

# ASCENDUM

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**VOLVO OCEAN RACE:  
ASCENDUM AND ITS  
CUSTOMERS CLOSER  
IN THE BIGGEST RACE  
IN THE WORLD**



## Contents

- P.02 EDITORIAL
- P.03 HIGHLIGHT  
ABOARD THE VOLVO OCEAN RACE
  
- P.06 RADAR  
EVENTS IN TURKEY AND SPAIN  
ENHANCE REPUTATION NARROWING  
TIES WITH CUSTOMERS  
  
TRAINING AT GLOMAK
  
- P.08 ASCENDUM WORLD TOUR  
ISTANBUL AT THE HEART  
OF THE TURKISH OPERATION
  
- P.10 HIGHLIGHTED TEAM  
THE RIGHT PEOPLE FOR MACHINE  
RENTAL IN AUSTRIA
  
- P.12 TALENTS  
NEW TALENTS IN SPAIN  
AND IN THE HOLDING
  
- P.14 MURAL  
ASCENDUM MOMENTS
  
- P.15 PROFILE  
NEW COO OF ASCENDUM USA,  
SHAWN SWEET
  
- P.16 WELCOME  
WELCOME: NEW STAFF  
IN THE CORPORATE CENTRE

## Editorial

### WITH THE CUSTOMER AT EVERY STAGE

There has been several months since the Volvo Ocean Race team began to cross the oceans. They are doing it in small vessels, out of sight of land and encountering all kinds of unexpected difficulties. Nevertheless, they are doing it as a team, without getting lost along the way. This is what we are doing at Ascendum: sailing with a clear course and doing it more and more as a great team.

These principles are crucial for a Group like ours that seeks a safe harbour, but it's important to remember that each stage of our journey can only be accomplished if our compass guides us towards every single customer.

We are sailing for them. To find them and to answer their needs; to help them plough the waves along the way; to achieve the goal that we both want to reach.

We do it whenever an Ascendum service exceeds their expectations or if a machine surpasses the expected performance. But we also do it every time we got a chance to provide and go through new experiences with them, whether we find ourselves out of the office or in the shipyard.



**RICARDO MIEIRO**  
President of the Executive Committee

This is what we have literally done in the Volvo Ocean Race, making the most of the long-term partnership between Ascendum and Volvo - and enriching the spectacular nature of the regatta stopover in Lisbon – providing a few different days to some of our customers... some days that, while memorable for them, also makes Ascendum more present.

Initiatives like these or like the trade fairs where our geographies are present, which count in our favour and help Ascendum achieve top-of-mind awareness with our customers. These events help us to bond and they strengthen relationships of trust. They also make new firms aware of a dynamic, cohesive and determined Ascendum.

So, we continue to sail, as a team, without losing our way and with the customer as the goal of each stage.

**Cover:**  
Volvo Ocean Race  
© Photos: Ainhoa Sanchez and Ian Roman

## Highlight

# ASCENDUM CUSTOMERS ABOARD THE VOLVO OCEAN RACE



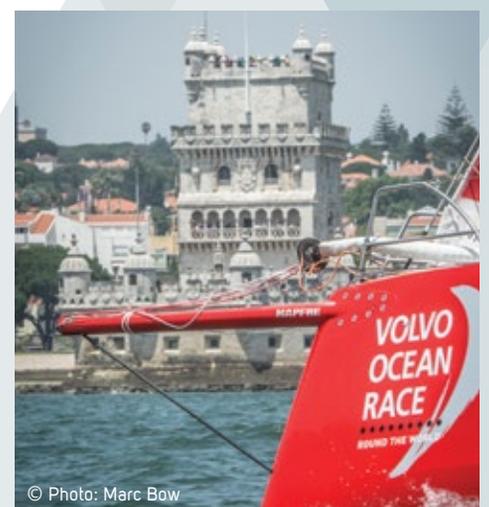
© Photo: Ainhoa Sanchez

The biggest round-the-world ocean sailing competition displays the brand of the oldest partner of Ascendum in its name. Just because of this and because the Volvo Ocean Race was in the city which hosts the group's headquarters - Lisbon - we wanted to make the most of the chance to give our customers a unique experience.

