and superstructures, too, but the company’s strength lies in customer-specific solutions. “Everything depends on the kind of transport they do,” says Mr. Snellman. “Some need special axles, others open tops that can be opened with a joy-stick by the driver. We do what the client wants, we are a solution partner.” Its solution-oriented approach has brought Limetec many loyal customers across Scandinavia. “Often, customers try us once and many of them come back because the solution was great,” states Mr. Snellman. “We have many satisfied customers who are our best advertising. Apart from that, we exhibit at various truck trade fairs, including Hanover’s IAA Commercial Vehicles, and focus on social media.” In particular, Limetec wants to grow abroad. “We started in Switzerland and Poland, are now entering Germany and the next country will be Italy,” Mr. Snellman describes the internationalization strategy of the dynamically evolving company. “There are many new possibilities and challenges as well.” To support its growth ambitions, Limetec does a lot of research and development that results in new, high quality transport solutions. “We never stand still,” says Mr. Snellman. “Our vision is to grow to 50 million EUR in revenues in the coming years. The only thing that could prevent us from achieving that goal is the growing skills shortage. We desperately need qualified people.”
Our YouTube-Account “Business to go” is your video source for career tips and your work-life balance. Here you can find helpful tips on how to create success, how to structure your working day and how to boost your creativity. Check our account and follow us for not missing anything.