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Case study: Deichmann



Restricted Substances List (RSL) testing



Effective control of supply chain quality is an essential element in the success of the Deichmann Group, Europe's largest footwear retailer. Since 2006, the Deichmann Group has partnered with TÜV SÜD to perform global testing of footwear produced by third-party manufacturers to ensure conformity with regulatory compliance requirements as well as Deichmann's own rigorous quality standards.

Business challenges

Originally founded in 1913, the family-owned and operated Deichmann Group is Europe's largest footwear retailer. Currently operating in 22 countries in Europe as well as the United States, Deichmann sold over 165 million pair of shoes in 2012 through its global retail network of 3300 stores and its website, more than double the number of shoes sold just a decade earlier. Deichmann Group stores offer women, men and children a wide selection of footwear products.

Deichmann buyers source footwear products from 40 different countries and from hundreds of independent manufacturers. Each manufacturer must meet Deichmann's strict quality and safety requirements regarding materials used in manufactured products, especially the company's restrictions on the use of certain chemicals and other substances that could be harmful to consumers. Deichmann's own restricted substances list (RSL) exceeds the regulatory requirements in the European Union regarding restricted substances.

OVERVIEW

Client name	Deichmann Group
Industry	Footwear
Profile	Retailer of footwear and accessories
Business challenge	Assuring that finished footwear products from third-party manufacturers meet regulatory requirements as well as the company's exacting standards regarding the use of restricted chemicals and other substances that could be harmful to consumers
Our solution	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Restricted Substances List (RSL) testing Business Social Compliance Initiative (BSCI) audit TÜV SÜD "Tested for Fit" Certification Mark
Business benefits	Providing consumers with footwear products that are safe to use



For this reason, Deichmann requires manufacturers to submit material and product samples to Deichmann-appointed testing laboratories to verify compliance with the company's RSL requirements. "Monitoring and independent testing of materials and finished products is absolutely essential for us to guarantee to our customers the quality and safety of our products," says Andreas Tepest, Deichmann's Head of Quality Assurance and Shoe Technology. "But the technical nature of the testing and the number of manufacturers involved places a significant demand on our appointed testing laboratories."

TÜV SÜD's solutions

With a global network of laboratory and testing facilities capable of conducting material and product evaluations regarding the use of restricted substances, Deichmann engaged TÜV SÜD as its RSL testing solutions provider. One of the key reasons behind this choice was TÜV SÜD's expertise, with global experts who have direct knowledge of restricted substance regulations in the European Union and other markets, as well as pending and potential changes to RSL requirements and guidelines.

Deichmann initially partnered with TÜV SÜD in 2006 to monitor and test samples from manufacturers based in the Asia-Pacific Region. "The TÜV SÜD people we worked with were more than technical experts," noted Tepest. "They also helped us to develop the testing protocols necessary to evaluate the range of substances we were concerned with." The success of the initial partnership with Deichmann eventually led to an expanded role for TÜV SÜD, which now conducts RSL monitoring and testing for most of the company's contract manufacturers.

In addition to RSL monitoring and compliance testing, TÜV SÜD has partnered with Deichmann in other important areas. For example, as an accredited auditor under the Business Social Compliance Initiative (BSCI), TÜV SÜD has assisted Deichmann in its efforts to achieve BSCI certification for the suppliers, consistent with the company's long-standing commitment to social

responsibility. Deichmann has also adopted the use of TÜV SÜD's "Tested for Fit" Certification Mark for children's shoes, which assures consumers that the shoes they buy for their children are reliably-sized.

Business benefits

TÜV SÜD's monitoring and testing of products and materials for the use of restricted substances helps to ensure that Deichmann retail stores continuously provide consumers with an ever-changing array of quality footwear products that have been tested for safety. Equally important, TÜV SÜD's technical expertise can result in the timely assessment of finished products, thereby reducing time to market. "This efficiency is an important competitive advantage, especially in an industry driven by fashion trends," notes Tepest.

The broad partnership between Deichmann and TÜV SÜD is also a vital element in the company's efforts to fulfill its mission, "The company must serve the people." "For us, it's not just about compliance with the applicable regulations," says Tepest. "Our ultimate commitment is to provide our customers with reliable and safe products. As a valued partner, TÜV SÜD understands the importance of these values, and supports us with outstanding programs that help us maintain this commitment."

Compliance with regulations on the use of restricted substances is mandated in the European Union and other jurisdictions, and some leading manufacturers such as Deichmann go beyond regulatory requirements to restrict the use of additional chemicals and substances. TÜV SÜD has the expertise and global capabilities to provide companies with supply chain solutions that can help to ensure compliance with regulations as well as proprietary restrictions.

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TÜV SÜD is a trusted partner of choice for safety, security and sustainability solutions. It specialises in testing, certification, auditing and advisory services. Through more than 24,000 employees across over 1,000 locations, the company adds value to customers and partners by enabling market access and managing risks. By anticipating technological developments and facilitating change, TÜV SÜD inspires trust in a physical and digital world to create a safer and more sustainable future.