Spending one day in the Race Village, the nautical town of 45 000m<sup>2</sup> created to welcome the regatta, visiting the Volvo Pavilion and competing in the simulator of a compact excavator or watching the river races were some of the thrills enjoyed by the fifty Portuguese customers invited by Ascendum Portugal and by a group of twenty customers who came especially from Ascendum CEG.

*"It's not every day that we have an event this size and the fact that Volvo is the main sponsor allows our customers to have the privilege of experiencing it first-hand. It was a few days packed with socialising and getting together, which nurtures closer relations between customers and their regular counterparts and this was the main purpose of the invitations we sent out",* says Angela Vieira, Executive Board Member of Ascendum Group.

Besides the relationships that are consolidated more easily in a relaxed atmosphere like this yacht race, favouring the forging of ties and increasing trust between the Ascendum professionals and their customers, the circumstances of an extremely competitive event like the Volvo Ocean Race, which attracts thousands of visitors and sailors, are really inspiring for everyone who comes into direct touch with the event.



© Photo: Marc Bow

Highlight

# 38 739 NAUTICAL MILES AROUND THE WORLD WITH AN 11-DAY STOPOVER IN LISBON

The 2014/2015 Volvo Ocean Race started October 11th, 2014, and ended on June 27th. Throughout these months, the teams covered 38 739 nautical miles around the world and completed nine legs that took them to 10 harbours and countries: Alicante (Spain), Cape Town (South Africa), Abu Dhabi (United Arab Emirates), Sanya (China), Auckland (New Zealand), Itajai (Brazil), Newport (USA), Lisbon (Portugal), Lorient (France) and The Hague (Holland).

The Lisbon stopover lasted from May 25th to June 7th and provided a chance to watch several races and enjoy the riverside entertainment facilities, where there was plenty of excitement: dozens of concerts, fireworks, canoeing, scuba diving, free-fall simulator and other attractions.



© Photo: Ainhoa Sanchez



## GUIDED TOUR OF THE VOLVO OCEAN RACE

Ascendum Portugal customers were presented with a full guided tour of the pavilions that enlivened the Volvo Ocean Race in Lisbon and discovered many of the 'secrets' of the world's greatest yacht race, told by monitors who really know about the sailors' adventures. In the photos, a group of customers from Leiria.



## CUSTOMERS FROM SEVERAL ASCENDUM CENTRAL EUROPE COUNTRIES WERE ALSO IN LISBON

As well as all the hustle and bustle in the Race Village, Ascendum CEG customers were rewarded with bright sunshine and summer temperatures as the thermometers rose above 30° Celsius.

The photo shows Thomas Schmitz, CEO of Ascendum CEG (2<sup>nd</sup> from the left), posing with customers and the mascot of the Volvo Ocean Race. Wisdom the Albatross represents an endangered species whose protection is backed by the race through the "Save the Albatross" campaign.



# VIRTUAL OR REAL? FOREVER VOLVO!

One of the most popular activities in the Race Village in the Volvo Pavilion was provided by the Volvo Excavator, a compact excavator simulator that tested the 'drivers' to the limit in complete safety, in a competition that was nothing if not good-humoured. In the photo we can see a customer from Oporto testing his skills at the controls of the simulator. This simulator was also used in an entertaining contest between the competitors from the Volvo Ocean Race.

In addition to the virtual experience, some other, real, competitions tested the expertise of the guests in handling Volvo CE products. The customers from Leiria rose to the challenge.



# NAUTICAL ADVENTURE IN PRO-AM RACING

On the very same day we were visited by Princess Victoria of Sweden, June 5<sup>th</sup>, our special guests were still our Ascendum customers, and they were the ones to experience the nautical adventure of Pro-Am Racing.

The Pro-Am races are events designed especially to allow the main sponsors and their guests on board, and ours sailed on one of the Volvo Ocean 65 class vessels for an experience they will never forget... at least until the next major Ascendum excitement.



