

REGINE SIXT

SIXT

THE SAGA OF AN  
EXCEPTIONAL FAMILY BUSINESS

1912-2016  
OVER A CENTURY & MORE OF SIXT



# THE SAGA OF AN EXCEPTIONAL FAMILY

*by Regine Sixt*

*We have been writing history over the last 104 years, day by day. I invite you to take a closer look on some of the outstanding moments of our company's and family's saga.*

## THE VISION

In quiet moments that I spent with my most respected and beloved late father-in-law, Hans Sixt, at his farm in the Bavarian mountains, he would tell me stories about the history of the Sixt family. At that time, they sounded to me as if they were fairy tales. How often did he say: "Regine imagine...when I was sitting with him on our bench in the front of his house. At the beginning of the twentieth century, Martin Sixt, a pioneer of his days, had a vision - to build a service on wheels."

This vision was realized in 1912 in a small garage in downtown Munich when Martin Sixt founded "Martin Sixt Autofahrten". Bavaria's first car rental service which opened for business with just three cars: a Deutz Landulet de Luxe and two Daimlers. "Regine imagine - in these days Martin Sixt was in contact with the celebrities of his time, offering them the service of a limousine company throughout all of Europe."

The company started to grow but this growth came to a sudden halt with



Martin Sixt



Hans Sixt

World War I, as the dark clouds of conflict spread over Europe, and in August 1914, the cars were all drafted into military service. The war lasted four years, rather than four months, as was originally expected, and the result was poverty and depression. "Regine imagine - despite the post-war climate Martin Sixt's wife Rosa opened a coffee house in Munich, which soon became the central meeting point for motorcar owners and drivers."

And with the money from the sale of the coffee house, they were able to restart the company, then called "Sixt Autofahrten". In 1925, young Hans



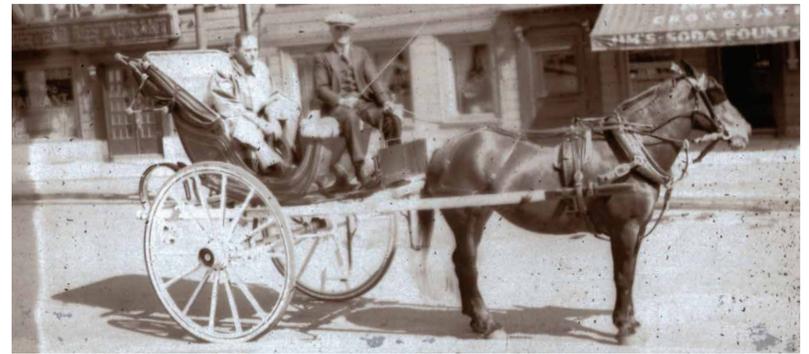
Sixt moved to the UK and then emigrated to the United States. “Regine imagine – I had no money, but I too, had a vision: to establish an International Company. Already, in these days, we were in contact with Thomas Cook and American Express.”

### THE FAMILY

Then, Martin Sixt asked Hans to return to Munich because he had to retire. He told me so many stories about those days – the roaring twenties, etc. – and how the company “Sixt Autofahrten” continued to grow over the next decades. “Regine imagine – in 1933 the Nazis came to power and with the outbreak of World War II in 1939 all of our cars were confiscated.”

But my father-in-law was courageous enough to hide three cars secretly in a stable. These were very sad moments in these days. My father-in-law was drafted in the army and sent to the Eastern Front. While he was in Russia, his beloved wife Erika gave birth to their son Erich – my dear husband. Nevertheless, after the war, Hans Sixt took the three hidden cars out of the barn and, with my mother-in-law, they again started a car rental business under the banner “Auto-Sixt”.

With the help of the US military forces, Hans Sixt created a Businessmen Motor Pool and rented “Export Taxis”,





which were paid for in US Dollars by members of the US Army.

**»AND I WENT TO AMERICA ON MY OWN ON SALES TRIPS, JUST AS HE DID AS A YOUNG BOY. HE WAS VERY PROUD OF ME DOING THAT.«**

By the late 1940's, Hans Sixt operated more than 1700 of these cars. In addition, his high-end limousine service quickly developed an impressive reputation including patronage by celebrities like Kirk Douglas, Greta Garbo and Marlene Dietrich. "Regine imagine – in the fifties, I started the self-drive business and pretty soon we were running 50 self-drive cars."

If he had known only then, that nowadays we would have 225,000 cars on the road, he would have thought it was a fairy tale. "Regine imagine – in 1964 my young son Erich joined me in the business, by now operating a fleet of 200 cars. He was the same age as me when I had started."

