



October 2013

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history



Marcel Bich, founder of  
Société BIC in 1950

## The first BIC® ballpoint

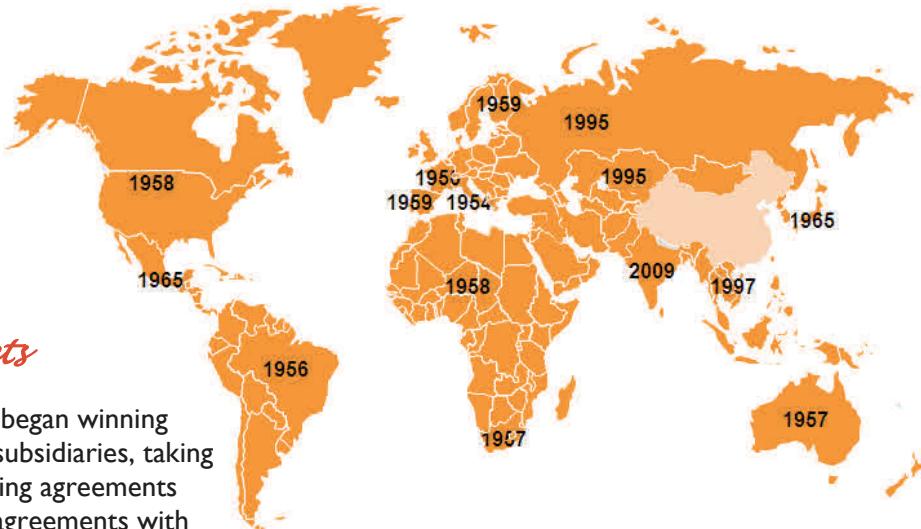
In 1945 Marcel Bich (1914-1994) started working with Edouard Buffard (1908-1996), manufacturing parts for fountain pens in a factory in Clichy, just outside of Paris (France). During this period, Marcel Bich realized the enormous potential for the ballpoint pen. Subsequently, he adapted and improved 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® ballpoint pen meant that it was quickly adopted by an increasing number of consumers.



# GEOGRAPHICAL EXPANSION

## *Winning foreign markets*

**A**t 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® products. 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 stake in Cello pens, number one for writing instruments in India, which becomes majority stake in 2013.



## KEY DATES

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



## PRODUCT DIVERSIFICATION

### Stationery

The BIC® Cristal® ballpoint pen 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® European 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 (since then sold under the BIC® brand) and in 2006, Pimaco, a Brazilian adhesive labels company.

*BIC® Cristal® launched in 1950 is the largest selling ballpoint pen in the world. On average it provides two kilometers of writing.*

#### In Museums

In 2005 the BIC® Cristal® pen was made a part of the collection of the Department of Architecture and Design of the Museum of Modern Art of New York (MoMA) and since 2006 it is part of the collection of the Musée national d'art moderne/ Centre de création industrielle-Centre Georges Pompidou Paris.





## Lighters

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.



*Launched in 1970, the BIC® Maxi lighter offers 3,000 lights.*



### *In Museums*

In 2005 the BIC® Maxi was made a part of the collection of the Department of Architecture and Design of the Museum of Modern Art of New York (MoMA) and since 2006 it is part of the collection of the Musée national d'art moderne/ Centre de création industrielle-Centre Georges Pompidou Paris.



## Shavers

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® Easy which provides the consumer with a handle and 6 refills all in the same pack and the Flex 3- or 4-blades with a new technology of moveable blades.

*On average the BIC® Orange shaver, launched in 1975, ensures 7 days of shaving.*



BIC® Miss Soleil® triple-blade for women and BIC® Flex & Easy (1 handle + 4 cartridges).



## *Advertising and 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 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. In 2010, advertising and promotional products (BIC APP) became the BIC Group's 4th category.

NORWOOD  
 BIC GRAPHIC

## Other products

In 1981 the Group branched out into the production and selling of windsurf boards. Today, BIC Sport offers a full range of water sport products including windsurf boards, surfboards and stand up paddle (SUP), kayaks and sailing dinghies for children. BIC has also successfully distributed specific products (pantyhose, batteries...) in key markets. Following this strategy of diversification, BIC® phone was launched in France in 2008 and expanded to Spain. In 2012, BIC in collaboration with Intel launched in France BIC® Education, a next generation digital educational solution for schools, including digital tablets for students and educational software for teachers.



BIC® phone : telephone, SMS, camera, radio

*BIC® Education, a simple and innovative educational solution for primary school, combining handwriting and digital technology.*



## PRODUCT KEY DATES

- 1950 Launch of the BIC® Cristal® ballpoint pen in France
- 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 Acquisition of Atchison Products, Inc.
- 2009 Acquisition of Antalis Promotional Products and Norwood Promotional products
- 2011 Acquisition of Sologear in the USA, fabricant de Flamedisk®
- Acquisition of Angstrom Power Incorporated in Canada
- 2012 Lancement de la solution éducative BIC® Education



*O'pen BIC, a dinghy for kids launched in 2006 and the Stand Up Paddle launched in 2008.*



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