# IN-PORT RACE

The day before saying goodbye to Lisbon, June 6<sup>th</sup>, the yachtsmen lined up and competed in the In-Port race, a small event within the main race in which Mapfre team ranked first. A number of customers had a front-row seat to watch the contest, on board one of the boats that make the daily trip ferrying passengers between the banks of the River Tejo.



## Radar

## THE MOST IMPORTANT TRADE SHOW IN THE SECTOR

# ASCENDUM TURKEY NARROWING TIES WITH NEW CUSTOMERS AT KOMATEK

Ascendum Turkey was at Komatek 2015. This is the biggest trade show in the sector there, and between May 6<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> thousands of trade professionals from the heavy equipment sector were gathered in an event that welcomed around 32 000 visitors.

"Building the Future" was the slogan behind this event, where Ascendum Turkey boosted its reputation as one of the major players in the industry, laying the foundations of its own future while at the same time it exhibited the machines and services that will help constructing many of the projects which will shape the future of the country.

With an exhibition area of 1800 m<sup>2</sup> and 23 machines on display, Ascendum Turkey devoted much of this space to Volvo and showed Sany and SDLG equipment for the first time, which caught the eye of new customer segments.



East Marmara sales team and the Sales & Marketing Director of Ascendum Turkey, Tolga Polat.  
From left to right: Oktay Akbaba, Sales Manager; Berkay Karabaş, After-Sales Manager; Serdar Türkoğlu, Sales staff; Cem Doyuran, Sales staff; Tolga Kurt, Sales staff; Tolga Polat, Sales & Marketing Director of Ascendum Turkey

A specific area was set aside, indoors and outdoors, for After-Sales Services which attracted a lot of local customers and also facilitated the contact with the suppliers.

The event permitted the opportunity to launch the 15<sup>th</sup> edition of Volvo Operators Club competition and Ascendum Turkey accepted the first enrollments there.

The participation at this grand event, which was attended by 505 firms from 25 countries, further strengthened the relations with a number of public sector entities with which relations have been established and which are in charge of many of the major projects in Turkey.



## ASCENDUM SPAIN AT 2<sup>ND</sup> SUSTAINABLE MINING AND METALLURGY DEVELOPMENT FORUM

Ildelfonso García, Sales & Marketing Director of Ascendum Spain, was one of the speakers at the 2<sup>nd</sup> Sustainable Mining and Metallurgy Development Forum, which was held in IFEMA-Feria de

Madrid on May 12<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup>. The event attracted the leading equipment firms and suppliers operating in the sector, as well as the authorities that oversee it.



Ildelfonso García, Sales & Marketing Director of Ascendum Spain

In addition to the speech given on the first day of the Forum, Ascendum Spain also had a stand in the event's exhibition area. It provided information on the Company's solutions and equipment that contribute to the sustainability of mining and metallurgy activities.



## TRAINING AT GLOMAK

"Rotary Excavators Safety and Operating Wheel Loaders" and "Operation, Maintenance and Safety of Forklift Trucks" were the subjects matters of the training actions held at Glomak's Oporto facilities in May and June.

Intended for employees whose professional duties involve working directly or indirectly with these machines, the training sessions involved highly diverse groups that included people from the technical service and others from the commercial and parts departments.

Everyone learned a great deal about the risks of driving and manoeuvring forklift trucks and anticipating the associated risks; they also learned about the essential safety requirements for executing manoeuvres with wheel loaders and rotary excavators. Apart from the theory and practical components, which reinforced the skills of the participants, there was also time for some enjoyable social interaction.



Ascendum world tour

THIS IS THE CITY THAT HOLDS TWO BUSINESS UNITS OF THE TURKISH OPERATION

# ISTANBUL: WHERE ANTIQUE MEETS MODERN



Blue Mosque

At the heart of the "Old World" stands one of the most magnificent cities in the world. Famous for its history, natural beauty and monuments, it is also the only city that spans two continents, linking Asia and Europe, naturally separated by the Bosphorus Strait.

Istanbul is the largest city in Turkey, with around 15 million inhabitants. Although not the capital, it is certainly the economic, cultural and historical centre of the country, where the headquarters of the Turkish operation and two Ascendum units are located.

