

Company History

Adecco Group

1957

Adia SA is founded in Lausanne, Switzerland, by Henri-Ferdinand Lavanchy. The firm grows rapidly in its home country before expanding abroad.

1964

Philippe Foriel-Destezet founds Ecco in Lyon. By the early 1980s, Ecco is France's largest supplier of temporary personnel.

1961–1980

In the 1960s, Adia opens offices in various European countries and then in 1972 takes a first step overseas, with a branch in Menlo, California. In 1974, Lavanchy recruits Martin O. Pestalozzi and a phase of expansion by acquisition begins. In the next 12 years, Adia buys over 85 companies, tripling in size and gaining footholds in more than a dozen countries, including France (1975) and the UK (1977), where it buys the market leader: Alfred Marks Bureau Ltd.

Early 1980s

Further expansion overseas, including Australia, New Zealand, Japan, Hong Kong and Canada. Meanwhile, Ecco is focusing on its home market. By the mid-1980s, it is the market leader in France, a decade later world no. 2. The growth of both companies is part of a wider trend: temporary staffing becomes the world's third-fastest growing industry in the 1980s. Adia's Pestalozzi states in 1985: "We want balanced growth; we want to be known as the best, rather than the biggest in our markets."

Late 1980s

Sales topping USD 1 billion in 1986 make Adia the European leader. Its success is partly down to a focus on quality and high-value services. The 1990s see a growing trend towards specialised skills, e.g. accounting, word-processing, including in-house training programmes.

1990s

Further acquisitions from the late 1980s onwards strengthen base in highly skilled, specialised fields. Also, a move into social programmes focused on more mature workers.

In 1991, recognising the importance of the industry's role in job creation and its growth potential, Klaus J. Jacobs invests in Adia en route to becoming majority shareholder.

1996

Adia and Ecco merge to form Adecco. Two of the world's top three personnel services firms, with complementary geographical profiles, merge to form a strong global leader with annualised revenues of over EUR 5.4 billion. Operations are combined to form a global network of 2,500 branches. The new company has an exceptional range and quality of services. The core staffing business places around 250,000 people in work each day.

1997–2000

Following its takeover of TAD Resources International, Massachusetts, in 2000, Adecco acquires Olsten Staffing of Melville (NY) to become the no. 1 recruitment company in the US. That year, the merged Company generates combined revenues of over EUR 11.6 billion.

2002

Recognising the increasing demand for professional and expert services as well as the growing importance of attracting talent, Adecco consolidates its businesses under three leading names and creates three dedicated global divisions to deliver its services.

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2005

After a strategy review, Adecco makes a commitment to expand through realignment across six professional business lines defined by occupational fields, complementing its office and industrial core business.

2006

Adecco announces a dual strategy focused on professional and general staffing. Following the acquisition of DIS AG, Germany, Dieter Scheiff takes over the position of Chief Executive Officer Adecco Group from Klaus J. Jacobs. Dominik de Daniel becomes Chief Financial Officer.

2007

The annual General Meeting of Shareholders approves the nomination of Jürgen Dormann, former Vice-Chairman, as Chairman of the Board. Rolf Dörig becomes Vice-Chairman. Klaus J. Jacobs, the co-founder of Adecco, hands back his mandate.

2008

The strategy announced in 2006 moves into its second phase: development of professional staffing, with devolution of more operational responsibility to foster the businesses at country level.

September 11: Klaus Jacobs, founder and Honorary President of the Adecco Group, passed away. Jürgen Dormann steps down at year-end, as Chairman of the Board of Directors; he is succeeded by Rolf Dörig as of January 1, 2009.

2009

January 1: Rolf Dörig starts as Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Adecco Group. June 1: Patrick de Maeseneire takes over as Chief Executive Officer of the Adecco Group from Dieter Scheiff.