

Caring for CONSUMERS

Dorel Juvenile has been looking out for the happiness of children and parents across the globe for more than five decades thanks to its dedication to innovation and safety.

Images courtesy of Dorel Juvenile

With well-known brands such as Maxi-Cosi, Bébé Confort, Quinny, Safety 1st, Baby Art, and Tiny Love, Dorel Juvenile's products can be found in more than 100 countries around the world. These brands and products are developed with a strong focus on innovation and safety with Dorel Juvenile aiming to offer parents the most advanced products and services possible.

To achieve this goal, Dorel Juvenile's European division has set up competence centres situated in France, the Netherlands, and Portugal. These centres collaborate closely to facilitate innovation and collaboration to develop leading brand and marketing strategies. This in-house expertise has proven

to be a key point of difference for Dorel Juvenile as it continues to lead the market in new products and services.

While Dorel Juvenile has been a global industry leader for decades, it has retained and nurtured its core purpose and mission to 'care for precious life'. *The CEO Magazine* recently spoke to Charles de Kervénoaël, President and CEO of Dorel Juvenile Europe, regarding this important mission that drives the European team.

***The CEO Magazine:* What led you to your current position at Dorel Juvenile Europe?**

Charles: I worked in FMCG [fast-moving consumer goods] companies for more than 25 years, with senior responsibilities at a

number of blue-chip international companies across the globe. I started with the Danone Group and stayed with them for 15 years. I worked in New York City, Shanghai, and Prague, and after that I moved to an American corporation, The Scotts Miracle Gro Company, which is known as the world leader in lawn and garden care products.

I then joined Black & Decker where I was leading their operation for Southern Europe and conducted the merger with Stanley. In April 2013 I joined Dorel as President and CEO of the European Dorel Juvenile division. Dorel is a world-class consumer products company with excellent products. Aware of Dorel's strong global reputation, I was intrigued with and excited by the >



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opportunity. My responsibility covers 13 countries and three competence centres. We research, design, develop, test and commercialise car seats, strollers, and small nursery products.

What challenges have you faced with the changing technological environment and the shifting of your customer base with younger demographics?

That’s a very important trend as we’re in a very specific industry where, by definition, our consumers are forever changing. They usually enter the category when the woman becomes pregnant. It’s a journey for the parents as they become more and more interested in the category and its products. We have to entice them at this stage and make sure that we can provide them with the right product offering.

Therefore, as the younger generation become first-time parents, it’s important for us to

connect emotionally through various digital outlets. Our objective is to listen, reach, as well as to provide knowledge and support to this consumer. The internet is clearly one of our main priorities. In addition, retail stores are very important. They provide our consumers with the personal experience, and remain a key channel of distribution in our industry.

Since joining the company in 2013, what have been the most significant cultural changes that you’ve seen within Dorel Juvenile Europe?

I think two of the things that really characterise Dorel Juvenile are innovation and people. Innovation is clearly in our DNA. Everyone in the organisation is dedicated to bringing new solutions and services to consumers. It could be more safety, more flexibility, or new ways of providing services—bottom line, it’s not just about innovating products, it’s about

innovating services as well. It’s a way for us to make sure that we bring new value-added solutions to our consumers and retailers.

The second differentiator is the people, and Dorel Juvenile is really a people-driven company. It’s not just words but a true cultural fact. Our employees are really proud to be part of Dorel Juvenile. Our mission states that we ‘care for precious life’, and our employees are really proud of contributing and working for a company that provides products and services to babies, young children and families all over the world.

What are the programs or initiatives that you have in place to foster your in-house expertise and innovation?

Innovation is a complex and very important process. Everyone at Dorel Juvenile is encouraged to share new ideas because innovation can come from many sources. Because innovation needs to be



brochure but, more importantly, concrete actions. We’re working to achieve our sustainable commitments in a way that makes sense in a business environment, which is where the challenge is. We have created a sustainability road map that will help us to reduce our carbon footprint in the coming years. The objective is to reach a 20-per-cent decrease. There’s a clear plan for everyone to be really challenged and make some clear steps and improvements thinking green and sustainable.

What is your three-year strategy plan for Dorel Juvenile Europe and what are your aspirations beyond that plan?

Our business strategy is to continue to grow and to develop our business by expanding our strategic categories, car seats and strollers, to our biggest and potential markets. We achieve this by developing relevant innovation and services, bringing value to both consumers and retailers.