It was the European Capital of Culture in 2010, and the real estate consultant Jones Lang LaSalle (JLL) named it as the best city for business in the last five years. But the fame of this city, over 6000 years old, goes back even further to the times when it was the capital of the great empires - Roman, Byzantine, Ottoman - ruled by more than 120 emperors and sultans for 1600 years.

Visiting Istanbul is getting to know the magic of antiquity. But also to discover a modern, cosmopolitan and bustling city where the imperious mosques, palaces and gardens blend with glamorous restaurants, clubs, theatres, shops, museums and art galleries.

Any time of the year is a good time to visit Istanbul, with its temperate climate, and whatever the month, one of many events that the city hosts is likely to be happening: the International Film Festival in April; the Theatre Festival, which involves a number of dance and theatre companies, in May; the Istanbul Music Festival in June, which brings music and ballet to the city, along with opera, modern dance, jazz, pop, film and much more.

During your stay, you should try the various appetizers (*meze*), kebabs and meat dishes that are the foundations of the Turkish cuisine. You really must try the seafood, preferably in one of the restaurants on the banks of the Bosphorus. For dessert, you absolutely must try baklava or Turkish delight. *Raki* is the traditional alcoholic drink. It is kind of liquor made from grapes and other fruits, unsweetened and flavoured with anise, and is often drunk with seafood and *meze*.

## NOT TO BE MISSED

- **Topkapı Palace:** encircled by walls, this is a city within a city. It was the residence of the Ottoman Sultans for 400 years and its first courtyard houses the Archaeological Museum (one of the world's largest) and the Aya Irini (Holy Peace, or Saint Irene) Museum.
- **Blue Mosque, Hagia Sophia Basilica and Basilica Cistern (Yerebatan Sarnici):** very close to the Topkapı Palace is the Ayasofya (St Sophia) Basilica Museum, the cathedral of former Constantinople (Byzantine Empire), the Mosque of the Sultan Ahmed, known as the Blue Mosque, and the Yerebatan Sunken Palace.
- **The Grand Bazaar:** one of the largest covered markets in the world, with 60 streets and five thousand shops, which attract 400 000 visitors a day, and where there is no shortage of jewellery, hand-painted pottery, antiques and tapestries.



Topkapı Palace

- **Süleymaniye Mosque:** the largest and most imposing mosque in Istanbul and a true masterpiece of architecture, built by Suleyman the Magnificent, an Ottoman Sultan who ruled for 47 years.
- **Cruise on the Bosphorus:** an unforgettable tour, with a breathtaking view of the elegant mansions and astonishing palaces that line the shore, in particular the Dolmabahçe Palace and Beylerbeyi Palace, built in the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

## A GREAT TEAM... IN COMMITMENT AND RESULTS

Ascendum Turkey has its corporate headquarters in Orhanlı, on the Asian side of Istanbul (Anatolia), along with one of the two business units in the city. The other is on the European side, in Kiraç. Together, they distribute Volvo, SDLG, Chicago, Sandvik, SANY and Massey Ferguson equipment and machinery. The business is supplemented by TRP, which provides solutions, parts and components that meet all the equipment needs, regardless of brand or model.

116 Ascendum employees work in this gigantic city, forming a great team that does not lack passion, knowledge, initiative and customer focus. Never giving up and keeping the customer as close as possible are the maxims followed in Istanbul. This is the reason why it has been possible to support and serve major projects, such as the city's third airport and third bridge, several motorways and the natural gas project in Anatolia.



The business unit that includes New Equipment Sales and After-Sales, with workshops and parts sales, two departments that serve the eastern region of Marmara, is located in Orhanlı, near the corporate headquarters. They are joined by several other departments that serve the entire Turkish operation: Rentals, Sales of SDLG and SANY brands, Marketing and Sales Support, After-Sales, Parts, and TRP. Fifty-five staff take care of all the services. All activities are performed by 55 employees.



The Kiraç business unit includes the New Equipment Sales and After-Sales Departments, which serve the Marmara region. It is staffed by 30 employees, most of whom are in After-Sales.



The corporate headquarters in Orhanlı accommodates the central services common to the entire Turkish operation, including the Financial and Accounting, Information Technology, Human Resources and Logistics Departments. Overall, 31 employees work here, including the CEO, Mahir Hocaoglu.

