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50 years of STIHL Austria: A blueprint for success

Andreas Stihl developed his first chainsaw in 1926. Only four years later the young entrepreneur ventured abroad with his products: Austria was the first market outside Germany for STIHL's gasoline-powered two-man chainsaws. Eventually, in 1967, Ges. mbH & Co. KG was founded and was thus the first ever wholly owned sales subsidiary. The 50-year success story has now been extensively celebrated in Salzburg on September 15 under the motto "Mission Future".

In retrospect, the founding of the company's own sales subsidiary was a landmark decision with lasting consequences for the future strategy of today's world market leader. "It became clear that we could operate far more effectively with our own subsidiary", said Dr. Nikolas Stihl, grandson of the company's founder and now chairman of the STIHL advisory and supervisory boards, in his speech. The new path taken in Austria was from that point onwards a kind of blueprint for success. The result: In 2017, STIHL distributes its products through 37 marketing and sales subsidiaries, some 120 importers and more than 45,000 appointed dealers in over 160 countries.

In Austria alone, STIHL has more than 800 appointed dealers. "We supply the most suitable power tool for every requirement and every application, be it a chainsaw or robotic mower. The many years of success with customers must be appropriately celebrated", said Alexander Hembach, general manager of STIHL Austria, at the gala evening which took place with a large number of staff and servicing dealers in Hangar-7 in Salzburg. "A company is more than a manufacturer of products or a provider of services. It is primarily characterized by a strong bond between people who work together every day", emphasized Hembach and expressed his sincere thanks to all those involved.

Business at STIHL Austria has grown continuously over the past five decades. "We are the undisputed market leader in chainsaws, brushcutters and many other product categories", said Nikolas Stihl. Together with Norbert Pick, STIHL executive board member responsible for marketing and sales, and Alexander Hembach, he was pleased about the large attendance at the gala evening and took the opportunity to look not only at the past, but also the future. For example, apart from expansion of the product line of cordless electric power tools, further new products in the core business of gasoline chain-

saws are in the pipeline, and STIHL is currently working intensively on new developments such as digitalization and connected products.

“The catchword digitalization is not new to STIHL. In our worldwide manufacturing network, a large number of ‘Industrie 4.0’ components and systems as well as collaborative robots have long been established“, explained Norbert Pick during an interview on the stage. A new field, which the company is currently opening up, is the development of smart connected products. “We see digitalization as an opportunity to offer our end users even better service and added value when they use our products.”

Company Portrait

The STIHL Group develops, manufactures and distributes power tools for professional forestry and agriculture as well as for garden and landscape maintenance, the construction sector and the demanding private user. The range of garden power tools from VIKING complements the product line. Products are distributed exclusively through authorized dealers, including 37 sales and marketing subsidiaries, about 120 importers and more than 45,000 servicing dealers in over 160 countries. STIHL has manufacturing plants in seven countries: Germany, USA, Brazil, Switzerland, Austria, China and the Philippines. STIHL has been the world’s top-selling chain saw brand since 1971. The company was founded in 1926 and is based in Waiblingen near Stuttgart. In 2016, STIHL achieved a worldwide sales volume of 3.46 billion euros with a workforce of 14,920.

This press release and pictures are available for downloading from the STIHL website at <http://www.stihl.de/tages-wirtschaftspresse.aspx>

Your contact for daily and business press:

ANDREAS STIHL AG & Co. KG
Dr. Stefan Caspari
Head of Corporate Communications and Public Relations
Badstrasse 115 / 71336 Waiblingen
Phone: +49 - (0) 7151/26-1402
Fax.: +49 - (0) 7151/26-81402
Email: stefan.caspari@stihl.de