



CONFEDERACIÓN
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**DIRECTIVOS
Y EJECUTIVOS**

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Interview with Enric Casi

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“We want the staff to identify with the success of the business”

Enric Casi, general manager of Mango

Enric Casi, general manager of one of the Spanish chains with the greatest international presence, states that now is the right time to innovate because it is in these cycles when everyone is ready for you to try new things, for you to seek new ways to achieve advancement in the areas of management and business organisation.



You have been general manager of Mango since 1996. Has team management changed in recent years?

No, it has not changed much. People have always been at the core for us: people and their motivation.

At the end of the day, it is people who do things at companies. There are new technologies and tools, but the way to manage is through people, people with values, with human qualities, and the key to people management lies in motivation. For example, as regards internal promotion, vacancies are filled by people who form part of the organisation rather than hiring someone specifically for that position. We open between 150 and 200 stores each year, creating new posts and creating loyalty and motivation among staff.

We want the staff to be more than just a number and to identify with the success of the company, creating a favourable atmosphere for people management. This is achieved leading by example.

In these current times of crisis, is management innovation crucial?

These times can help you think about how to change things. Everyone is ready for you to try something new. If everything is going well, you do not have to make as much of an effort...but when faced with an adverse climate everyone is alert and looking for ways to do things better.

Mango's target or potential customer profile is quite wide. To what degree is Mango up to speed with what is happening on the street?

At Mango we have designers, shop staff and staff dedicated to preparing statistics on the public visiting our stores to ascertain which products are sold most, amongst other things.

For instance, we see that there are customers who like a product, are satisfied with the price, decide to try it on but do not actually come to buy it. When this happens repeatedly it is because something is going awry at the last phase of the purchase. In this instance each member of staff forming part of the chain must detect these difficulties as to why sales fall short of expectations and this information is channelled towards making decisions.

What are the problems facing a manager, a leader?

It depends on the country. We have a presence in 93 countries. In Spain, the US, Ireland and the UK consumer spending has fallen, and there are difficulties because economic activity has declined a lot. In the rest of the world, we find countries that are going through great changes, even increasing consumer spending.

In a company like Mango, how do you combine global with local concerns?

We maintain a global strategy. The world seems to be getting smaller.

It is from our headquarters in Barcelona, together with the distribution centre, from which all our stores around the world are managed.

There are some countries in which we have distribution centres for legal reasons, but in general our desire is to have a single central point from which everything is managed. It is not viable to have a management structure in every country. We have legal consultants in different cities to solve the problems which may arise but all the activity is centralised in Barcelona. The same goes for the storage of products: if possible, they are sent directly from the manufacturer to the store or they are stored at the distribution centre while we wait for the right moment to distribute them.

All this allows us to save on costs, and these days everyone tends to want to save.

Most companies decide that it is best to save on communication, on advertising; however, we have not taken that path and we follow our own line of savings and cost containment, and we are more efficient.

“We follow a clear line of savings and cost containment, and we are more efficient”

Our product does not have much margin and it is based on the turnover of stock which is why the company's structure should be light, and this is what we are achieving. Every member of staff must decide what we can save on and, as a result, we are drawing up a reduced budget for 2010.

Is this the right time to think about innovation for future actions?

From Barcelona we monitor the entire production process, on the basis of which we take decisions at the appropriate time, and that for me is innovation. Having a single management office is also innovative.

“The design of our collections is a living process which is constantly adapted to the customer”

You are a mass consumption retail chain yet you define yourselves with a boutique spirit. How is this achieved?

Everything is achieved through effort, and everything has its price. There are shops which are mistaken for large stores. Mango is not a boutique but there are only a few garments for each model, and a great deal of care is taken with the distribution of each garment. Each product is replaced by another one which is the same or similar. In Europe products are distributed daily, and twice a week in the rest of the world. Every Monday the designers get together to create new collections and introduce new models.

A reduced first collection is created every season for in-store merchandising and the catalogue and based on how sales go we design new collections to adapt every day. It is a living process which is constantly adapted to the customer.

How do you think fashion will change? What is Mango's focus?

The world is becoming more standardised, we watch the same films, read the same books and, at the end of the day, fashion is fashion and it often transcends customs or traditions...however, 80% of what we produce is universal while 20% is tailored for each country.

What role do you believe Spain should play to improve and so that we are seen as business leaders at an international level?

Do things well and to be in as many countries as possible and, above all, manage to sell, demonstrate that we can do things well and earn that prestige. Previously, in Europe, Spain was last in line but that reality has changed.

Do you believe that we will emerge from this crisis by making a concerted effort?

Spain will come out of this, we have to be optimistic and positive. There are people who are consuming less due to unemployment, but most people are not spending due to fear and that undermines the economy, but this situation will change. Cycles have always existed and are a part of human history. The world is mysteriously based on cycles and as such, this happens in the economy as well.

It seems that in Spain this cycle is to be more protracted, the difference being who will come out first and who later. To this end, appropriate economic policies should be applied.

What is the business leaders' role in conveying trust to the market?

Everything is demonstrated by facts, at the end of the day this is what takes priority. You have to prove that you are doing things well and the market will be the one who decides if you are doing things right or wrong.

Contact

CONFEDERACIÓN ESPAÑOLA DE DIRECTIVOS Y EJECUTIVOS - CEDE

World Trade Center
Moll de Barcelona, s/n Edificio Sur 3ª planta
08039 Barcelona (Spain)
Tel. +34 93 508 83 20
Fax. +34 93 508 83 21
email: info@directivoscede.com