Restaurants, bars, tea houses and nightclubs complete the picture, where there are still traces of fishing villages.

- Galata and Beyoğlu (Pera) District: one of the most vibrant and popular areas of the city, with hotels, bars, cinemas, theatres, cultural centres and art galleries. A unique view can be enjoyed from the Galata Tower, standing 70 metre-high and with a 360° panorama over the city.

- Taksim Square and Istiklal Avenue - one of the busiest places, day and night, packed with cafés, traditional restaurants, theatres, cinemas, and fruit and fish markets.
- Nisantasi - an elegant quarter, with designer label stores, cafés, bars, restaurants and a thriving nightlife.
- Leander's Tower (Kiz Kulesi in Turkish, or Maiden's Tower), used as a lighthouse for



Cruise in Bosphorus



Leander's Tower

several centuries and today a restaurant that stands majestically on a small islet in the middle of the Bosphorus.

Highlighted Team – Rental of Ascendum Machines in Austria

# ONLY WITH TEAMWORK CAN WE MAXIMIZE MACHINE RENTAL



IT WASN'T EASY TO FIND THE RIGHT PEOPLE TO ACHIEVE THE DESIRED QUALITY AND PROFESSIONALISM IN THE RENTAL SERVICE, BUT WE DID IT. THIS IS WHAT WE HAVE TODAY IN THE MACHINE RENTAL DEPARTMENT OF ASCENDUM AUSTRIA. IN ORDER TO FIND OUT MORE ABOUT THE TEAM THAT MANAGES AROUND 350 MACHINES AND OVER 1500 ACCESSORIES CURRENTLY RENTED THROUGHOUT ALL AUSTRIA, WE SPOKE WITH THE MANAGER, ERNST SCHUCHANEGG.

**REGARDING ASCENDUM AUSTRIA MACHINE RENTAL DEPARTMENT, CAN YOU TELL US ABOUT ITS EVOLUTION?**

We started in February 2006 with the rental station a few kilometres south from Vienna, in Gumpoldskirchen, and now we cover the whole country. By the end of 2007 we had rental stations in the Graz area, in Linz (Upper Austria) and nearby Innsbruck (Tyrol). In 2009, we extended the rental business to our headquarters in Salzburg and finally in 2012, we opened in Villach, in Carinthia. This was our structure when we joined Ascendum Group, a new milestone that has enabled us to approach the market with new resources.

Today, even though our fleet consists mostly of Volvo machines, we have started to add other brands like Thwaites, Atlas Copco and Wacker-Neuson.

**HOW BIG IS THE TEAM?**

We're 13, and it has not been easy to find the right people. But this is what we have today: A group of creative and teamwork oriented people.

**CAN 13 PEOPLE HANDLE THE RENTAL NEEDS THROUGHOUT AUSTRIA?**

Each Rental Station has one or two people wholly dedicated to the rental business and focused on

dealing with our customers, as well as keeping the machines in operation. The After-Sales team help out with this latter aspect.

Of course, this means an endless number of tasks, including negotiating for equipment, delivering them, moving them, signing rental agreements, drafting delivery notes, drafting budgets, billing customers... and doing all of this with the same goal

## A PERFECTLY INTEGRATED FAMILY

This team is unique, formed by a group of ambitious people who have "grown up" together in the last few years and who work as a perfectly together.

*"We work hard and are always facing strong competition, but we end up having fun whenever we have something to celebrate. And this spirit extends to our families, too, because our husbands and wives need to be very understanding and appreciate that if a customer has a problem, we have to sort it out for them. This is the only way to succeed."*



Ernst Schuchanegg heads the team, supported by Ines Lippert



INNSBRUCK



Günther Gruner ensures the business in Innsbruck

and responsibility: satisfying our customers who are, after all, our business partners, whether they are large Austrian and European companies, with over 15 000 employees, or small enterprises.

**WHAT'S THE SECRET BEHIND YOUR SUCCESS?**

Basically, it's all in the planning of the fleet, our positioning and teamwork.

