



**H.J. Heinz**

**The main man behind the Heinz empire is founder Henry John Heinz (1844-1919).**

**He grew up just after the American civil war in Pittsburgh, where the iron, steel and glass factories promised golden times. By the age of twelve Henry was already selling fruit and vegetables from the garden of his parents' house. Henry used this business talent in 1869 to start up the business Heinz and Noble with his friend and neighbour Clarence Noble. They sold bottled horse-radish, pickles and, of course, Ketchup; in fact, the world's first 'convenience products'. Ultimately, this would prove to be the basis for today's global group of companies.**

In the early years it wasn't long before Henry was forced to contend with a stroke of bad luck. A poor harvest saw Heinz and Noble go bankrupt in 1875. Without Noble, but together with his brother and cousin, he opened the H.J. Heinz factory to the north of Pittsburgh. The range of all kinds of seasonings and pickles grew steadily, and the construction of several factories was the next logical step. The pickle logo on the bottles of Heinz Tomato Ketchup dates back to this time. For a long time the factory was a shining example of the most worker-friendly in the world. The social conditions were so good that visitors from all over the country would come to see how good the staff at Heinz had it. The factory was to make Henry a millionaire, famous the world over.

### **Howard Heinz, the son**

When Henry died in 1919, his son Howard took the helm. In the turbulent twenties he refused to be swept up in the pressure to speculate, achieving solid growth as a result. During the Depression years in the thirties Howard did cut costs, but not wages. Under the motto: 'A real leader does not wait for opportunity, but makes one himself,' he launched baby food and instant soup onto the market.

Howard had a great interest in science and technology. It is therefore he who made the link between science and Heinz. 'What does my product do and how can I improve the quality in a natural, responsible way?' Howard Heinz brought scientists into the factories and made sure there were agricultural experts in the field, to ensure high-quality products. He also provided a radio link between all the Heinz factories, even as far away as Australia. In 1924 10,000 Heinz employees in the US, Canada, England and Scotland listened simultaneously to a broadcast in honour of the foundation of Heinz. Even the president of the United States, Calvin Coolidge, sung its praises. High levels of promotion and advertising led to a doubling of turnover in 1937.

### **Henry John 'Jack' Heinz, the grandson**

At the beginning of the forties Heinz also had to contend with the consequences of the Second World War. The factories in England had been bombed by the Germans, in America many employees had joined up and it was difficult to find staff. In 1941 33-year-old Henry John 'Jack' Heinz II became the senior manager at H.J. Heinz. The founder's grandson managed to recruit housewives for the factories under the slogans 'beans to bombers' and 'pickles to pursuit planes'.

After the war Heinz was given its own radio programme entitled '57 styles', and was advertised on TV. The family firm became more professional in character and was focusing more than ever on foreign markets. Under Jack's leadership Heinz factories and offices were opened in the Netherlands (1958), Venezuela (1960), Japan (1962) and Italy (1963). Turnover grew in the '50s and '60s, particularly in England, resulting in the opening of the largest food-producing factory in Europe. In 2001 one million cans of soup and beans were rolling off the conveyor belt on a daily basis at Kitty [sic] Green (England).

Jack was the last of the Heinz family to wield the sword over the global group. In its ninety-six years the company had taken the world by storm. It was left to Burt Gookin and Tony O'Reilly to continue its success. The philosophy of Henry John Heinz, 'To do a common thing uncommonly well, brings success' is the poignant key here.



## **The Heinz philosophy**

**Heinz's success is based on many factors: the right product in the right place, quality, a good commercial spirit and perseverance. Possibly the biggest role, however, is reserved for the philosophy and credos of Henry John Heinz. The Heinz policy is still founded on his ideas and thoughts. The vision of one man, supported by thousands of employees all over the world.**

### **Involvement**

The first principle is 'Heart power is better than horse power'. You are better off working with motivated people who feel involved with the company than with workers who have no connection. Henry made sure his people were motivated by treating them well. At a time when most workers were being exploited, Heinz employees were better off at work than at home. For example, the women who worked on the conveyor belts even got a weekly manicure. Although the manicure is no longer a feature nowadays, good working conditions are still considered of paramount importance. In the Netherlands Heinz continues to have a low staff turnover.

### **Quality**

His second principle: 'Quality is to a product what character is to a man' points to the continual drive towards improving quality. Only the best ingredients - freshly picked and subjected to strict control checks - are good enough. Even in those days, the Heinz factories were so clean that he was the first person to invite the public for a guided tour. Heinz was also the only food manufacturer to support a bill setting out guidelines for food production. Heinz's very strict product and quality control is based on this principle. The Heinz quality requirements tend to go further than those required by law.

### **Promotion**

Heinz demonstrated his talent for promoting his products in the right way, in his third motto. "It's not so much what you say, but how, when and where." The 57 varieties are a good example of this. As are the logo, the pickle pin and the use of magazines, billboards and illuminated advertising. These were joined later by the radio and TV ads. It is partly due to the expansion of its promotional activities that Heinz is the world-famous brand it is today. Heinz continues to charm people with its snappy adverts that whet the appetite. Everyone is familiar with the adverts showing the ketchup creeping slowly out of the bottle, or the slogan: "Beanz Meanz Heinz".

### **Expansion**

Henry John Heinz's expansion drive also clearly comes to the fore in the fourth and final credo: 'Our field is the world'. Words that he uttered in 1886, just before the first overseas trip to

London. In 1900 a large number of buyers travelled to Africa, Europe, Australia and South America to sell Heinz products. The visits yielded just over 200 orders, which set Heinz's cross-border growth in motion.

### **57 varieties**

In 1892 Henry John travelled to New York in an air train. From there, he had a good view of the city's advertising hoardings. An advert for shoes that were available in no fewer than '21 styles' gave him the idea for '57 varieties'. He actually counted the number of products he had in his own range and although there were more, he stuck to the magic number '57'. Since then, this figure has always appeared on the packaging.

All these ideas emanated from Heinz's philosophy, which still fires the imagination of the company's numerous employees. 'To do a common thing uncommonly well, brings success.'

### **Heinz Nederland**

In 1919 H.J. Heinz was asked to explain his success. He gave the following answer:

"To do a common thing uncommonly well, brings success ". This credo is still key to the business philosophy of Heinz, which has been operating in the Netherlands since 1958. Among the products produced in Elst are Heinz Tomato Ketchup and Heinz Sandwich Spread. With a market share of approximately 60% Heinz Tomato Ketchup is the market leader in the Dutch ketchup market.