



Press Information

In Memory of Dr. Heinz-Horst Deichmann The German Entrepreneur died on October 2, 2014

Essen, October 2014. Dr. Heinz-Horst Deichmann, founder of the shoe retailer chain carrying his name and deputy chairman of the board of DEICHMANN SE, passed away on Thursday, Oct. 2, 2014, at the age of 88. After the Second World War the studied physician and theologian turned his parental shoemaker shop in Essen into an international shoe chain, which today is the market leader in Europe. His son Heinrich Deichmann (52) (bearing the same name as his grandfather) has been chairman of the board since 1999. The company has been in the family's ownership for three generations.

Heinz-Horst Deichmann was born on September 30, 1926 in Essen. His father Heinrich Deichmann opened a shoemaker's shop in 1913, which he ran with his wife Julie.

When Heinz-Horst Deichmann was 13 years old, his father died from a stroke at the age of 52. After the death of her husband, Heinz-Horst Deichmann's mother Julie had to put the small business and her five children through the war years all by herself. After the war, Heinz-Horst helped his mother in the business and studied medicine and theology. During this time he also opened the first shoe stores in the German cities Essen, Düsseldorf and Oberhausen.

Given the choice to earn his living as an orthopedic surgeon or shoe dealer, the entrepreneur's gene prevailed in Dr. Heinz-Horst Deichmann in 1956. His idea to offer customers fashionable shoes in good quality at a reasonable price was welcomed in Germany during the consolidation years after the war. DEICHMANN expanded. In 1963, on the occasion of the company's 50th anniversary, there were already 16 DEICHMANN stores. The company opened its 100th store in 1975 and the 1000th German store was opened in 2006. The international expansion was pursued at the same time.

Today, DEICHMANN is represented in 23 countries in Europe and in the USA. In 2013, the company sold a total of around 167 million pairs of shoes in its 3,500 worldwide stores and employs around 35,000 people. Heinrich Deichmann, son of Dr. Heinz-Horst Deichmann, joined the company in 1980 and has been its director since 1999 as chairman of the board.

Dr. Heinz-Horst Deichmann coined the motto "The company must serve the people." This applies to the customers and the company's staff as well as people in need. His son Heinrich put this principle into writing, lived by it and put it down as a corporate mission statement for the business.

The owner family is strongly influenced by the Christian image of humanity. This led to the family's particular commitment for people in need. In 1977, Dr. Heinz-Horst Deichmann founded the charity wortundtat that is now active in India, Tanzania, Moldova, Greece and Germany and cares for some 200,000 people. The work focuses on education and medical care.

Dr. Heinz-Horst Deichmann has received numerous awards and honors for his entrepreneurial and social commitment, including the Grand Cross of Merit with Star of the Order of Merit of the Federal Republic of Germany, the Order of Merit of North Rhine-Westphalia, the price of German Retailers for lifetime achievement, the Luther-Rose of the International Martin Luther Foundation and most recently the Karl Barth prize in September.

Dr. Heinz-Horst Deichmann was Honorary Consul of India for North Rhine-Westphalia since 2000. In addition he was awarded a number of titles including honorary doctorates from the Ben-Gurion University, Beer Sheva, Israel (1990), the Nagarjuna University in Andhra Pradesh, India (2002)

and the Church University of Wuppertal (2010) and the title of "Honorary Professor" of the School of Management from the Ben-Gurion University of the Negev (1998).

Media contact:

DEICHMANN SE
Unternehmenskommunikation
Ulrich Effing
Tel.: +49 (0) 201 / 8676 – 960
ulrich_effing@deichmann.com