Regarding the first, it is crucial to have the right machine, at the right time and in the right place. This requires constant control and deciding whether to buy new machines, keep some or sell them.

At the same time we want to be competitive but we have to continue to focus on what makes us stronger and recognized by our customers: the availability and efficiency of our machines, where and when they are needed.

Last but not least, the rental business relies greatly on people and the trust that is built up with customers. Our challenge can only be tackled as a team,



One of the 350 machines rented and in operation in Austria

with mutual support between the members, and this is easy to understand when we realize that these machines have to be moved all around Austria so that we can exploit them to the fullest.

**WE MANAGED TO EMERGE UNSCATHED FROM THE ECONOMICAL CRISIS**

Our greatest achievement was to be able to overcome the crisis we went through in 2008/2009, being capable to maintain the team we have today. We were the only department that remained the same, without anyone having to leave the team, and that had a lot to do with the work we do and the careful management of machines that we successfully achieved at a time when it was impossible to make forecasts, even in the mid-term.



Franz Elias and Markus Arzt take care of rental in Linz

LINZ



Markus Weissenböck is in charge of the rental business in Vienna

VIENNA

SALZBURG



In Salzburg, the rental business is in the hands of Gerhard D'Ambros and Reinhard Dufter



GRAZ

The Graz branch is overseen by Josef Wiener, Heribert Weh and Josef Rumpf



Johann Pozewaunig and Natascha Pozewaunig is monitoring in Villach

VILLACH





Maisa relates to Gaston Rébuffat's maxim, "The mountain climber is someone who is drawn to where their eyes one day dreamed of".

## ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT IN ASCENDUM SPAIN, VALLADOLID

# FOR MAISA OTS THE SKY IS THE LIMIT

"Ever since I was young, I couldn't get the images of mountaineers with their back-packs and equipment out of my head and it was basically that what fascinated me about the mountains" – says Maisa, explaining how her love for mountaineering was born and grew stronger.

Maisa was always determined and adventurous: first as a young scout, with a taste for hiking, camping and nature; then as an adult, a competitive sportswoman who played basketball for 10 years. Only after this "career" as a player, then aged 40, she started to head to the mountains more often.

Born in Valladolid, which is a level land city, this is what she does at weekends and when on holidays. "During the week I go jogging or go to the gym to keep myself in

good shape. It's really important to be fit when you're on a mountain... Otherwise, you suffer a lot!"

Even though she says she does not aim to reach a particular peak - more than achieving a mountain goal, mountaineering is a way of life for her – the bottom line is that she became a strong climber and has been getting higher and higher.

"At first I was happy with small peaks in the Cantabrian Mountains. Then I spent a week or two in the Pyrenees..." and she reached the highest peak in the world: Mount Everest, Himalayas.

Maisa, now 60, has been part of the Ascendum family since 1999 - when Volvasa, where she was working - was acquired. Her working day involves all

kinds of administrative tasks, support for sales and aftersales, and managing payments. Whenever these responsibilities are off her shoulders she heads to the mountain for a tough but relaxing getaway.

### WHAT IS THE HIGHLIGHT OF YOUR MOUNTAINEER'S LIFE?

After climbing Mont Blanc, which was a very important peak, and after overcoming the challenges of the Alps, Toubkal and Kilimanjaro, my dream - the dream of all mountaineers, in fact - became reality in 2008, when I went to the Himalayas. It was the experience of a lifetime! Not only for having reached over 6,000 metres and being on Everest (the world's highest mountain), but also for getting to know the Nepalese and learn about their culture. It was a fantastic adventure!

## Talent Holding

# PEDRO ARÊDE: A GROUP FINANCE DIRECTOR ON THE CREST OF A WAVE

After five days of hard work, Pedro takes his board and faces the waves. For a few hours it's just between him and the power of the sea, in an activity that, despite being physically demanding, helps him restoring his balance. *"It's a healthy addiction. It's an escape that helps me to deal with the pressures"*, says the Group Finance & Financial Operations Director, who finds surfing the counterpoint to the enormous responsibility he bears for the financial management of a group this size.

