

70 years of adidas on August 18, 2019: from a Franconian crafts business to a global player in the world of sport

Herzogenaurach, Germany – This development has really been quite something: Adi Dassler started his company with 47 employees in the town of Herzogenaurach in Franconia, Germany, on August 18, 1949, when it was officially entered into the commercial register; 70 years later, the company now has 57,000 employees and is active on every continent. With sales of almost € 22 billion in 2018, it is one of the largest sporting goods companies in the world. The driving force behind this success is still the innovative spirit of the founder. Adolf (“Adi”) Dassler was born on November 3, 1900 and was already experimenting with sports shoes in his mother’s laundry room at the beginning of the 1920s, before then founding the company “Gebrüder Dassler Schuhfabrik” together with his brother in 1924. In 1932 and 1933, he perfected his skills at the renowned technical shoemaking college in Pirmasens.

After he and his brother separated their business interests in 1948, Adi Dassler was firmly on track for success with adidas the following year. When the German national football team surprised everyone by winning the World Cup title in 1954 in Berne, Switzerland, the brand with the 3-Stripes suddenly gained worldwide fame. The innovative, lightweight football boots with interchangeable screw-in studs worn by the German team were far superior to the conventional heavy football boots of the time.

Adi Dassler continually pursued the aim of helping athletes perform better with the aid of new and innovative products. The specially padded football boots that helped Uwe Seeler get back onto the pitch faster after an Achilles tendon injury achieved great renown. As did the little suction cups on the soles of the shoes with which Heide Ecker-Rosendahl ran and jumped to win two Olympic gold medals in Munich in 1972.

Both pairs of shoes are now stored in optimal conditions, at a constant temperature of 18 degrees Celsius with 55 percent humidity, in the company’s archive. The 40,000 items in the collection there, which cover almost 100 years of sporting history, also provide a great source of inspiration for adidas designers. Many recent products have their roots in the past. For example, the 2018 World Cup jersey took its stripes from the 1990 World Cup jersey. The same applies to current shoe models, such as the Continental 80 and the Nite Jogger, which have reinterpreted classic silhouettes. And classic shoe models, such as the Stan Smith and the Superstar, have been relaunched on the market in a number of different variations time and



again over recent decades, and are now items which many people would not want to do without.

The fact that Adi Dassler's spirit of innovation is still very much alive and well at adidas today is demonstrated by the launch this year of Futurecraft Loop, the world's first fully recyclable running shoe. Also groundbreaking are the company's Parley products, which have been available since 2015. In these, plastic waste intercepted from beaches and coastal regions is used to create footwear and apparel instead of being washed into the oceans. This year, adidas aims to produce 11 million pairs of shoes using recycled plastic waste.

Since the turn of the millennium, adidas has been one of the first sporting goods companies to also make a big impact in the lifestyle sector. As a result of collaboration with international stars such as Kanye West, Pharrell Williams and Beyoncé, the company integrates famous creative talent into its design work and thrills sneaker enthusiasts around the world with its unique creations.

About adidas

adidas is a global leader in the sporting goods industry with the core brands adidas and Reebok. Headquartered in Herzogenaurach/Germany, the company employs around 57,000 people across the globe and generated sales of just under € 22 billion in 2018.

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