

POLANOCCO REVOLUCION

"If the market leader starts promoting values that are important to consumers, the house brand market naturally follows. Consumers quickly notice the measurable benefits of purchasing house brands and become loyal to them."

BOCUSEAN DUBZINSKI

SUBSTITUTION

Poland is a market with a fundamentally healthy economy, where purchasing power and Gross Domestic Product (GDP) are both expected to grow by more than 3% in 2012. Barry Callebaut spoke with the owner of the family-owned confectionery company EDBOL to find out what makes Poland such a unique place to manufacture and sell chocolate.

Studies show that Polish consumers have a sophisticated taste for chocolate and a growing interest in premium products. How did the Polish consumers discover their preference in chocolate?

After the borders opened in the early 1990s, Polish consumers sought brand name products, with a well-known producer's logo, thinking that the quality was better. But our decision to choose the quite narrow specialization of house brand products was carefully thought out, and our market share is now rapidly growing. The recent economic crisis forced consumers to look at cheaper house brands in a new way. And we

benefitted once they realized that house brands are just as good as well-known brands.

Which are the key advantages of EDBOL's cooperation with Barry Callebaut?

We build relationships with our business partners, both suppliers and customers, based on respect. The cooperation between EDBOL and Barry Callebaut is based on a deep mutual understanding of our needs and abilities and the conditions in which we work. Three factors are vital for us: first, the best quality in raw materials, second a "be on time" policy, allowing precise production planning and third, Research & Development know-how that enables us to find optimal solutions for the most demanding customers.

What are the future trends in the Polish market?

The consumption of chocolate in Poland and Eastern European countries is still small in comparison with Germany or Great Britain for example. Based on this simple indicator, the market in this part of Europe should be considered as developing. The growth rate of sales is a confirmation of this trend. We are committed to fulfilling our customers' increasingly detailed and discerning requirements. It is expected that components in chocolate are as

natural as possible. That means, reducing the amount of sugar, or substituting white sugar with cane sugar, increasing the percentage of cocoa, eliminating emulsifiers and replacing vanillin with vanilla. These requirements will be a challenge for our companies in the coming years, in particular when it comes to the crucial criterion: pricing. Whether the upward trend in sales of chocolate remains depends mainly on consumers' disposable incomes, which are influenced by economic circumstances.

What are the advantages and disadvantages of being a family business?

A family-run business has a lot of advantages. These include: a friendly, family atmosphere, the ease and speed of decision-making resulting from the trust among co-workers, a lack of anonymity which translates into a greater determination of the team to complete even the most difficult tasks, quick and accurate identification of customers' needs, flexibility and rapid responses to changes in the environment, and optimal use of the company potential.