



Technology



Prevent Leather Sarajevo, Bosnia and Herzegovina

The need for a new tannery within the ASA-Prevent Group was conceived in 2003, with work on the new venture beginning in October 2004. This new tannery is now well-established in the town of Visoko located some 25km outside the capitol Sarajevo. Custom-built for the conversion of up to 2,000 hides per day into automotive leathers, the factory extends to 20,000m². This area is divided into four production halls covering all phases of wet white leather manufacture from the input of raw hides through to the cutting of car seat components. The state-of-the-art equipment, handling methods and plant layout, the young and creative management, together with the long-established tradition of leather manufacture in this area is viewed by the company as key elements to its success.

The company has also made responsible investments for the treatment of tannery effluents. A state-of-the-art effluent plant has been established where the effluents are mixed and aerated to remove sulfides, chemically dosed to precipitate solids, and then followed by the activated sludge treatment.

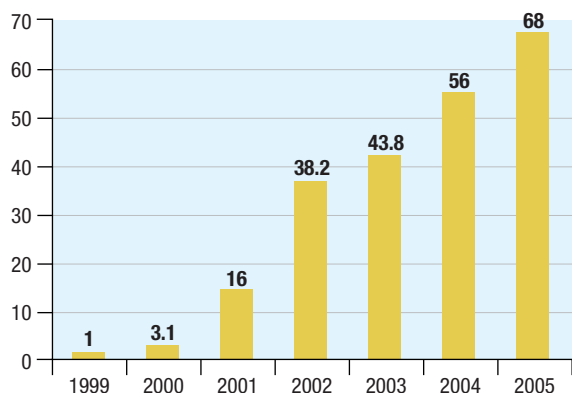
The events leading to this new enterprise are unusual as leather manufacture had not previously been part of the activities of the group. The tannery was created as leather manufacture was perceived as a major link in a complex company value-adding chain.

The roots of the company started about twenty years ago, when the present managers of ASA-Prevent first became involved with VW Germany. The war in Bosnia and Herzegovina caused massive disruptions, but these managers





Figure 1: Group turnover 1999-2005, in millions of euros

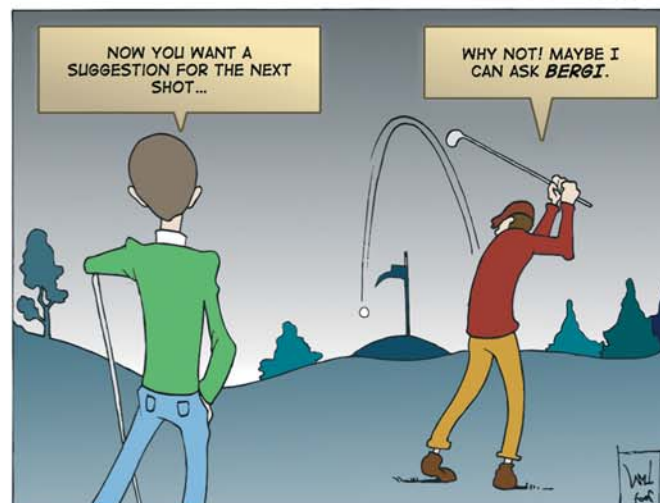
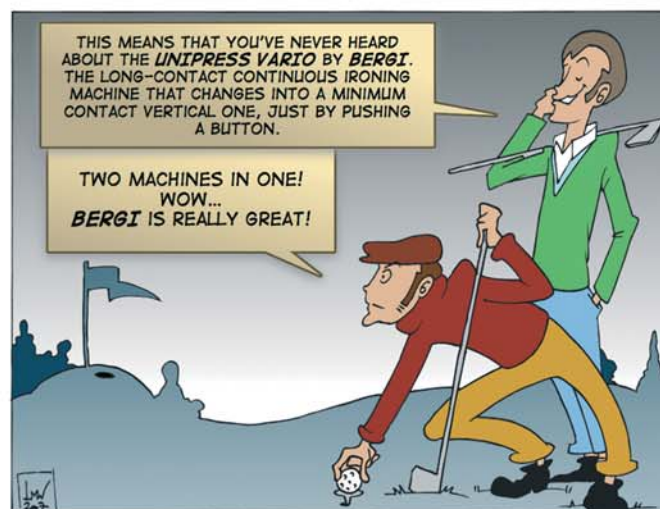
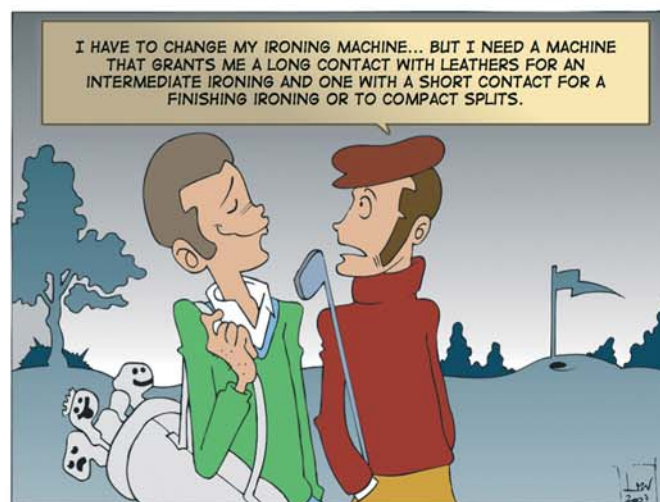


retained links with VW and, when the war finished, the company began to grow. In 1995, a sales division began to import VW vehicles, and services for these vehicles. From these beginnings of growth the ASA-Prevent group now comprises some 20 companies.

These firms include a vehicle sales division in partnership with VW, with a holding of 42% by ASA-Prevent. Other divisions include car rental, leasing arrangements, transport, customs clearance and car servicing. A specialised division provides finance and consultancy in the areas of leasing arrangements, insurance, investment funds and logistical support to ASA-Prevent and other companies.

In 1999 a niche was identified in the market for the manufacture and supply of seat covers for vehicles. Accordingly a sewing company was set up for the manufacture of these components from various fabrics. This new manufacturing branch, named Prevent, has now expanded and comprises two fabric cutting and sewing companies. These manufacture vehicle seat covers for VW, Renault and Peugeot, and handbrake covers for BMW. Brake systems are manufactured for various makes of cars, and now Prevent Leather with Prevent Cutting adjoin the tannery as a specialised leather cutting unit.

The creation of a new tannery to maximise a value-added chain in this way is probably unique. The growth of the company is extraordinary, and Prevent seeks to grow and establish itself within the automotive sector. It has further established itself by purchasing Spleat Leather, France, which specialises in the manufacture of leathers for steering wheels. 🌐



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