Dorel Juvenile benefits from the financial strength and stature of our parent company, Dorel Industries, a publicly traded company on the Toronto Stock Exchange. This provides a powerful foundation upon which to continue grow. An example is the recent announced acquisition of the juvenile factories in China and R&D centre in Taiwan of Hong Kong-based Lerado Group. This will allow us to be more flexible and efficient in an increasingly competitive environment. •

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carefully developed in a very specific environment, we’ve created a dedicated innovation team that operates separately from the traditional marketing department. This encompasses a cross-section of people from different disciplines. They are designers, R&D engineers, quality engineers, and marketing people. All those talents work together to develop breakthrough innovations. They are working upfront in the processes to identify new concepts and test them. Once they’ve been fully and successfully tested, they move back into the regular channel within Dorel Juvenile’s development teams where R&D and marketing evolve the innovation until its launch.

How does Dorel Juvenile Europe collaborate with its key suppliers and partners to create long-standing relationships?

We spend a great deal of time and effort with suppliers as we believe that they’re really part of our success. Some of them are even considered to be strategic suppliers because we believe that they can provide us with good services and insights on how to be even more competitive.

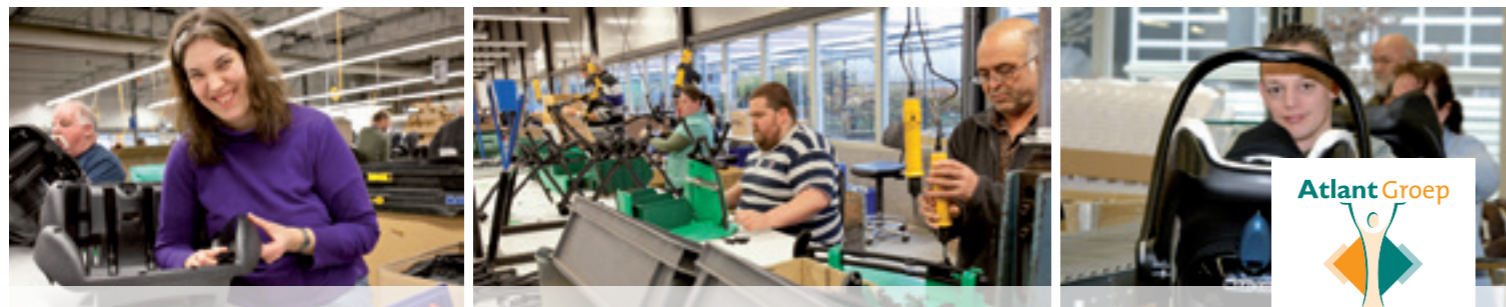
The Atlant Groep is one example of where we’re trying to develop

a long-term relationship where we share our long-term goals and objectives so that they can understand which direction we intend to follow and exactly which services we require. We expect our suppliers to be flexible and cost-competitive, enabling us to provide the best offer and value to our retailers and our consumers.

The Atlant Groep is an organisation which guides people with intellectual and physical disabilities. These people assemble our car seats in a factory in the nearby vicinity of our Helmond office and distribution centre. The Atlant Groep works with disadvantaged people and we believe that this is a way for us to help those people and to build our social responsibility commitment. We have been working with the Atlant Groep for more than 30 years and have established a long-term relationship with them and are very happy with our collaboration.

What role does sustainability play in your company ethos and operations?

We believe sustainability is very important. We want to ensure that these are not just words in a fancy



It’s all about people

People, that is what it is all about, at both the Atlant Groep and Dorel Juvenile. Where Dorel Juvenile is fully dedicated to the well-being of babies and young children, the Atlant Groep focuses on people who are disadvantaged in the labour market. Together we take our social responsibility seriously.

Long-term employment

The Atlant Groep has worked with Dorel Juvenile Europe (formerly Maxi-Miliaan) for the past 30 years. We guarantee employment of a large group of disadvantaged people. Nowadays around 700 people work daily to deliver a top of the bill product that meets international quality standards. Over 1.3 million car seats are assembled by the Atlant Groep on a yearly basis at two locations in Helmond, the Netherlands.

Knowhow of assembly

Also, the Atlant Groep has a role within the supply chain which consists of assembling Maxi-Cosi car seats and delivering added value by participating actively in the areas of engineering, logistics, quality, and cost reduction by product efficiency.

About the Atlant Groep

The Atlant Groep is active in the field of supported/sheltered employment and labour integration. Our goal is to guide people who are disadvantaged in the labour market [physically, mentally, or psychologically/psychiatrically challenged and long-term unemployed people] to a job that fits their abilities and needs. We do that by training them and mediating/liasing for regular work. If ‘regular’ work is not feasible, we offer employment in cooperation with external partners or within our in-house activities.

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