



2014: 100TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE BIRTH OF MARCEL BICH, FOUNDER AND PRESIDENT OF BIC COMPANY

July 25, 2014 - 2014 marks the hundredth anniversary of the birth of Marcel Bich and the twentieth anniversary of his passing away. Entrepreneur and visionary, Marcel Bich has left a strong mark on the French industry.

Originally from Val d'Aoste, Marcel Bich was born in Turin (Italy) on July 29, 1914, where he spent his early childhood before moving to Spain and then to France with his parents. He became a French citizen in 1932 and pursued his studies in law.

In 1944, Marcel Bich and his associate Edouard Buffard settled in Clichy (France) and began to manufacture parts for writing instruments in their factory PPA (Porte-plume, Porte-mines et Accessoires).

In 1950, his visionary spirit led him to become interested in the ball point pen, for which he foresaw enormous potential. Marcel Bich acquired a patent from the Hungarian Laszlo Biro for the ball point pen and did everything to find the ideal ink formula and the perfect fitting between ball and ink, using machines of extreme precision from Swiss clock making. He put all his efforts into this product and launched his own ballpoint pen, the BIC® Cristal® pen, based on his unassailable philosophy of offering the consumer superior quality at the best price. In 1953, the BIC Company is created. To market the BIC® Cristal® ballpoint pen, Marcel Bich used a strategy based on audacious and massive advertising campaigns, like the ones created by Raymond Savignac, that contributed to strong sales, first in France, then internationally: in Italy in 1954, in Brazil starting in 1956, in the United Kingdom, South Africa and Oceania in 1957, then in the United States as of 1958, in Africa and the Middle East in the 60's.

Listen to Marcel Bich reading to Shareholders, on June the 4th, 1973, his Letter in which he expressed his vision for the company (French audio) in [About BIC/History](#).

In 1973, Marcel Bich decided to diversify his activities and launched the BIC® lighter, then revolutionized the shaver market by designing and marketing the first non-refillable shaver. After listing BIC on the Paris Stock Exchange in November 1972, he continued to explore very diverse areas of business, such as wind-surfing by creating BIC Sport. His passion for sailing and sailboat racing led him to compete - for France and for his personal ambition - in the Americas Cup challenge.

Marcel Bich built his company on strong values which guided his professional life and still inspire employees of the group today: ethics, responsibility, teamwork, simplicity, trust in people, but also ingenuity and tenacity.

Today, 20 years after his passing away, the BIC Group is present in more than 160 countries around the world with worldwide leading positions in its categories: number two in writing instruments, number one in branded pocket lighters, number two in non-refillable shavers and number two in advertising and promotional products.