Pedro doesn't know how long it has been since surfing came into his life: *"I was about 12 and went swimming at the time, when some friends who enjoyed surfing began daring me to have a go"*. I used to ask my parents to take me to the beach, which was a few kilometres away from Lisbon - where I was living back then - until I was old enough to go on my own.

He learned by himself and with friends, by trial-and-error, because according to him, *"at that time there weren't as many surf schools like we have nowadays. We used to learn at a slower pace, and it wasn't easy to find surf gear, like wetsuits and boards"*.

Now 40, Pedro is familiar with the best beaches for surfing and there is where we can find him almost every weekend and holiday. In Portugal, the Alentejo shore is one of his favourite destinations. When it comes to vacation destinations he goes along with the best waves around the world, from Cape Verde to the Maldives.

## SURFING CAN BE DANGEROUS... HAVE YOU EVER HAD ANY SCARES?

Yes, I have. For instance, the leash - the line that holds the surfboard to the ankle - once broke and I was in the water without a board and had to swim 30 metres to the shore... When we try to exceed our limits it's natural that we sometimes have scares. The best way to deal with them is not to give up: al-



ways returning back to the sea but establishing some limits - so that, in time, we gain awareness of the waves that we feel we can actually surf.

## HOW SUPPORTIVE IS YOUR FAMILY ABOUT THIS?

My wife doesn't surf but she does support me and joins me. She knows how important surfing is to me, to be able to clear my head of the daily routine. My daughter, who's 4 years old, is still very young... but she'd like to.

We have several friends who practise this sport, who have kids a bit older than her and they're taking their first steps into it. Because she watches them with their boards she wants to try. She says this summer she's going to try out, but only with her father's help.



Garret McNamara catching the famous 30 meter-high wave, in Nazaré, Portugal.

## WORLD SURFING RESERVE

Portugal has made its name in the last few years as one of the top surf destinations in the world, thanks to over 900 km of coast and a climate that allows you to surf all year long. As well as the major events of this activity organised in Portugal, the fact that the country is collecting records - the biggest wave in the world, in Nazaré, by the famous Garret McNamara; the longest wave in Europe, in Figueira da Voz and the stretch of coast with the highest concentration of waves in Europe, in Ericeira - led to it being recognised by the North American Save the Waves association as a World Surfing Reserve.

The Portuguese Sports Association estimates that surfing earns the Portuguese economy 400 million euros a year.

Mural



## ON THE PODIUM AT THE EUROPEAN BUSINESS AWARDS

Ernesto Silva Vieira came on stage to receive the honours of Ascendum Group's nomination for the European Business Awards. The gala took place on May 26<sup>th</sup> and was attended by representatives of the nominated companies.

## ASCENDUM CROATIA: A GREAT SMALL TEAM

Of all our operations, Ascendum Croatia is the one with the smallest team: 8 employees. But in Ascendum Group, quantity and quality do not necessarily have a direct relationship, so the fact that it is the smallest does not prevent it from being great in dedication and professionalism.



Support and Sales team in Croatia, from left to right: Mirjana Kučan, Accounting Technician; Zlatan Obarčanin, Sales Manager; and Gordana Božiček, Financial Manager for Hungary and Croatia.



Support and Sales team in Croatia, from left to right: Mirjana Kučan, Accounting Technician; Zlatan Obarčanin, Sales Manager; and Gordana Božiček, Financial Manager for Hungary and Croatia.

## THE GREAT MEXICAN FAMILY

On June 13<sup>th</sup>, the Mexico City branch gathered for a very special day: colleagues and their families had a chance to meet each other under a festive environment.

In this in-house event with 130 people, the motivation and satisfaction of the Mexican employees was improved. The workers had the chance to show their families their daily routines and responsibilities in Ascendum.



