
BSH China commits to build bigger presence on mainland

By **SONG WENWEI**

“Our company has done well in China over the years and will continue to build a bigger presence in the Chinese market,” said Roland Gerke, CEO and president of BSH China.

Joining Bosch-Siemens Home Appliances Ltd shortly after graduation from Freie Universitaet Berlin in 1985, Gerke has worked his way up – he has been a sales manager, a senior sales manager, a general manager (sales) before taking up his present position in 2002.

As one of the founders of BSH China, he has witnessed the company’s rapid development since it first entered the Chinese market in 1994.

He said: “We have four companies in China now and around 6,500 employees. We also have a complete sales and after-sales service network in 30 provinces, covering 600 cities and 1,900 counties.”

After years of development, BSH China has become one of the most successful international players in China’s highly competitive marketplace.

It has now successfully established the brands “Siemens” and “Bosch” in the premium segment. Its product portfolio ranges from locally manufactured cooling, laundry and cooking products, as well as electric water heaters, small consumer appliances, to imported high-end kitchen appliances, including dishwashers and ovens, to match the changing needs of Chinese consumers.

The company aims to be the industry benchmark in the areas that have become its hallmarks – innovation and quality, environmental protection and social responsibility.

The company has generated healthy profit margins over many years, which it attributes to its continuous efforts in seeking out innovative solutions.

As a result, it has introduced many breakthrough technologies and cutting-edge products, including refrigerators,



Roland Gerke: “Confidence”

washing machines and kitchen appliances.

Social responsibilities

Whilst manufacturing quality products, the company has always put environmental protection high on its agenda. It regards it as a key part of its sustainable development program and its commitment to social responsibility.

All its production sites are equipped with environmental management systems to ensure compliance with both statutory and internal regulations. It also strives for continual improvements to the company’s environmental performance.

Out of strong sense of social commitment, BSH China has made a considerable number of donations in the field of disaster relief, as well as supporting social and cultural activities, over the years.

It has launched projects making enormous contributions to raising people out of poverty, including staging an exhibition of “arty” refrigerators – many of which were auctioned and all the funds raised donated to improve the medical and nursing conditions of mothers and infants in underdeveloped areas.

When the major earthquake hit Wenchuan county in Sichuan province last year, affecting millions of people, BSH China not only donated money, but also sponsored an educational training program for the teachers from the disaster-stricken area in December 2008, alongside

the China Youth Development Foundation.

Quick recovery

When asked about the impact the global financial crisis on the company, Gerke is confident that business did not really suffer as much as a number of others in the sector.

Explaining its success, he said: “The local government has been very supportive and helpful, as they have always been since the day we first came here. It is also partly due to the central government’s stimulus policies.”

Gerke said: “The period from last October to April this year was rather hard for us, but our business has witnessed a quick recovery since May and yielded an increase of 41 percent in June, compared with that of last year.

“We have every confidence in the Chinese market and have continuously expanded our investment over the years.”

In March 2008, its new “side-by-side” factory, representing an investment of 250 million yuan, was opened in Chuzhou in Anhui province. Later that same year, in October, the new BSH electric water heater factory, an investment of some 65 million yuan, began production in Nanjing.

“We have invested another \$90 million in China this year, mainly in the refrigerator factory in Chuzhou and more investment will follow next year,” said Gerke.

Turning to discussing day-to-day life in Nanjing, Gerke confesses he is more than comfortable with his living environment. He said: “Nanjing is a nice place to both work and live. The city has a rich culture, a good natural environment and a convenient transport system

“It will surely become more prosperous with further improvements to its infrastructure and the addition of more international company headquarters.”