### THE SUCCESS

And it is at that moment in time, that the real story of Sixt's worldwide success began. "Regine imagine – now YOU, my lovely girl, are a vital part of us." That's what he told me when I married Erich Sixt in 1976. I became a part of this amazing family with a spirit that has encouraged me to set

ambitious goals in the tourism industry ever since. I started to work with airlines and hotel partnerships and the largest US tour operators. And I went to America on my own on sales trips, just as he did as a young boy. He was very proud of me doing that.

"Regine imagine – what a future this boy is going to face!" He told me in 1979 when I had our son Alexander in my arms. "Regine imagine – how strong the two boys are going to be together," he said again when I put our son Konstantin in his arms in 1982.

Unfortunately, he was not able to witness their entire bright future. Today, Alexander and Konstantin are in the top management of our internationally renowned public company, where we still hold the majority of the shares of Sixt AG within the family.

"Regine imagine – your mother-in-law and I could travel around the world and discover the Seven Wonders of the World." And indeed: He did it in his days already in 1962. At the same time, Erich Sixt, with again 20 years old, has set the Seven Corner Stones of the Sixt's success:

**1969:** Erich Sixt founds one of the first German leasing companies which is now one of the leading leasing companies in Europe.

**1977:** Erich Sixt enters a cooperation agreement with an international



car rental company and becomes truly international by offering our clients a worldwide reservation tool.



**1983:** Erich Sixt starts the legendary advertising campaign: “Rent a Mercedes at the price of a Golf!“ The ad „Drive first class – pay economy“ changed the car rental market dramatically and propelled Sixt to be Germany’s market leader. In those days Erich Sixt bought several thousand Mercedes 190 and with this cemented his company’s philosophy: “Drive first class – pay economy”. This campaign has had many versions over the years but has always followed the same principal.

**1986:** Erich Sixt takes one of his most important decisions: Going public! It was not an easy decision to submit to the complex regulations of the stock market with its laws and to give up a great deal of entrepreneurial freedom.

**1989:** Erich Sixt decides to develop with corporate expansion. Sixt Switzerland and Austria are opened and Regine Sixt begins to open the first franchise countries in Europe, beginning with Portugal and Ireland; today Sixt is present in 105 countries.

**1995:** Erich Sixt recognizes the increasing importance of the internet. By founding e-Sixt he makes sure to utilize the advantages of new technologies. Ever since then, Sixt has been the most forward-thinking and innovative car rental company in the world. Today, Konstantin Sixt is leading this department with 50% of Sixt’s reservations being made through Sixt.com.

**2010:** Konstantin Sixt together with Axel Springer AG established the joint venture autohaus24.



**2011:** Alexander Sixt was founding DriveNow as a joint venture with BMW. Alexander sets the course for this pioneering innovation which will conquer new dimensions in the car rental industry.

I am so proud to say that these are the “Seven Wonders of Sixt”. “Regine imagine – the worldwide reputation of Sixt is based on loyalty, effort and reliability that has developed into a tradition over the last 75 years.”

## THE 100<sup>TH</sup> BIRTHDAY

Hans Sixt pointed that out for Sixt’s 75th anniversary and it was still true in 2012 with Sixt’s hundredth birthday. I would like to thank the thousands of employees who helped us in building up this amazing success story and moulded us into a unique organization. I would also like to thank the managers of 105 countries of Sixt who life the spirit of the Sixt Family, which I created in 1997 in opening the first franchise country and brings us the orange Sixt colour to a most respected international brand awareness.

And that happens to international attention and global recognition of entrepreneurial performance by Regine Sixt. Since 1976 Regine Sixt operates autonomously guided international marketing, licensees and partners



Sixt.com, Sixt Apps, Autohaus24.de and DriveNow – created by the new generation: Alexander and Konstantin Sixt.



By providing health care, educational and livingsolutions, many little tears have been dried. Together with Sixt SE and its highly engaged employees in 105 countries, the Regine Sixt Children’s Aid Foundation has developed into a relief organization that makes the impossible possible.

business – plus her helping worldwide charity organization „Drying Little Tears“, the Regine Sixt Children’s Aid Foundation. The main purpose of the Regine Sixt Children’s Aid Foundation is the worldwide improvement of humane living conditions for children. The foundation is therefore modeled after the UN’s Convention on the Rights of the Child. Divided into four program areas including health, care, education and emergency aid, it supports projects of third parties and takes on its own initiatives in order to achieve the defined objectives. Since the establishment of the Regine Sixt Children’s Aid Foundation over fifteen



The innovative carsharing fleet DriveNow with MINI and BMW i3.



Sixt loves BMW: The first German electric luxury sportscar BMW i8.

years ago, numerous relief projects inland and abroad have been successfully implemented. By providing health care, educational and living solutions, many little tears have been dried. Together with Sixt SE and its highly engaged employees in 105 countries, the Regine Sixt Children's Aid Foundation has developed into a relief organization that makes the impossible possible.

