



Direct and dialogue marketing at Adidas: A tradition of top technical performance

To maintain its leadership position in the global sporting goods industry, the Adidas Group has to keep up with the latest trends in technology. This is true not just for their products but for their communications systems, too. In this area, Adidas has had great success working with messaging specialists Retarus.

When people talk about the "Miracle of Bern", it's not long until someone mentions that the football boots with replaceable cleats that Adolf "Adi" Dassler made for the German team played a role in its legendary 1954 World Cup victory. Dassler founded Adidas in 1948 and one year later he registered the three stripes as a trademark.

Continuous innovation and expertise in all areas of sport have allowed Adidas to become one of the global leaders in the sporting goods industry in its nearly 60-year history. After splitting with the Salomon Group and taking over Reebok International Ltd., the new Adidas Group now employs more than 25,000 people around the world and its annual sales total about 9.5 billion Euros. Its product lines include sport shoes, clothing and equipment, all made using the latest technology.

In the global world of sport, Adidas has a global focus, too: from the group's headquarters in Herzogenaurach, the company now oversees more than 110 subsidiaries worldwide. The strategic business units running, football and tennis as well as the centre for research and development are located here, too. Other business units, design studios and development and acquisitions departments are scattered around the world.

In order to strengthen and build on its position as a market leader, the Adidas Group is dependent on a stable and reliable communications system. In the area of direct and dialogue marketing, Adidas relies on the fax solutions of the Munich-based company retarus GmbH.

Classic channels of communication

The sporting goods sector in which the Adidas Group works is a saturated business environment that is bound by tradition. One sign of this is the fact that the entire industry continues to use the fax as the basis of communication. Modern methods of communication such as email have so far not been implemented in any meaningful way. Instead, the industry continues to rely on communication by fax, which is economical and still allows for rapid response.

In order to provide information to sporting goods stores, shoe stores, fashion boutiques, branches, groups and mail-order houses quickly, reliably and at a good price, Adidas uses the proven abilities of Retarus Solutions Faxolution® Broadcast. And since April 2005, they have also been using Faxolution® for Windows®. There are many areas where these solutions can be used: for example, the company uses faxes to alert retail stores to new products, to announce price updates, inventory reduction or discontinued merchandise, to carry out customer surveys and data updates and to pass on information about upcoming marketing plans in more traditional media such as television and radio advertising or through catalogues.

High volume and high quality

This makes for a considerable volume of faxes: Adidas faxes between 20,000 and 40,000 pages every month. Adidas naturally wants to do more than simply get this volume of faxes out, they want to ensure that the transmissions are of the highest quality. Faxolution® for Windows® also allows high resolution faxes to be sent. For our customer Adidas, this is especially important. Retarus sales manager Norbert Radmacher: "The sporting goods sector has evolved into a lifestyle sector, in which design and visual presence play a significant role in establishing corporate identity. Low resolution faxes simply will not do in this market. Faxolution® for Windows®, the solution developed in-house by Retarus, allows Adidas to transmit their image when sending faxes, too."

Other positives for using Retarus for faxing include individualised headers, which simplify identification in cases of non-delivery.

In addition, this system employs various blocked sender lists as well as BITKOM's Robinson list, in order to avoid sending unwanted faxes.

Technology box:

- **Efficient tool for marketing, sales, investor and public relations**
- **Send faxes directly from any Windows application**
- **No additional investment in hardware or wiring**
- **Immediate availability of sending status reports provides high degree of transparency**
- **Employs blocked user lists, such as BITKOM's Robinson list**

Ease and flexibility of use

But don't let the impressive performance of Retarus Faxolution® for Windows® fool you – it is very easy to use: To the user, the application looks like a regular Windows printer driver, which can be operated from any Windows programme just like a printer. Special instructions are hardly required. If you want to send a fax via Faxolution® for Windows®, you just enter the fax number or load a list of numbers. Everything else is completely automatic. The status of the transmissions can be checked anytime online at the click of a button. In the background, the programme accesses the Retarus fax infrastructure directly. This makes all the services of the redundant Retarus computer centre available to the user. This means that faxes of almost any size can be sent around the world quickly and at a favourable price with no additional investment in hardware, wiring or fax software.

For Willi Geißdörfer, Adidas Senior Manager Sales Service, working with Retarus has been a great success, one he intends to continue in the future: "Retarus is a technology leader in electronic corporate communication, so we will be well taken care of regardless of what technological developments take place in the future."