

HEMAR HIGH-TECH TOY TRUCKS

A GLIMPSE INTO THE LIFE OF A TOY SME



ENGINEERING SUCCESS

Hemar was founded by two engineers with years of experience as University lecturers.

Mariusz and Agnieszka Musialik and their parents run Hemar, a well-known Polish company specialised in plastic toys. The parents, Marek and Henryka, both engineers, founded the company in 1982 after working as assistant lecturers at a University for a few years. Marek designed the company's first machine to mould toys just after he defended his doctoral thesis in that same year. At that time, the family could only count on the support of one employee and one machine.

Despite hard times in the beginning when no bank loans were available in the country, the Musialik family succeeded in obtaining basic raw materials and started making toys that soon became very successful. Their first spinning tops were followed by cars and dolls and their continuous growth allowed them to receive a loans in the 1990s after the fall of the old political regime.



Today, Hemar employs one hundred and eighty people in its manufacturing site in Wola Hankowska, near Częstochowa. The use of advanced technology in its toys has even enabled the company to branch out and it now also employs around ninety staff at a division specialised in real automotive components, which was created in 1992. Both plastic toy trucks and brake discs for real vehicles are designed and produced with the same sophisticated 3D technology and machinery that Hemar uses to make toy moulds. The fact that Hemar makes its own moulds gives the company a lot of independence. Thanks to its thirteen modern moulding machines, Hemar's range nowadays includes more than two hundred products.

The company sells one third of its toys in Poland, whilst the rest make their way to homes in Eastern and South-Eastern Europe. From modest beginnings, Hemar's turnover now reaches almost 4.5 million euros per year, making it a real success story.

NEED FOR ENFORCEMENT



The path towards success has not been without challenges though, and the company finds it very difficult to prevent rogue traders from creating parasitic copies – also known as 'lookalikes' – of their products. It is almost impossible for Hemar to enforce legal requirements to protect its intellectual property rights.

In order to protect creative businesses and their products, the company believes that well-funded enforcement of the existing rules by market surveillance authorities is needed. Hemar would also welcome more EU-level coordination and cooperation in terms of border controls.

Parasitic copying by rogue traders is a major threat for Hemar

OVER-REGULATION



While EU safety legislation can be burdensome, Hemar sees it as necessary to protect children as long as it is scientifically justified

Hemar believes that decision makers should use the 'think small first' principle to create conditions that allow SMEs to remain competitive and innovative. EU legislation is often burdensome for companies like Hemar, which is concerned that over-regulation often puts reputable companies out of business while creating a gap that is filled by dishonest traders. Ever-increasing safety rules are the biggest challenge Hemar faces: in order to understand and comply with the multitude of very technical rules, expertise and significant resources in terms of time and money are needed. Nevertheless, as long as these rules are based on scientific evidence, Hemar sees them as essential for ensuring children's safety.

ENCOURAGING CHAMPIONS

Hemar believes that play is fundamental for children's healthy development



Hemar is proud of its history, its toys, and their contribution to the local community life. The company is convinced that play is fundamental for children's healthy development. In an effort to enable all children to play, it regularly donates toys to children taking part in sports tournaments and provides toys to the local church for distribution.

'Authorities need to use the 'think small first' principle to create conditions that allow SMEs to remain competitive and innovative'

Mariusz Musialik, Director



With around 5.8 million children under 15 (15% of the population), annual toy sales in **Poland** reach around €480 million. Toy production is concentrated in the region of Silesia. The Polish toy market is very seasonal with around one in two toys bought during the last quarter of the year.

The **European Union** (EU) is the largest toy market in the world (27% of global sales), meeting the diverse and evolving demands of its 79 million children. Over 99% of the almost 5,000 toy companies are small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs). With over 220,000 people working in the sector in the EU, toy companies play a key role in Europe's economic fabric. The toy industry is highly international and is one of the most dynamic business sectors in Europe: around 60% of toys on the market each year are newly developed. The sector is also highly seasonal, with consumers making the majority of purchases during the Christmas period.

The **Polish Toy Association** is an organisation representing Polish industries specialising in toys and products for children. It has more than 60 company members including manufacturers, distributors, exporters and importers active in the toy sector. Wader-Wozniak is a member of the Polish Toy Association.

Toy Industries of Europe (TIE) is the trade association for the European toy industry. Members include companies and national associations from across Europe.

