

## **A change in consciousness in Germany increases the value placed on ecologically- and socially-acceptable production**

### **POLOLO takes optimistic stock at the end of their jubilee year of 2013**

Tags: Franziska Kuntze, children, jubilee, Pololo, shoes, Verena Carney

*POLOLO approves an integrated approach for medium-sized businesses in Germany, because according to the spirit of sustainability it is a matter of completely rethinking the entire process chain, starting with design, through production, sales and use, to disposal, accompanied by a change in consciousness on the part of the consumer. Beautiful, comfortable shoes – manufactured ecologically and in a socially acceptable way: POLOLO has shown for ten years that this works!*

**[POLOLO, 05.11.2013]** POLOLO OHG, the German manufacturer of ecological children's shoes and slippers, is optimistic when taking stock at the end of its tenth jubilee year. Today, Pololos are available from over 800 specialist trading partners in more than 25 countries - and the number of interested parties is continuing to grow in Europe, Asia and America.

### **From a futile search to independent involvement**

It was a long and at times difficult route from the founding idea to successful positioning as a medium-sized company in the market. From personal experience, as mothers on the futile search for good shoes for their own children, grew the decision of the two POLOLO founders Verena Carney and Franziska Kuntze to look for their own independent, sustainable route to producing children's shoes, made in Germany.

Shortly after the millennium, the focus of many consumers in Germany appeared to still be on superficial properties - on spectacular and occasionally garish designs, even for the smallest people. Few paid any attention to the ecological and social acceptability of products and their manufacture.

In defiance of the trend at the time, Carney and Kuntze formulated the idea of producing by hand environmentally-friendly and healthy children's shoes from natural leather - also so they could then, with a clear conscience, become their own customers. At Advent 2003, they dared to make an initial attempt and offered their first hand-sewn shoes at a Christmas market in Berlin-Zehlendorf. The initial success motivated both of them to single-mindedly accept the challenge of founding their own company.

### **POLOLO as a pilot: Deliberately transparent production to the highest standard**

The criterion of sustainability in the production of shoes for their children is obviously becoming increasingly important for parents, summarized Carney and Kuntze, but there is a conflict when it comes to taking decisions: on the one hand they want to kit out their children with a clear conscience, and on the other they are attracted by the low prices of standard goods, whose background and properties are often opaque.

Of course, top-quality handmade products have their price in Germany - if comparisons are made with the offers from discount stores, then the environmental acceptability and that of the people involved in their production

must also be included in the evaluation. Both POLOLO founders were and are aware that sharpening the critical perception of consumers is a long process. POLOLO sees itself as a pilot and consciously produces to the highest standards - this has already been honoured with the ECARF seal for hypoallergenic products and the IVN "Natural Leather" certificate, amongst others. The "SOFT" series of toddler shoes and slippers are produced at a traditional site in Franconian Oberreichenbach in Bavaria by sole cutters and stitchers from the region. Since 2011, there have also been solid Pololos ("MINI" and "MAXI") manufactured by a reliable collaborative partner in Alicante in Spain, which sees itself as faithful to the word "Pololo" in Chilean Spanish, meaning a firm, enduring friend of the company.

### **Social and politico-economic commitment**

Pololos stand for real, 100 % vegetable tanned leather, free from harmful substances, which are highly breathable and are wonderfully skin-friendly. The two Pololo bosses, with their rich experiences from over a decade, would like to put the subjects of sustainability and ecology in shoe production on the industry's agenda.

This is why Kuntze is intensively involved in the International Association of Natural Textile Industry (IVN) - convinced that natural leather is of increasing significance in the shoe industry. In this, a fundamental, unified approach is important to Carney and Kuntze, because this is a matter of completely rethinking the entire process chain, starting with the design, through production, sales and use, to disposal, accompanied by a change in consciousness on the part of the consumer. Beautiful, comfortable shoes – manufactured ecologically and in a socially acceptable way: POLOLO has shown for ten years that this works.

Photo: POLOLO OHG, Berlin

(bewusstseinswandel\_nachhaltigkeit\_naturleder\_kinderschuhe\_pololo.jpg)

**A change in consciousness in the parents: Increasing demand for environmentally and health-friendly children's shoes made from natural leather**

### **More information on the POLOLO jubilee:**

And POLOLO - this is us:

2013 is the year of POLOLO.

<http://www.pololo.com/de.ueberuns.html>

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*Brief information:*

2013 is the year of POLOLO. Verena Carney (shoe designer) and Franziska Kuntze (management) are celebrating their tenth jubilee with their teams in Berlin and Oberreichenbach. The idea for their own shoe company came to the two founders during a fruitless search for pretty toddler shoes for their own children. They started to design their own shoes. Since their positive start in 2003 - initially at a Christmas market in Berlin-Zehlendorf - POLOLO has grown continually and successfully. Their group of customers now includes more than 800 specialist shops, catalogues, mail-order companies, etc. in Europe, Asia and America.