This entrepreneurial passion is lived by Alexander and Konstantin in their own way. After her business studies, among others in Paris and London they are getting into the Sixt company. In the first decade of the 21st century Konstantin Sixt developed as Managing Director e-commerce the Sixt AG successfully the multimedia and internet business and Alexander Sixt as Managing Director corporate devel-

opment and strategy of Sixt AG established carsharing offensive DriveNow – their young dynamic entrepreneurs banners.

**»I WOULD LIKE TO THANK THE THOUSAND EMPLOYEES WHO HELPED US IN BUILDING UP THIS AMAZING SUCCESS STORY AND MOULDED US INTO A UNIQUE ORGANIZATION.«**

The future is what we make of it! Looking back, I am truly thankful for all we have achieved. And looking forward, I am excited and thrilled to help shape what lies ahead of us! Change and renewal is one Sixt secret of success and the Sixt DNA is another one.



## THE SIXT DNA

The Brand Core itself is the condensed feeling we want to evoke in anyone who works at Sixt, with Sixt or rents with us: Sure, people like great service, premium cars, our famous advertising or client-centric innovations. However, the competition is fierce and to truly ensure loyal employees and clients alike, our brand needs to constantly give a positive feeling. All our actions should evoke excitement. Because the “X” in Sixt stands for excitement. The six Sixt principles are:

### BE OBSESSED!

Make Sixt better every day.

### CREATE EXCITEMENT!

Satisfaction is not enough.

### QUESTION EVERYTHING!

Always fight for the optimum.

### DO IT!

And finish it.

### NEVER GIVE UP!

If you fail, try again.

### STAY SIXT!

A global family.

And Sixt define some universal values too. They give a definition of what we do, how we do it and what it rules in:



**Brand Value Fire:** This values defines what we do. We rent great products, offer superior service, have highest quality standards and aim to surprise to make a difference.



**Brand Value Herzblut:** This value defines how we work: Trust, loyalty and responsibility are key to our business – internally as well as externally. The German word roughly translates to “lifeblood” and gives a hint to our regional roots and heritage.



**Brand Value Performance:** Performance is the result of all our actions. Sixt is a highly professional company. We have the power to decide without asking and success is key.

## THE DYNAMIC DUO

Now, the next generation is at the starting gates and the engines are roaring: new board members Alexander and Konstantin Sixt discuss global mobility of the future, having orange blood in their veins, and the power of dreams.



“We will, we will rock you!” More than a thousand people clap and stomp to the Queen classic as Konstantin Sixt makes his way through the room onto the stage. “You may think that we are crazy,” he said, beginning his speech at the Sixt World Conference in Davos last November. “But my brother and me, we have a dream: We dedicate our lives to make Sixt number one in the world!”

Whether that takes ten, twenty, or fifty years, he adds. Shouts of jubilation from Sixt managers from 105 coun-

tries. Being a part of this adventure threatens to bring down the roof at the annual gathering.

Months later at Sixt headquarters in Pullach near Munich. In February 2015, the Sixt brothers Konstantin, 32, and Alexander, 35, were appointed to the company’s Executive Board. Now they will be judged on how well their words are followed by concrete actions. They discuss major issues facing the company and ongoing projects such as the expansion into the US. Sixt entered the largest car rental market



Sixt presents on ITB in March 2016 the new mobility tool Sixt fastlane allowing customers to skip the queues at the counter and unlock their rental cars with a smartphone.

in the world three years ago and now has more than 50 rental offices in the States. If the pace continues, Sixt will be making more money there than in Germany in just a few years. But there is a lot of competition and Sixt has to fight to gain a spot at each location and each airport.

## THE US STRENGTH

At LAX alone, a total of 40,000 rental cars are available, more than the entire fleet of the entire industry in Austrian and Switzerland combined. Licences for airport offices in the United States are auctioned off to the highest bidder, sometimes only once every ten years.

So it's important to stay on the ball. For a global company like Sixt, this means never falling asleep at the wheel. "And why should we? There are 24 hours in a day, aren't there?" says Alexander Sixt, laughing. He is not only responsible for corporate strategy, but also for process management, centralised purchasing, and new mobility offering.

The two brothers have their offices next door to each other and their doors are mostly open. They know that the big dream can only succeed if there is an unconditional commitment to becoming the world leader. Isn't this goal too big? "Why should it be?" counters Konstantin Sixt. "When my parents took over the reins as the third genera-

tion to run the company, they only had 200 cars and dreamt of a 1000. Now we've got 144,400!" As the person responsible for domestic and international sales as well as the company's global e-commerce business, the speed of the company's growth is highly dependent on his performance.

## THE ADVANCE

When spending time with the brothers, you get the feeling that you're in the control room of a massive power plant where everyone's pushing to generate even more energy and enthusiasm in Sixt. This obsession to strive for the big goal is contagious. Konstantin Sixt speaks of "orange blood flowing in our veins".

