

The first BIC[®] ballpoint

In 1945 Marcel BICH (1914-1994) started working with Edouard BUFFARD (1908-1996), manufacturing parts for fountain pens in a factory in Clichy, just outside of Paris. During this period, Marcel BICH realized the enormous potential for the ballpoint pen. Subsequently, he adapted and improved a process for making ballpoints invented by the Hungarian Laszlo BIRO and in December 1950, launched his own ballpoint pen in France under the BIC[®] brand, a shortened and more memorable version of his own name. The high quality and affordable price of the BIC[®] Cristal[®] meant that it was quickly adopted by an increasing number of consumers.



Marcel Bich, founder of Société BIC

GEOGRAPHICAL EXPANSION

Winning foreign markets

At an early stage, Marcel BICH began winning foreign markets by creating subsidiaries, taking over foreign companies, signing agreements with agents, and arranging licensing agreements with companies to produce parts of the BIC product. Between 1953 and 1957, BIC entered into the Belgian, Dutch, Swiss, Spanish and Austrian markets. BIC Italy was created in 1954 and BIC Brazil in 1956. In 1957, BIC acquired BIRO Swan in England, thereby moving into this key market and consequently the markets of Ireland, Australia, New Zealand, South Africa. BIC began its conquest of the huge North American market in 1958 and in 1959, BIC entered the Scandinavian market. Throughout this time BIC also pursued its development in Africa and the Middle East. In 1995, BIC significantly strengthened its position in Eastern and Central Europe and in Asia in 1997. In 2009, BIC Group and Cello Group signed an agreement whereby BIC Group acquired 40% of Cello pens, number one for writing instruments in India.

PRODUCT DIVERSIFICATION

Stationery

The BIC[®] Cristal[®] ballpoint quickly revolutionized the writing habits of millions of consumers throughout the world. Not settling for just one model, BIC has always worked to develop other writing products and to build up a complete range of stationery items. In 1979, the Group acquired Conté, a famous French brand for drawing and coloring products. Following the same logic, BIC moved into correction products by acquiring the Wite-Out[®] brand in the United States in 1992, followed by the Tipp-Ex[®] brand in 1997. In the same year, the BIC Group acquired Sheaffer[®], manufacturer and worldwide distributor of luxury writing instruments. In 2004, BIC acquired the French company Stypen, market leader in fountain pens for schoolchildren and in 2006, PIMACO, a Brazilian adhesive labels company.



BIC provides a large range of stationery products

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The BIC[®] Cristal[®] is the largest selling ballpoint pen in the world.

On average it provides two kilometers of writing



Lighters

The BIC[®] Maxi lighter offers 3,000 lights



In 1973, BIC diversified its business by launching the BIC[®] adjustable flame pocket lighter. Its "maxi" size, the quality of its flame and its shape, especially designed for a good grip, soon led to its growing success. The line was expanded with the successive launch of different models (mini and slim[™] sizes), decorated lighters, and electronic lighters. In 2000, BIC developed a line of utility lighters for open fires, barbecues, and candles; lighter cases were introduced in 2002.

The multi-purposes BIC[®] Megalighter[™]



Shavers

On average
the BIC®
Orange
ensures
7 days of
shaving



In 1975 BIC again diversified its activity by launching the BIC® single-blade shaver. With the first one-piece shaver on the market, BIC revolutionized shaving habits. The company went on to develop a whole range of shavers: single, twin and triple-blade shavers, for both men and women who are looking for a practical, simple and affordable shaver. The range includes the BIC® Soleil® for women, the BIC Comfort 3® and the very recent BIC® Easy launched in 2009 which provides the consumer with a handle and 6 refills all in the same pack.



*The BIC® Soleil® Scent™
triple-blade shaver with new
colors and a scented handle*

Promotional products

As far back as 1969 in the United States, BIC had the idea of offering other brands a selection of its products, especially stationery and lighters, for use as advertising aids. In 1997, this business known as BIC Graphic spread to Europe and the Middle East. This imprinting service is carried out in dedicated BIC plants. In August 2007, BIC Graphic USA acquired Atchison Products, Inc., a supplier of promotional bags. In 2009, BIC completed two major acquisitions in the promotional products area: Antalis Promotional Products (APP), an European based distributor, and Norwood Promotional products, the second largest supplier of non-apparel promotional products in the USA.



*A large range of supports to
print your logo or advertising*

Other products

In 1981 the Group branched out into the production and selling of windsurf boards. Today, BIC Sport offers a full range of windsurf boards, surfboards, and kayaks.

BIC has also successfully distributed certain products (pantyhose, batteries...) in key markets.

Following this strategy of diversification, the BIC® phone was launched in France in 2008 and expanded to Spain in 2009.



*O'pen Bic, launched
in April 2006*

BIC® phone



KEY DATES

Geographic expansion

- 1950 Launch of the BIC® Cristal® ballpoint pen in France
- 1953 Creation of SOCIÉTÉ BIC
- 1953-57 BIC in Belgium, Netherlands, Switzerland, Spain, Austria, Italy
- 1956 BIC in Brazil
- 1957 BIC in the United Kingdom, Ireland, Australia, New Zealand, South Africa
- 1958 BIC in North America
- 1959 BIC in Scandinavia
- 1960 BIC in Africa and Middle East
- 1995 BIC in Eastern Europe
- 1997 BIC in South East Asia
- 2009 BIC in India: Agreement with Cello Pens

Product diversification

- 1969 Promotional products activity in the United States
- 1973 Launch of the BIC® lighter
- 1975 Launch of the BIC® shaver
- 1979 Acquisition of Conté®
- 1981 Creation of BIC® Sport
- 1992 Acquisition of Wite-Out®
- 1997 Acquisition of Tipp-Ex® and Sheaffer®
- 2006 Acquisition of PIMACO in Brazil
- 2007 BIC Graphic USA acquires Atchison Products
- 2009 Acquisition of Antalis Promotional Products and Norwood promotional Products