

schweitzer

Italian creativity for all-round shopfitting concepts

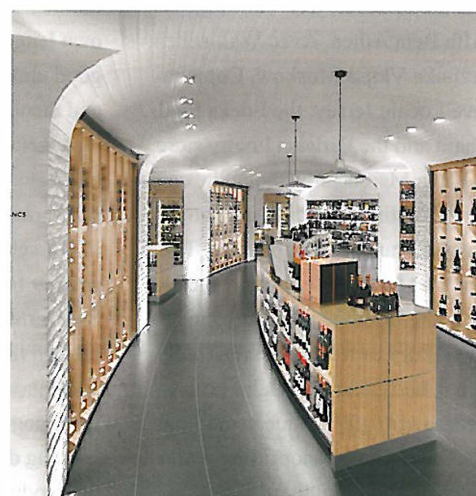
Since the turn of the 20th century, the fame of Italian design has grown to heights of class and sophistication. In the '60s and '70s, interior design reached the pinnacle of stylishness in Italy, and it was at that time that the phrases 'Bel Designo' and 'Linea Italiana' were coined. Like in decor and furniture design, Italy has also set trends in the industrial sector, for example with Zanussi's creative fridges and washing machines or Olivetti's office and electronic equipment designs. Located in Naturns, Italy, Schweitzer Project Spa not only represents the best of Italian design tradition, but also stands for a concept that covers all aspects of shopfitting from the initial idea to the opening day. Successful projects in various European cities confirm the excellent reputation Schweitzer has gained as one of the few businesses in Europe that are capable of serving both the food and the fashion sector, luxury brands and large retail chains.



Schweitzer headquarter



Prototype development



Le Bon Marché Rive Gauche and La Grande Epicerie de Paris are just two of Schweizer's customers

For more than 85 years now, Schweitzer Project Spa has been setting standards in the planning, projecting and realization of shopfitting concepts for the retail industry. The company's understanding of all-round solutions for its customers involves the development of top-quality, innovative furniture systems tailored to the special character, image and marketing strategy of a particular brand or retail chain, as well as general contracting services, ensuring that the original concept is realized efficiently and in accordance with the highest quality standards. Project management working towards the success of the customer's sales floor complements the offer.

The company's know-how in the retail and shopfitting sector has been accumulated in the course of an eventful company history that is also the story of three generations of the Schweitzer family – a family whose members have never stood still and always remained open to new ideas. The know-how and experience accumulated in the process provides a sound basis for the development of tailor-made total and detail solutions in the areas of food, fashion, retail and catering today. The company's ability to provide total solutions from a single source is enhanced by in-house production at its headquarters in Naturns, a modern center with facilities for wood and metal processing, and the close cooperation

with the Interstore design office, an independent organization established in 1987 to work exclusively for Schweitzer Project Spa and its customers. "Interstore Design focuses on package solutions," explains Christian Dempf, member of the board of directors, who can draw on many years of experience in the shopfitting sector himself. "This is what makes the company so efficient – and so successful." The foundation of Interforce as a company working on a turnkey basis in the year 2000 expanded the operations of Schweitzer Project Spa yet again, along with subsidiaries and branches in several foreign countries including Germany, Great Britain, Austria, Hungary, Switzerland, Russia and

even Hong Kong. The acquisition of a large metal production facility in Hungary in 2011 and the expansion of the company headquarters and development center in Naturns account for the steadily increasing appreciation Schweitzer enjoys in Europe and other parts of the world. About 80 years after its start from small beginnings, the family enterprise, now in its third generation, is well established in business with more than 700 employees, very positive trading performance and exports accounting for 95% of all sales. "In Italy, we receive many orders from clients in the luxury segment that take us abroad, for example on behalf of major fashion brands," adds Mr. Dempf. "Our cooperation ►

with the fashion industry includes shopfitting solutions and services for big names such as Armani, Ferragamo, Burberry's and others. We also work for major fashion chains such as H&M and C&A, however, or carry out large projects for department stores such as KaDeWe in Berlin or Steffl in Vienna." BHV Paris, Pkz Bern, Victoria's Secret, Galeries Lafayette, Woolworth, Waitrose CW, PKZ Genf, PKZ, The Pre Look and EuroShop 2011 are other important clients worth mentioning in this context.