The biggest challenge has just begun: the continued transformation of Sixt from a rental car company into a provider of comprehensive mobility services. Alexander Sixt makes a comparison: "Edison wanted to make electricity so cheap that only the rich would still burn candles. We want to make mobility so affordable that only the rich will own a car."

The self-driving car that Google and others have been successfully testing? Of course, Sixt wants to be the first car rental company to offer it. After all, it was the first to offer all-electric cars and it was the first to allow

cars to be booked on smartphones. Maybe the self-driving car will even one day make its way directly to the renter's location, saving a trip to the rental counter. Technically that would already be possible today; all that is lacking is the legal framework to make it happen. Augmented reality, such as GPS with helpful information directly displayed in your data spectacles, is already available at Sixt.

An application for Google Glass allows employees at stations to receive, check, and inspect vehicles for damage. And new services are continually being added to make life more convenient. Currently, direct 24-hour roadside assistance is available that will immediately displays the location of the vehicle, which can be in case of a breakdown or an accident can be crucial. The Sixt app now offers an accident checklist to help drivers know what to do, step by step, in case of an accident. And online damage reports identify which parts of the car were damaged. Another example: leasing customers have their own app that helps them find the nearest authorised garage or tyre retailer.

And Sixt develops the software it needs for these projects in-house. "IT is playing a crucial role in our business today because we have always been pioneers," says Alexander Sixt. The aim is always to be one (or two) steps ahead with every digital assistance system. To ensure this, right outside their doors is

a large office where the best programmers and business strategists collaborate. New ideas and the technology to realise them are developed side-by-side.

## THE FREEDOM

The understanding of digital possibilities has long been tradition at Sixt. Just as IT was beginning to be relevant for business, Erich Sixt did not settle for one of the existing solutions. They were not fine-tuned enough to his company's needs. So he taught himself how to program in Linux. To this day, he remains a fan of the open-source solution, proving again Sixt's independence and freedom from cookie-cutter solutions.

Freedom. The word keeps on coming up in conversation and it seems to be in the DNA of the Sixt family. The freedom of the entrepreneur to act on his own terms has been the foundation of Sixt's success that continues to grow year in, year out. The family's creativity has no limits, which is why Sixt rolls out innovations like an assembly line. The company is now considering transferring to rental cars the technologies successfully being used for DriveNow car sharing, such as using smartphones to open vehicles. DriveNow, the joint venture between Sixt and BMW, has exceeded all expectations. More than 400,000 registered users and a global demand are driving continued expansion.

Vienna, London, and San Francisco have recently joined the cities in Germany where DriveNow was first offered. But that is only the beginning.

The next generation is providing a further boost to these visions of the future where mobility is no longer about ownership, but about use. Pay-per-use is the big idea. The Sixt brothers also know that demographic trends and the growth of cities require more intelligent solutions such as car sharing. Being fast to act and realising new ideas is one of the Sixt -brothers' secrets. Alexander Sixt's office contains a poster that read: "Culture eats strategy for breakfast," by which he means that strategies from the executive suite can only be implemented if the corporate culture buys into it.

And they work on that constantly. Consciously or unconsciously, the two brothers sometimes find themselves playing "Good cop, bad cop." Konstantin, always smiling, convincing, winning. Alexander, tough and quick with his words. All the figures, data, and facts in his head.

## THE BIG IDEA

The two are revving the company's engines so that every bit of the collective horsepower at Sixt headquarters is put on the road. Sometimes a clear message also helps. The Sixt forum where executives explain their line and answer questions, Alexander has put it bluntly: "F \*\*\* innovation!" What he means: he does not believe in innovation departments that excuse the rest of the company from responsibility. Instead, read: "Together everybody achieves more."

Innovation has to be the duty of every employee, from mechanics to accountants. The Sixt brothers believe that the little ideas are the ones that when put together allow the big step forward. Dreams are not realised by dreaming, but instead through commitment and hard work, each and every day. Even so, if they could get a wish granted from a fairy godmother, what would they wish for? Both were quick to answer. For Alexander it would be even more

really great staff. Because he wants to develop his vision with people who like to see themselves as entrepreneurs and perform their duties with freedom and accountability. Constantine's wish: "To be honest, when I was young, I did not want to work for Sixt. Today, my wish is to be able to work here until the end of my life." How might the company look by then? What will it be like when Sixt is the world's market leader? And that probably will not take forever to achieve, given the pace that the two are setting.

## THE SAGA OF AN EXCEPTIONAL FAMILY GOES ON.



Konstantin and Alexander Sixt with their father Erich and the two other members of the Executive Board of Sixt SE, Dr. Julian zu Putlitz and Detlev Pättsch (from right to left).



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