

Waiblingen, 01 July 2006

80 Years of STIHL – A family-owned company celebrates its anniversary

STIHL, a family-owned company, celebrates its 80th anniversary in this year. The international group of companies has its headquarters in Waiblingen near Stuttgart, cooperates with more than 35,000 servicing dealers and 120 importers on all continents and sells its products in more than 160 countries. The group now employs some 9,000 men and women. Sales volume in the past year was €1.812 billion.

STIHL: Winner of globalization

The company was founded as a two-man business in Stuttgart in 1926. At the beginning of the thirties the company founder Andreas Stihl, also known as the “Father of the Chainsaw”, exported gasoline-powered chainsaws to Russia and America. This early push into export markets helped fuel the company’s sustained growth in the following decades. The sales organization now has 32 wholly owned sales subsidiaries throughout the world which account for more than 90 percent of turnover. More than 88 percent of turnover is achieved outside Germany. The company began building up an international network of production plants in the early seventies. Today, STIHL has nine manufacturing facilities in six countries: Germany, U.S.A., Brazil, Switzerland, Austria and China. A new factory will be opened in Qingdao, China, in September. A second saw chain production plant is to be built in Switzerland by 2008.

World’s largest selling chainsaw brand

The gasoline chainsaw remains STIHL’s key product even though the company sells more brushcutters, cut-off machines, blowers and other outdoor power tools for agriculture and the construction industry. STIHL has been the world’s largest selling chainsaw brand for 35 years. Furthermore, VIKING, a member of the STIHL Group, produces and distributes garden equipment, including lawn mowers, shredders and electric hedge trimmers, which round off the line of power tools.

Hans Peter Stihl, general partner and chairman of the advisory board of STIHL Holding AG & Co. KG, sees the long-term orientation of the family-owned company as a major success factor: "In the past 80 years there have been only two changes in top management. The members of the family have a strong influence on strategic decisions. This continuity contributes quite considerably to the company's culture with values such as independence, fairness and stability."

Dr. Bertram Kandziora, chairman of the executive board at STIHL, identifies an important cornerstone for the company's success in the motto "A Tradition of Innovation": "It is a tradition at STIHL to develop and manufacture innovative products in house. We will continue to further optimize the performance, convenience, safety as well as the environmental and user friendliness of our chainsaws and power tools and launch new products in the future too."

Anniversary celebrations for staff and the international sales organization

A number of events are being staged in 2006 to mark the 80th anniversary. One of the highlights will be the staff party at Plant II in Waiblingen-Neustadt on July 15, 2006, to which all STIHL retirees are also invited. Customer events with the international sales organization and guests from 65 countries will follow in September. The 12th International Andreas Stihl Memorial Tournament took place in Waiblingen-Neustadt on June 30-July 1, 2006.

Your contact for daily and business press:

ANDREAS STIHL AG & Co. KG
Dr. Stefan Caspari
Head of Corporate Communications and Public Relations
Badstraße 115
D-71336 Waiblingen
Tel. +49 (0) 7151/26-1402
Fax +49 (0) 7151/26-1119
E-Mail: stefan.caspari@stihl.de