Although fashion is an important and prestigious market segment, food is Schweitzer's core business at a share of 50%. A&P Parkridge NJ, Alfa Beta Athen, Avec Wallisellen, Azbuka Vkusa Moskow, Cooperative Locale Jersey, the Edeka food chain and the Parisian luxury store Le Bon Marché are among the company's satisfied clients and confirm its wide-ranging competence. The fact that Schweitzer is able to cover both the fashion and food sectors, the luxury as well as the retail segment, has gained the Italian enterprise a virtually unique position in the international shopfitting market. Located in the southern Tyrolean town of Naturns, the company unites the best of both worlds: Tyrolean hospitality and industriousness with Italian design competence and creativity. Moreover, the company's most recent investments in its design, development and manufacturing facilities in Italy and Hungary have expanded its capacity considerably and made it fit for future challenges. "We have gained more independence and a sound basis to serve our clients in Eastern Europe," says Mr. Dempfle.

"We also feel well prepared for global competition – and even for the next crisis that may come up." The realization of fully comprehensive solutions on behalf of customers in the retail, fashion and food sectors is above all a people's business. Mr. Dempfle not only lives up to this maxim himself and travels Italy,

Hungary and Switzerland to look for the best qualified staff, but the company's employees are guided by the overriding aim of customer satisfaction and continuously strive for improvement themselves. Internal training courses held at the company's new, purpose-built auditorium ensure that the highest levels of staff qualification are maintained. In all, Schweitzer Project employs as many as fifteen different nationalities and focuses on fast, flexible and highly qualified people who are able to adapt to customers' wishes and specific requirements. Working with people from different nations not only means being able to communicate with customers in their own language, but also ensures a good understanding of their habits and mentality. Exports are supported by a well-organized distribution network and the participation in trade fair shows, above all the EuroShop in Dusseldorf, Germany, as well as smaller fairs. Germany, France and Switzerland are the most important foreign markets for Schweitzer at present, with Eastern Europe coming up strongly as the rollout business is being developed via the Hungarian production plant. Moreover, Schweitzer is a competent partner to globally operating clients with operations in Europe. "From design right through to realization, clients can use our capabilities like a toolbox," concludes Mr. Dempfle. "In all, our offer is virtually unbeatable and makes us one of the most important players in the shopfitting sector." ■

Schweitzer

Industriezone 7/9

39025 Naturns

Italy

Phone: +39 0473 670670

Fax: +39 0473 667326

info@schweitzerproject.com

www.schweitzerproject.com

Solid as a rock

Natural stone is one of the world's greatest resources for construction. An alternative to bricks or wood, natural stone comes in a variety of shapes and colours with tinted splashes throughout. Wachenfeld Natursteinwerk GmbH from Volksmarsen-Külte, Germany, is an expert in natural stone. Founded in 1883 and now in the fifth generation of the family, the company not only sources natural stone but uses it in high-class construction projects.



Wachenfeld's spectrum is broad-ranging. Just over a third of its work is in the construction of building facing with air space. Exclusive projects, such as villas or other high-class real estate, make up the same share of the business. About one fifth of the company's work is in overhanging staircase systems. "The staircase systems are our own product," Managing Director Michael Wachenfeld highlights. "We hold a European patent on the systems, which were developed by my father." Wachenfeld also gets about 5% of its business from trade and another 5% in the restoration of solid constructions with masonry.

Wachenfeld has an export rate of 30 to 40%, and the vast majority of that comes from overhanging staircases. Globalization has helped Wachenfeld evolve, especially since the early 1990s. "We were able to source materials in China and India instead of just from Europe," says Walter Wachenfeld, who heads the company with his son. "We were able to move our projects overseas, as well, though our focus is still on the EU." A few references for staircases include the jeweler Cartier in London, the Construction Bank of China in Beijing and the Gorbunov Palace of Culture in Moscow. Wachenfeld has completed facades in England, Ireland and southern France, among



Exclusive interiors in villas and other high-profile real estate are part of the broad range of Wachenfeld Natursteinwerk products

other locations. "Our staircases tend to be for wealthy private individuals, while our facades are for commercial clients, such as banks and hotels," Walter Wachenfeld says... ■

You can read the whole article at www.european-business-journal.com

Wachenfeld Natursteinwerk GmbH

Am Steinbruch 10

34471 Volksmarsen-Külte

Germany

Phone: +49 5691 8046-0

Fax: +49 5691 8046-80

info@wachenfeld-naturstein.de

www.wachenfeld-naturstein.de