

## PRESS RELEASE

### 50 YEARS OF GERRY - GERRY WEBER CELEBRATES ANNIVERSARY

*Halle/Westphalia, 01.03.2023* The year 2023 is a special year for the GERRY-WEBER Group. This year, it celebrates its 50th company anniversary. With a clear vision and a lot of entrepreneurial spirit, the Group developed from small beginnings into one of the largest fashion and lifestyle companies in Europe.

#### **Brands and markets**

The foundation stone was laid on 01 March 1973. Gerhard Weber and Udo Hardieck founded Hatex KG in Halle/Westphalia and started manufacturing and selling women's trousers. The company grew quickly and expanded its portfolio to include skirts, blouses and jackets. Due to the growth, the company's headquarters were moved to neighbouring Steinhagen-Brockhagen in 1979. Soon, the company was also producing abroad.

The GERRY WEBER brand was created in 1986 and protected worldwide. In the same year, a sponsoring agreement was signed with Steffi Graf. A stroke of luck for the company - the then 17-year-old tennis player went on to an unprecedented world career and her triumphs also gave GERRY WEBER an extraordinary level of recognition.

At the end of the 1980s, the first construction phase of a new factory in Halle/Westphalia was completed. This is where the company is still headquartered today. 1989 also saw the birth of the TAIFUN brand, which was intended to appeal to a younger target group from then on. In October, Hatex KG went public and became GERRY WEBER International AG. At that time, the company employed 421 people.

In the early 1990s, GERRY WEBER was one of the first fashion manufacturers in Germany to digitise and grade patterns with the help of CAD/CAM. The good fit, across all clothing sizes, remains one of the brand's USPs to this day. In terms of communication, the company relied on sports sponsoring in addition to classic advertising. The GERRY WEBER OPEN tennis tournament, which is held annually in Halle/Westphalia and features top-class players, ensured that brand awareness also increased internationally and that the export business now accounted for 40% of sales.

In 1994, the brand portfolio was expanded to include SAMOON - the brand that stands for casual, self-confident fashion for curvy women.

After the opening of the first self-managed House of GERRY WEBER in Bielefeld in 1999, the 2000s were marked by further distribution expansion. The first online shop was launched in 2005.

# GERRY WEBER

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Since the 2010s, the company has been working intensively on making fashion more sustainable. In 2016, the first sustainable collection was launched.

At the same time, the company was an early advocate of a better work-life balance, creating Kids World, a daycare centre on the company premises in Halle, and making working hours more flexible.

Economically, the signs continued to point to expansion with the construction of a large logistics centre and the acquisition of Hallhuber. In 2018, however, the group got into financial difficulties and finally had to file for insolvency at the beginning of 2019. Through extensive restructuring measures, the insolvency proceedings were completed in just 11 months under the company's own responsibility and new investors were found.

A new start was made in 2020.

Today, the company is managed by Angelika Schindler-Obenhaus, CEO, and Florian Frank, CFO. With their team, they have realigned the business model and the brand. The company has also continued to work on its attractiveness as an employer - in 2022, the already very flexible working time model was expanded to include additional options, such as the 4-day week.

### **Anniversary**

"The 50th birthday of our company is a reason to celebrate," explains Angelika Schindler-Obenhaus. "GERRY WEBER has a long tradition and is one of the best-known women's wear brands. We want to use this anniversary to pause, look back and thank our employees, partners and loyal customers. They are all part of our history. And at the same time, we want to look ahead. We want to hold on to what has been tried and tested. To our values, to our high standards of quality, fit and materials. And also to the longevity and sustainability of our fashion. At the same time, we want to remain flexible and agile. We move in a volatile environment. Reacting appropriately to changes, mastering challenges, remains our aspiration. We will continue to be a reliable and innovative partner in the future."

In its communication, the Group will focus on its anniversary under the motto "50 YEARS OF GERRY" throughout the year.

The kick-off will be in March, with an attention-grabbing campaign. Inspiring self-determination is presented to the full. Authentic and diverse women are shown under the motto CHEERS TO FIFTY / BEST AGE EVER. CELEBRATE EVERY MOMENT or IN LOVE WITH MYSELF are further leading mottos. GERRY WEBER thus pays tribute to all women in their uniqueness. Women who are simply SO GERRY.

# GERRY WEBER

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## **About the GERRY WEBER Group**

Headquartered in Halle/Westphalia and employing some 2,100 people, GERRY WEBER International AG is one of the largest fashion and lifestyle companies in Europe. The company sells trend-oriented modern classic mainstream fashion in 54 countries. In addition to the GERRY WEBER brand, the GERRY WEBER Group also owns the younger TAIFUN brand and the plus-size brand SAMOON. For more information, visit [www.gerryweber.com](http://www.gerryweber.com)

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