

Faber-Castell founds subsidiary in Russia

Moscow, 14 March 2012. On 11 November 2011, the 24th subsidiary of the Faber-Castell group was opened in Russia. In a joint venture with the long-term Turkish partner Anadolu Group, Faber-Castell is planning to systematically establish and expand the brand, using all classical distribution channels. Over the long term the company aims to expand its market presence across all regions focussing initially on the major cities of Moscow, Saint Petersburg, Rostov-Na-Donu, Kazan, Novosibirsk, Yekaterinenburg and Nizhny Novgorod.

"Russia is a promising market for Faber-Castell and holds great potential, especially when it comes to our premium products", explained the chairman of the board, Count Anton-Wolfgang von Faber-Castell, who alongside by general director Yigit Yirtimcilar and commercial director Mutlu Cicek gave the starting shot for the Russian distribution company *Faber-Castell Anadolu* on 12 March 2012 in a press conference in Moscow.

Faber-Castell is presenting its entire range of products at the specialist trade fair "Skrepka" since 13 March 2012 in the Krokos Expo Center in Moscow. Alongside the five fields of competence Playing & Learning, General Writing and Marking, Art & Graphic and Premium several superlatives are also on show. Among its exhibits is the most expensive pencil in the world for 10,000 EUR – with a white gold extender, inserted with three diamonds, which hides a pencil sharpener.

***Faber-Castell** is one of the world's leading manufacturers and marketers of high-quality products for writing, drawing, colouring and creative design. The international group of companies was originally founded over 250 years ago (in 1761) as a pencil factory in Stein near Nuremberg. It is thus one of the world's oldest industrial companies – and has been in the hands of the same family for 8 generations. Today, it is represented in 120 countries with 14 factories and 24 sales organizations around the world. With over 2 billion graphite and colour pencils per year it is the world's leading manufacturer of wood-cased pencils. Its leading position on the international market is due in large measures to its commitment to quality and to the large number of product innovations and improvements. In the fiscal year 2010/11, the corporate group was able to post sales of 538.0 million Euros, a gain of 19% over the previous year.*

***Anadolu Group** was founded in the 1950s by Yazıcı and Özilhan Family. The Group that changed to holding structure in 1969 has investments in food, health, energy, electronic, information and tourism industries besides its major activity industries that are beverage, automotive, finance and retail.*

Anadolu Group has 47 production facilities in 13 countries and employs about 23 thousand people in its 81 companies. As of the end of 2009, the Group recorded a turnover of 5 billions of dollars.

The brand's heritage and its history in Russia

In 1761, the cabinet-maker Caspar Faber set up his own pencil business outside the city gates of Nuremberg, in Stein. He thus laid the foundation stone for the present Faber-Castell group. But it was his great-grandson Lothar who brought about the rise of the German pencil industry in the 19th century. Lothar Faber took over the small A.W. Faber company in 1839; it was thanks to him that within a few decades the Nuremberg region blossomed into the center of European pencil production. He was responsible for the world-wide availability and reputation of the pencil in its present form and quality.

In 1856 he acquired a mine in Siberia which produced the best graphite of the time. The valuable material had to be transported to the nearest port by reindeer, over enormous distances without the slightest hint of a road; its journey was not over when the ship later docked in Germany. The cost was high, of course, but as English graphite was rare, Lothar held all the trump cards. Later he wrote in his memoirs: "From the beginning I strove to rise to the highest position by producing the best that could be made in the whole world."

In 1874, Lothar founded a commercial agency in St. Petersburg showing entrepreneurial vision well before "Globalisation" became a watch-word. With the foundation of this 5th foreign branch (after the launching of subsidiaries in New York, London, Paris and Vienna) he opened up his company to the east, and was later to expand his trade relations into the Near East, even eventually reaching as far as China.

At the same time, however, he had to protect his goods from an increasing number of cheap imitation products. As early as 1856 the first imitations appeared in Moscow. He sought help from the Bavarian embassy in St. Petersburg with the mediation of King Max II of Bavaria. However, the greater the success of the brand "A. W. Faber", the more it was copied at home and abroad. To protect the brand name from a growing market in brand forgery, Lothar von Faber submitted a petition to the Deutsche Reichstag (the government of the day) to protect the brand product. The law came into force in 1875. Thus Lothar von Faber became a pioneer for a unified trademark protection law in Germany. He entered the brand A. W. Faber in the Russian trade register in the same year, or to be more precise on 3.12.1875.

The Russian catalogue from 1900 suggests a wide range of products. For instance, at around this time, A. W. Faber organised the production of lead pencils made of 14 carat gold in St. Petersburg, branded with the company name A. W. Faber and labelled with the city brand. Eight years later the new brand A. W. Faber "Castell" appeared on the Russian market. This name was introduced by Count Alexander from the aristocratic counts family Castell-Rüdenhausen, who had married Lothar's granddaughter Ottilie in 1898. With this marriage, the new title Count and Countess von Faber-Castell came about and Alexander became the 6th generation to take over the helm of the company.

After the turn of the millennium, exclusive writing instruments were once again produced for Faber-Castell in St. Petersburg. Boris Igdalov, the artist who oversaw the restoration of the famous Amber Room, and head of the Catherine Palace Museum Workshop, produced the exceptional limited edition fountain pen "Pen of the year" in 2004 with a barrel made of amber. A special stone from Russia was also used to create the Pen of the Year 2011: jade from Siberia. The pens and pencils in the Graf von Faber-Castell Collection are distinguished by a high degree of precision craftsmanship. Since it was started in 2003, the Pen of the Year edition has epitomised this claim, with elaborate settings of exclusive natural materials.

Further Information:

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