

IMAP CREATING VALUE
REISENTHEL

Finding the Right Successor



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IMAP Germany recently advised the shareholders of Reisenthel Accesories ("Reisenthel"), on the sale of a majority stake in the company to Swiss-German financial investor, INVISION.

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REISENTHEL

Reisenthel is the leading manufacturer of shopping baskets, bags and trolleys for the shopping, travel, cosmetics and kid's segments. Due to its products many unique special features, it is subject to a high level of imitation and spends hundreds of thousands of euros every year in the fight against product piracy. With humble beginnings, the Reisenthel family has spent the last 50 years building their brand, with products characterized by innovation, award-winning functional design and high quality. Since the 1990s, the company has focused on manufacturing shopping bags, with the launch of its famous carrybag®, made from aluminum and textiles, in 2003. This contemporary evolution of the wicker basket is an absolute bestseller around the globe.

Having founded the company in 1971, nearly 50 years later, 75-year-old Peter Reisenthel was looking to retire. With his son Patrick not looking to take over the role of CEO/sole shareholder, he sought to find a suitable succession option and new trustworthy "hands" in which to leave his company, whilst maintaining a small interest in the business, stating: "One has to keep moving. This is precisely the strategy I have been implementing in my company for 50 years and why I have decided to tread new paths, let go and sell Reisenthel Accessories." At the time, Reisenthel

employed approximately 80 employees, many of whom have been with the company for 10+ years. In order to secure a long-term successful future of the company, the Reisenthel family mandated IMAP Germany to initiate a structured sales process.

IMAP Germany began by approaching potential buyers both nationally and internationally.

Reisenthel serves various niche markets in the durable consumer goods sector. However, in every niche segment, the company has different peers, mainly luggage and handbag companies, but also outdoor goods specialists. Therefore, there was no "obvious strategic buyer". Hence IMAP also reached out to private equity investors and family offices, with an interest in the consumer sector, some of which, already had portfolio companies in the sector.

The opportunity to invest in Reisenthel was very well received and a significant number of non-binding offers were made. Financial investors in particular, saw high development potential in the company for several reasons:

1. Strong brand equity

Reisenthel is positioned as a premium brand, with innovative and high-quality lifestyle products and thus, a high level of brand awareness. Reisenthel already has a strong foundation, which is important for the continuous development of the brand.

2. Pioneer of the growing trend towards sustainability

Investors shared IMAP's opinion: The trend towards a more sustainable lifestyle is playing directly into Reisenthel's hands: The company's shopping segment in particular offers customers aesthetically pleasing and functional solutions which reduce plastic consumption. This product potential could be marketed even further.

3. Internationalization

Reisenthel products are sold in circa 50 countries. To date, the majority of sales are domestic. Potential investors were sure that the product category "functional bags" is also in demand internationally and that this potential could be tapped into by Reisenthel. Further growth requires an effective internationalization strategy that can be implemented with the help of the right partner.


4. Distribution & target group

Most investors agreed: Reisenthel has a strong multi-channel sales strategy. The products are, however, also well suited for further growth in the "direct to consumer" (DTC) business, focusing on online sales and thus, potentially rejuvenating the brand to reach a larger target group.



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REISENTHEL



CONSUMER & RETAIL 

INVISION

SWITZERLAND

Acquired Majority Control
of Business Operations

reisenstheil.

GERMANY

IMAP

ADVISED ON SALE OF COMPANY

Transaction signing with members of the Reisenstheil and INVISION teams.

Stepping down from the role as CEO, Peter Reisenstheil left big shoes that needed to be filled. This was one of the biggest challenges for IMAP Germany during the sales process as some investors were wary of trying to find the right person to follow in his footsteps. During the ongoing process, a few investors however, had found potential buy-in managers which would ensure the stable development of the company's business following the transition period.

One of these investors was Swiss-German investment company, INVISION. Since its foundation in 1997, INVISION has become one of the leading investment companies in succession situations and growth financing in Europe. Crucially, it has significant experience in the delicate business of entrepreneurial families wishing to settle their legacy. With previous investments in 50+ companies, INVISION is an expert, specifically in the German consumer goods sector and in all its investments, places emphasis on thoroughly understanding the specific needs of the company, as well as its founders, developing individual and tailor-made solutions.

INVISION acquired a majority stake in Reisenstheil Accessoires in December 2019. During the takeover process, it found a new Managing Director, Alexander

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Peter Reisenstheil

Selch, who brought with him significant industry expertise, built up during many years of experience and responsibility in sales, digital business, marketing, finance and brand management. Following his appointment as CEO, Alexander quoted: “I am delighted to be taking over the management of such a strong family business. In the future, we want to work together to move Reisenstheil forward both strategically and in terms of content and to increase brand awareness both nationally and internationally.”

Rita Reisenstheil and her son Patrick initially remained part of the management team, in order to pass on the “Reisenstheil” DNA, with Rita stating: “We have built up the company with a lot of passion and want it to continue.”

Taking a role on the Board, Peter Reisenstheil commented: “My gratitude goes to my family and to our employees. Thanks to their commitment, Reisenstheil is a healthy and well-positioned company. With the help of the German IMAP team, we found a reliable and down-to-earth partner with extensive knowledge concerning consumer goods. It is particularly important to me that INVISION as the new shareholder has experience with German family businesses and therefore, understands and continues Reisenstheil's corporate culture.”

Since acquiring a majority stake in Reisenstheil, INVISION continues to support the further development and internationalization of the brand, investment in new products and sustainable growth of the company. Partner at INVISION, Martin Spirig commented: “We would like to thank the Reisenstheil family for their trust in INVISION to support shaping the future of this successful and renowned company. Through the quality, functionality and popularity of its products, Reisenstheil has developed an enormous brand power, which we plan to maintain and expand together with the founding family, management and employees.” ■