

Founders of a company need courage, endurance, fortune and confidence as well as a bit of love for adventure. This love for adventure led Jonas Taureck from Germany to South Africa, in an old Magirus Deutz. On his way, he made the discovery of his life – the Petromax high-pressure lamp. Today, the love for adventure is what drives the success of his company. Jonas Taureck and his wife Dr. Pia Christin Taureck are the managers of the Petromax Group which, within only a few years, has become a leading supplier of equipment for outdoor adventure.

It has its beginning in the desert.



Fine sand rises up to the nose of the two young men from Germany. On their way from Hanover to South Africa, Jonas and his companion carry a backpack full of love for adventure and food cans. Once again, the vehicle – a heavy Magirus Deutz from 1963 – is stuck in the hot sand of the desert. Now, it is time to show true strength. After several sweaty hours of shovelling, the colossal truck is still not moving. The engine does not roar as usual - the suspension is broken and the engine has crashed the generator. The batteries have to be charged any other possible way.

Searching for a possibility to charge the batteries, they reach a small village in Niger. With the huts and streets being illuminated, the village appears to have electric power. They start a conversation with the inhabitants.

Using some words of English and French and also their hands and feet, the travellers try to find out if they could use the power to charge their batteries. But over and over, they receive the response that the village does not have electric power. The source of light for this settlement is not electricity. Jonas gets up and, in disbelief, approaches the bright light to have a closer look at the lamp and find the cable. He squints his eyes, hears a rustling and hissing and notices the smell of kerosene in the air. A kerosene lamp it is. At this moment, only being 21 years old, Jonas does not yet have any notion that this engineering marvel would be part of his life for a long time.

The invention of the Petromax lamp



The Petromax lamp, Jonas sees in this small African village, has been developed by Max Graetz in 1910, based on the known spirit lamp. In the past, with electricity not being available in every household, it was a great progress to make such a bright light available and affordable for everyone. Graetz reserved his rights to the name "Petromax", derived from "Petroleum Maxe" as his friends and family would call him. The lamp quickly became a worldwide best seller, being available in different versions.

After his adventures on the black continent back in Germany, Jonas thinks back on the evening in Niger and is caught in fascination for this lamp. He starts to research and finds out that Petromax high-pressure lamps are still used internationally, though the production in Germany has long been stopped. By auction, he purchases 50 Petromax lamps from the German Federal Disposal Sales and Marketing Agency. He takes them apart into over 200 components, puts them back together and is thrilled just as thousands of people around the world. Who would

have thought that? A business idea is born. Jonas buys old inventories from the German Armed Forces and sales the components, among which are mantles and other spare parts. A flourishing trade develops, which makes him curious. Can there be more? The 23 years old business student finds out that the Schott company holds the trademark rights, which he then acquires to revive the manufacture in Germany with his fellow student. The Petromax lamp undergoes a renaissance which would have filled its inventor Max Graetz with pride.

The Petromax brand thought through: New products

Jonas decides not to change the basics of the lamp, as the once innovative principle, long tradition and the success after over 100 years of brand history are in its favour. The company Petromax starts to grow, and again Jonas ponders where his journey with the Petromax brand might take him. The Petromax high-pressure lamp is equipment for living outdoors. Which products might be a good addition? After some thoughts, he decides for an addition of the product portfolio targeted to outdoor cooking, bushcraft and survival as well as camping and the



lifestyle of living outdoors. As a start, he launches cast-iron cookware whose quality and details get noticed by the scene, followed by grills, cooking places in various versions and with accessories. They have become best sellers by now and inspire more and more people that love being outside.

The standard for the new brand is based on the history of the high-pressure lamp: Petromax stands for innovation, tradition and quality. By now, the company has grown strongly and Jonas is supported by a great and strong team of engineers and developers, who he works on new projects with.

New strategy for an old brand

The formerly student-founded company, managed from a shared flat, has become one of the leading providers of equipment for light, fire and outdoor cooking. At the University of Magdeburg, Jonas meets his wife-to-be Pia Christin, who studies and later will earn her doctorate there. Pia Christin's topics: Finance and investment management as well as strategies. Jonas and Pia Christin develop the concept for a strategic reorientation of the old brand Petromax. In 2014 and after some years in another company, Pia Christin joins the Petromax GmbH and becomes part of its management, making it an owner-managed family business. But 2014 is also an important year in the company's history for another reason: With Feuerhand, Petromax receives the chance to acquire another legendary German brand and piece of industry history.



Feuerhand: A new legend joining the company

And again Petromax plays a role. In the 1930's, Feuerhand supplied the largest part of the world's need of kerosene hurricane lanterns. This success was based on an ingeniously simple design and the automated production, which the engineers Hermann and Ernst Nier had realised in Beierfeld, Saxony. The Feuerhand history already lasts 125 years, now. For many decades, the Feuerhand hurricane lantern with its classic design and warm and safe light had been part of people's every day life, but in 2014, the brand existed only in shadow. Pia Christin and Jonas took the bit.



Their experiences in creating a brand as well as sales and strategy now helped Feuerhand. Within a short time, the Taurecks and the hurricane lantern, traditionally manufactured in Germany, get in place on the market. There are new, modern colours and special editions. Pia Christin and Jonas also offer an expanding portfolio for the Feuerhand brand. New products, such as the Pyron Fire Barrel and the Pyron Plate (and the Tamber table grill) position Feuerhand as brand for the garden and terrace. It is all about convivial and enjoyable moments that become unforgettable through crackling fire and red embers as well as cosy warmth and light for friends and the entire family.

Petromax and Feuerhand: Tradition and innovation from one hand

The brands Petromax and Feuerhand face an exceptional success after their reorientation in the family-managed Petromax Group. Both brands shine with new products for use in the open air and also provide friends of fire the advantage of traditional products. The success of Petromax and Feuerhand lies in the intelligent connection of tradition and modernity. In the last years, Pia Christin, Jonas and their development team have launched about 40 new products for light, fire and outdoor cooking. Both brands show tradition and modernity in form, material, quality and function and win a top place in the markets' competition. Today, their products are developed, produced, commissioned, promoted and shipped from the headquarters in Magdeburg with a space of over 10,000 sqm. Petromax has grown to a midsize family company with the owners Pia Christin and Jonas Taureck as its power centre. Passion for adventure was the starting point of this exceptional journey. Passion for adventure is the Petromax feeling, which Pia Christin and Jonas have passed on to over 40 employees by now. As a team, they design the future of the traditional brands.

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