## Profile

## NEW VICE-PRESIDENT AND OPERATIONS DIRECTOR OF ASCENDUM USA

# SHAWN SWEET: EXPERIENCE, LEADERSHIP AND DETERMINATION TO DEVELOP BUSINESS IN AN EXTREMELY DYNAMIC MARKET

ASCENDUM MAGAZINE WELCOMES SHAWN SWEET, THE NEW VICE-PRESIDENT AND DIRECTOR OF OPERATIONS OF ASCENDUM USA. HE IS RESPONSIBLE FOR ALL THE OPERATIONS SUPPORTING THE BUSINESS, ALONG WITH RELATIONS WITH SUPPLIERS IN THE FIVE REGIONS WHERE WE OPERATE: NORTH CAROLINA, SOUTH CAROLINA, NORTH DAKOTA, GEORGIA AND WEST TENNESSEE.

## WHAT LED YOU TO ACCEPT THIS NEW PROFESSIONAL CHALLENGE?

I've been in this Equipment for Construction industry for over 25 years, in all sorts of areas from sales and marketing to operations, production and distribution, and I've worked in the USA and Canada in positions with global responsibility. Besides, I truly love our industry at every level, and few are the challenges that fulfil me as much as being able to build a profitable business that crosses different functional and geographical areas.

Being part of Ascendum means doing it in a distribution company with enormous experience and proven capacity that represents the world's leading brands and that has the chance to grow in key business markets and areas.

Ascendum USA is thus excellently placed in the market and has challenging opportunities ahead to expand our flagship brand, Volvo, as well as other products in the various American markets that are still under-represented.



This role gives me a unique opportunity to enrich my experience and relations in the industry at the same time as it encourages me to learn, grow and develop as a leader.

## GIVEN YOUR PREVIOUS EXPERIENCE, WHAT CONTRIBUTIONS WILL YOU BRING TO THE NORTH AMERICAN OPERATION?

I hope to bring new perspectives, ideas and approaches which are the result of my prior experience and a progressive style of leadership that can help us developing in this dynamic, constantly-chang-

ing market. I've built relevant relationships in the industry over the years and worked closely with the current leaders of a number of our suppliers. This trust is vital in any partnership and throughout my career I've definitely worked to keep a high level of integrity that is recognised in the sector.

## WHAT ARE THE MAIN OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES THAT YOU SEE IN ASCENDUM USA?

The opportunities are huge. First, the American market is very dynamic and our specific markets are gaining strength. The southwest region has been improving significantly in the last few years and our operation in North Dakota, though more difficult because of the fall in the price of oil in the last 12 months, has sound prospects for long-term growth. Second, contractors in the USA are still somewhat risk averse and they're getting distributors to find more creative solutions from the financial point of view in order to attract business. If we keep close and committed to the customer and if we can anticipate these trends, we'll have a solid territory to continue to grow profitably.

In terms of the challenges, I'd say that our customer service is under immense pressure to meet the ongoing customers' needs. Hiring, developing skills and retaining the most talented technicians in the parts and maintenance services is crucial to continue to grow in these important business areas.

## WORKING WITH CONSTRUCTION EQUIPMENT FOR 25 YEARS

Shawn Sweet was born in Canada. He has dual nationality - American and Canadian - the two countries where he has both lived and worked.

The new COO is an expert in the sector, with 25 years of experience, having worked for companies like Ingersoll Rand, Doosan and Volvo Construction Equipment.

This knowledge and experience is combined with acknowledged leadership and management skills, borne out by a number of management positions and leadership of new business, since it was him, for example, who took over the management of Volvo Penta's industrial engines division in the USA. Shawn is 53 and married to Danielle, and has two boys, Cameron and Brandon, aged 19 and 18.

Welcome

# WELCOME: NEW STAFF IN THE CORPORATE CENTRE



**DIANA GUERRA**

*Human Resources Manager, Corporate Centre*

Graduate in Communication and Management from Lisbon's Universidade Nova, for the past three years she has been working at Hay Group as Human Resources consultant.

Diana is helping Angela Vieira in the HR area.

Age: 26



**JOANA PEREIRA**

*Executive Assistant, Corporate Centre*

Graduate in Translation and Proof Reading from the Faculty of Letters of Lisbon University, she joins the Corporate Centre as an administrative assistant.

Age: 25



**ANTÓNIO DIAS**

*Business Analyst, Corporate Centre*

Graduate in Management and Finance, he joins the Corporate Centre as a business analyst, helping Rui Galamba in the Business Development area.

Age: 28



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