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## Erich, Regine, Alexander and Konstantin Sixt

Sixt Group

Synonymous with high-end car rental around the world, the Sixt Group is one of Germany's most successful family businesses. Now run by a combination of the third and fourth generations, the group has benefited from being led by successive generations of innovators. And an adventurous culture continues to thrive at the Munich-based company, as it looks to stay at the forefront of how the world gets around in the 21st century.



**"From our family past, I know the extent to which adventurousness belongs to business."**

**Alexander Sixt,**  
Member of the Managing Board, Sixt SE

Sixt is one of the best-known car rental brands in the world. And the Munich-based company has been a model of family business success for more than 100 years. The vision and entrepreneurship of successive generations have built Sixt into the world-beater it is today. Much of the group's recent success has been thanks to the work of the husband-and-wife team of Erich and Regine Sixt.

The family business began in 1912, when Martin Sixt started the Sixt Autofahrten und Selbstfahrer company with just three cars. The company rented the cars out, mainly to wealthy foreigners,

In 1948, only three years after the end of the Second World War, Hans launched Auto Sixt, a rental company for motorists who wanted to do their own driving. And from the start, the rental car business was a success, helping Sixt to grow rapidly during the economic boom years of the 1960s. However, the international business was not always very easy at the beginning.

#### International expansion in the 1970s

Toward the end of that decade, Erich Sixt started to manage the company with his father. In the 1970s, "Auto Sixt" started



The family business started in 1912, mainly for wealthy foreigners. Later, the mobility services were available for everyone.

for day trips and special tours through Bavaria. Central to the success of Sixt over the last 100 years have been three principles laid down by the founder: have the right cars, offer a perfect service to the customer and minimize administrative costs.

#### Hans was only 20 years old

In the early 1930s, Martin passed the running of the business over to his son Hans Sixt, who was just 20 years old at the time. In the lead up to the Second World War, the Sixt fleet was confiscated by the German army and used for the war effort. After the war, Hans salvaged what he could, including a Mercedes that had survived the chaos of the war years hidden in a barn in Bavaria. With that Mercedes, Hans obtained a taxi license and chauffeured members of the American occupation forces through Munich. That was the beginning of the rebirth of Sixt.

its expansion throughout Germany and, together with his wife Regine, Erich started the international expansion of Sixt. Regine Sixt thereby focused her work on the international relationship marketing. "From the beginning, I had only one goal: to get far ahead – as very far as possible," says Erich. "I was obsessed." The first dream was to reach a 1,000 cars. "If you have 1,000 cars, that's boring again. And so we continue, from one target to another. I'm not satisfied for a second in my life."

With its easily recognizable black and orange logo, the Sixt Group now has locations in over 100 countries, making it one of the world's biggest car rental groups. In 2015, Sixt had revenues of €2.18b. But Sixt is not just a car rental company. The group has also become a major force in the automobile leasing sector. And it is pushing the boundaries of car sharing, having established joint ventures with some of Europe's biggest carmakers.



Erika and Hans Sixt.



Regine founded the Regine Sixt Children's foundation "Drying Little Tears."



Regine with her young sons Konstantin (left) and Alexander.

“What is important at Sixt is to grow constantly, wisely and smoothly. We have been following these principles since 1912.”

Erich Sixt



Erich (center) is the Chairman of the Board, his two sons (right) are Members of the Board.

Unsurprisingly, marketing has played a key role in the company's success. And until now, the company's marketing efforts have been co-led by Regine Sixt. One of the most widely recognized businesswomen in Germany, Regine started working at Sixt in the same year she married Erich, who is the grandson of the group's founder Martin Sixt.

“When I started at Sixt, I called myself the ‘fire brigade’, because you could put me anywhere and I would quickly adapt to the skills needed,” says Regine. “This flexibility has given me a

broad understanding of the whole business, from the car rental counter up to board level. You can put me at one of our counters anywhere and I'll do that work quite happily, to such an extent that I sometimes miss it. When I travel, I often help out at one of our counters at an airport. Today, I'm in charge of international marketing, but I still play a big role in the day-to-day running of the business.”

Sixt listed on the German stock market in 1986. But the family remains the main shareholder of the company, and Sixt is still

very much family directed. “The listing helped us in raising capital for our expansion, and we did not take money out of the business for personal reasons,” says Regine.

### Growing smoothly since 1912

Asked what makes Sixt so successful, Erich cites a number of factors. “First, we have the most exclusive cars to rent. Yes, we do rent cheaper cars, but we focus on luxury cars, such as Mercedes and BMWs. We would rather have fewer cars at a price we can make money on than rent at low prices and lose money. Second, being a family business means we take a long-term perspective. What is important at Sixt is to grow constantly, wisely and smoothly. We have been following these principles since 1912.”

The Sixt Leasing GmbH was founded in 1988 and listed on the German stock exchange as “Sixt Leasing AG” in 2015.

In 1996, Regine Sixt founded her own children's aid organization, which was turned into a foundation in 2008 under the name Regine Sixt Children's Foundation “Drying Little Tears.” Today, the foundation has realized over 85 projects in 65 countries and is the official CSR program of the Sixt group. “Children are the Future, and they need our help!” says Regine.

### Fourth-generation family members take a leading role

The stewardship of Sixt looks to be in good hands as fourth-generation family members begin to take a leading role in the group. They can look back to the great legacy left by the previous generations. But, even more importantly, they can also look forward while confidently knowing that Sixt is one of world's finest family businesses.

Erich and Regine's sons Alexander and Konstantin sit on the Executive Board of Sixt, and are already following the family tradition of entrepreneurship. Alexander is responsible for the strategy and M&A of the Sixt group, whereas Konstantin functions as the Chief Sales Officer of Sixt. Since

2011, Alexander Sixt has been the leading force behind the introduction of the DriveNow car-sharing joint venture with BMW. “From our family past, I know the extent to which adventurousness belongs to business,” says Alexander. “An especially good example of this culture of innovation is the DriveNow service.” Today, DriveNow is one of Europe's leading car sharing operators, and has been rolled out in many European cities and the US.

Konstantin points to his grandfather as an important role model when it comes to grasping the importance of innovation. “He always had his ear to the ground and would recognize new developments, such as the demand for chauffeur services,” he says. “Our grandfather handed this important ability down to us, and I view it not just as a virtue, but as a responsibility toward the future of Sixt.”

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Company name:	<b>Sixt Group</b>
Generation(s):	<b>Third and fourth</b>
Founded:	<b>1912 in Munich, Germany</b>
Industry:	<b>Mobility and financial services</b>
Revenue (2015):	<b>€2.18b</b>