



1944-2014: 70TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE BIC GROUP

This October, BIC Group is celebrating its 70th anniversary. It was on 25 October 1944 that the PPA Company (*Porte-plume, Porte-mines et Accessoires* or Penholder, Mechanical pencils and Accessories) began its activity. Marcel Bich (1914-1994) was then CEO and Edouard Buffard (1908-1996) Manufacturing Director.

They had met at *Société des Encre Stephens* (Stephens' Inks Company) and wanted to create their own enterprise. At the end of October 1944, gathering their own savings, they partnered to buy a three hundred square meter workshop at 18 Impasse des Cailloux in Clichy (Paris suburb) where they began to manufacture writing instrument parts.

At PPA, which was the very first of all the BIC Group companies to be created, the two associates established a true teamwork spirit and a high level of industrial requirements.

The visionary spirit of Marcel Bich led him to become interested in the ball point pen. He envisioned enormous potential for this product, and he and Buffard dedicated their efforts to launching their own ball pen. After acquiring a patent from the Hungarian Laszlo Biro for the ball point pen, the teams did everything to find the ideal ink formula and the perfect fitting between ball and ink, using machines of extreme precision from Swiss clock making. The BIC® Cristal® pen was launched in December 1950 and was based on the unassailable philosophy of offering the consumer superior quality at the best price. The BIC® Cristal® was an immediate success.

Today, 70 years after the creation of PPA in Clichy (France), BIC® products are found in more than 160 countries around the globe and occupy worldwide leading positions: number two in writing instruments, number one in branded pocket lighters, number two in non-refillable shavers and number two in advertising and promotional products.



1.



2.

1. **Marcel Bich (1914-1994)**
In front of Clichy factory
2. **Edouard Buffard (1908-1996)**
co-founder of PPA