RECARO

Press Information

Interview with Recaro Brand Director Patrick Gevelmann

A consistent brand experience in all interactions and contacts with Recaro

As Brand Director, Patrick Gevelmann is responsible for centralized brand management and supervision at Recaro Holding. In addition, he is also the point of contact, in-house expert and sounding board for all brand-related topics for the Recaro Aircraft Seating and Recaro Child Safety divisions, as well as for licensing partner Recaro Automotive Seating. In this interview, he gives insights into the special features of integrated brand management at Recaro and its success factors.

What makes the Recaro brand special? What distinguishes it from competitors?

Whether it be child car seats, racing shells for sports cars, or seats in commercial vehicles or aircraft – Recaro has a worldwide reputation as a premium brand that is tied to three core benefits. First of all, Recaro inspires through Ingenious Design, which we understand as the combination of functionality, ergonomics and aesthetics. Furthermore, Recaro is committed to always offering our customers extraordinary quality. This includes not only the durability and robustness of our products, but also the good service that we provide throughout our entire relationship with the customer. Last but not least, Recaro stands for the highest safety standards. For us, the

RECARO Holding GmbH
Jahnstrasse 1, 70597 Stuttgart, Germany
Press Contact:
Hendrik Ockenga, +49 711 25277-240, hendrik.ockenga@recaro.com

physical safety and security of human beings is the standard against which everything is measured.

What challenges do you encounter as brand managers in the Recaro Group?

One big challenge is certainly the fact that we and our brand are represented in three completely different business areas. This diversity has its roots in our history: the Recaro Group is a family company with a corporate history spanning more than 100 years. Our origins go back to Karosseriewerk Reutter & Co., a company that was founded by Wilhelm Reutter in Stuttgart in 1906. With the sale of the body plant in 1963, the focus shifted from vehicle exteriors to interiors – and this is when the seating specialist Recaro (the short form of REutter CAROsserie) was born. During the years that followed, independent divisions developed under the Recaro umbrella. Today, Recaro Aircraft Seating and Recaro Child Safety belong to our group. They are united by Recaro Holding, which holds the rights to the Recaro brand and which is the licensing partner of the company Recaro Automotive Seating. These heterogeneous business areas bring a certain complexity to the management of the brand: in addition to parents, the customers of our brand include decision-makers in retail as well as OEM buyers in the automotive and aviation industries.

What distinguishes integrated brand management at Recaro? What are its success factors?

The brand is not just a top priority in a few specific specialized departments, but has been recognized throughout the company as a decisive factor in our success in international competition. We have therefore made management of the brand a permanent component of our strategic process. In 2012, we transformed what was once a classic financial holding company into an integrating brand holding

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company, thereby creating the organizational preconditions needed to sustainably increase the value of the brand.

Since then, we have been pursuing the umbrella strategy for the brand that we call “Recaro: One Common Brand,” under which the brand assumes an integrating function for the entire organization. When we implemented the umbrella strategy, we worked with colleagues in the divisions to answer the question of what Recaro specifically represents. After defining the brand identity, we interpreted it for the individual business areas and then saw to it that every employee of the group is able to clearly understand what the brand represents and what makes it unique. We also conduct group-wide measures to ensure that we present ourselves to the outside world in a unified, consistent way: all employees attend Brand Identity Workshops, where they are trained as brand ambassadors. To assist them further, they also receive copies of the Recaro Brand Book and the Brand Pocket Guide. In addition, the Recaro Brand Film also emotionally conveys the characteristics of the Recaro brand. Last but not least, all social media content related to the brand is presented in the Recaro Stream in a unified way that spans all of the different business areas. After all, in the end it is the behavior of our employees at all levels that makes it possible for customers to experience the promises we make in our communications on a daily basis. In this way, we can ensure that our customers will have a consistent brand experience in all of their interactions and contacts with Recaro.

How do you measure and guide the success of the Recaro brand?

What we call the Recaro House of Brand serves as our brand management model. It combines market analyses, brand management modules and KPI-based reporting instruments. This makes it possible to actually plan and measure increases in the

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brand's value. We also get important insights and impulses from market research that is conducted in the most important markets around the world. This means that we are always up to date on the status of our brand, the strengths that make it stand out from the competition, and the weaknesses that it has in the eyes of the target audience. All of these results are regularly fed back into the company and are brought together in the Brand Report.

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Press Contact RECARO Group:
Hendrik Ockenga
Telephone: +49 711 25277-240
hendrik.ockenga@recaro.com