

Growing the strength of the GORE-TEX® brand:

W.L. Gore & Associates intensifies its engagement in Eastern Europe

With its GORE-TEX® brand the American company W.L. Gore & Associates is the world's leading manufacturer of functional fabrics. Through selling GORE-TEX® products for different segments (garments, footwear, gloves & accessories) and categories (i.e. mountaineering, snowsports, motorcycling and citywear) some 25,000 retailers throughout Europe reach a sales volume of more than €1.5 billion (2006). In order to consolidate the company's leading position in the market in the long term, Gore is planning to invest €80 million in the GORE-TEX® brand in Europe over the next three years. Some of this money is being channelled into Eastern Europe. As this is one of the markets of the future, Gore will be intensifying its operations in Eastern Europe from autumn 2007 onwards.

We spoke to Holger Pigors who is responsible for the GORE-TEX® garments business in Eastern Europe. He is based in Feldkirchen, near Munich in Germany.

[Name of magazine]: Since when has Gore been playing an active role in Eastern Europe?

Pigors: We have been active in Eastern Europe with our GORE-TEX® brand since 1992. However, we have not yet supplied many key customers. Over the past two years we have been investing heavily and establishing a lot of new contacts.



[Name of magazine]: Why has Eastern Europe become so important for manufacturers of premium brands?

Pigors: The decision at the beginning of July in favour of Sochi as host for the Olympic Winter Games in 2014 has once again shown how strongly Eastern Europe wants to achieve its goals and set new international standards. We are seeing an increase in the propensity to invest and greater economic potential. All over Eastern Europe we are witnessing a significant increase in the desire for higher standards (of living) and in the willingness to invest in order to achieve this. The demand for genuine premium brands such as GORE-TEX® is therefore also growing. The appropriate markets and the necessary infrastructure have been developing extremely quickly over the past two years and will continue to do so.

[Name of magazine]: Will Gore be investing all over Eastern Europe?

Pigors: No. Initially we will be concentrating our efforts on the core markets in Poland, the Czech Republic and Russia. In these markets we will be trying to raise the brand awareness of GORE-TEX® in line with our new European marketing and communications concept. We will also be intensifying our sales and marketing activities in the three GORE-TEX® product segments garments, footwear and accessories.

[Name of magazine]: What is your main objective?

Pigors: Our strategic objective is to extend the GORE-TEX® brand promise beyond the well-known performance features of waterproofness, windproofness and breathability. This equally applies to Eastern Europe. After all, new generation GORE-TEX® products offer enhanced comfort and durable protection. Our business objective is to significantly increase our turnover in these three countries within the next three years.

[Name of magazine]: What exactly are you planning?

Pigors: We are planning a whole range of country specific activities on all business levels. Some of these are taking place in co-operation with internationally operating



customers such as The North Face, Rossignol, Salewa, Arc'teryx and Bugatti, others with domestic manufacturers who are licensed to produce GORE-TEX® garments. In all three countries we will be launching our new campaign through the major print media in the outdoor, travel and sports segments as well as through the online and digital media. We have ensured that the branded products of our licensed manufacturing partners are well integrated into this campaign. There will also be eye-catching promotional materials in the retail shops and other consumer hotspots focussing on the travel and outdoor segments with particular emphasis on winter snowsports.

[Name of magazine]: Can you give us some examples?

Pigors: In Poland we will be advertising on the intercity trains running between Warsaw and Berlin and between Gdansk, Warsaw and Krakow. In the major skiing resorts, such as Zakopane, we will be equipping the ski instructors and mountain rescue teams. In the Czech Republic we will be targeting travellers using the brand new tilting train, which runs between Prague and Ostrawa and was featured in the last James Bond film. They, and also commuters using Narodni Trida tube station, one of the busiest in Prague, will be spotting advertisements informing them about the latest GORE-TEX® product solutions. These offer the human body enhanced protection and durable comfort. Our advertisements will also be attracting the attention of the over one million annual visitors to Prague's recently refurbished zoo.

[Name of magazine]: And what are you doing in Russia?

Pigors: In Russia we are focussing our efforts on Moscow and St. Petersburg. In addition to communicating through the classical media of print, television and radio, high-circulation retailer catalogues and directly at the point of sale, from September to March 2008 there will be bill board type ads in the centre of Moscow and in the major ski resorts such as Sochi and Sarochani. We are also co-operating with the charter airline Vim-Avia and are planning an advertising campaign in their aircraft to grab the attention of all those Russians who love to travel. Furthermore, we will be attending quite a number of trade fairs and other events at which garments can be ordered. In



Russia we will be drawing the same analogy as in our European-wide advertising campaign and targeting visitors to the new zoo in Moscow with full-size advertisements.

[Name of magazine]: Will everyone in Eastern Europe have to speak fluent English in order to find out more about GORE-TEX®?

Pigors: No. From September in all three countries there will be GORE-TEX® and WINDSTOPPER® Internet sites in the local language. Visitors to these sites will be able to find all kinds of information, including descriptions of domestically and internationally produced products and a local store finder. Furthermore, all products sold in Eastern Europe are now being supplied with guarantee booklets in the local language. Even our standard retailer programme involving comprehensive in-house or external training courses taught by qualified GORE-TEX® employees will be offered in the local language.

Contact:

W.L.Gore & Associates GmbH
Aiblinger Str. 60
D-83620 Feldkirchen-Westerham
<http://www.gore-tex.de>

Garments:

Hans-Peter Rudolph

Tel: +49 / (0)8063 / 80-1843

Fax: +49 / (0)8063 / 80-1900

Mobile: + 49 (0) 172/814 60 66

hrudolph@wlgore.com

© 2007 W.L. Gore & Associates, GORE-TEX®, GUARANTEED TO KEEP YOU DRY™, GORE-TEX® XCR® GORE® and designs are trademarks of W.L. Gore & Associates.

