

The evolution of the Adecco Group is characterised by productive acquisitions, organic growth, industry innovation and global expansion, creating a story spanning over 50 years. In 1996, the founding companies Adia and Ecco merged to form the global leader.

History

1957

Adia SA is founded in Lausanne, Switzerland, by Henri-Ferdinand Lavanchy. The firm grows rapidly in its home country before expanding abroad.

1964

Philippe Foriel-Destezet founds Ecco in Lyon. By the early 1980s, Ecco is the largest supplier of temporary personnel in France.

1961–1980

In the 1960s, Adia opens offices in various European countries and then in 1972 takes a first step overseas, with a branch in Menlo Park, California. In 1974, Lavanchy recruits Martin O. Pestalozzi and a phase of expansion by acquisitions begins. In the next 12 years, Adia buys over 85 companies, tripling in size and gaining footholds in more than a dozen countries. These include France (1975) and the UK (1977), where it buys the market leader: Alfred Marks Bureau Ltd.

Early 1980s

Adia continues to expand overseas, including Australia, New Zealand, Japan, Hong Kong, and Canada. Meanwhile, Ecco is focusing on its home market. By the mid-1980s, it is the market leader in France and a decade later world no. 2. The growth of both companies is part of a wider trend: temporary staffing becomes the world's third-fastest-growing industry in the 1980s.

Late 1980s

Revenues topping USD 1 billion in 1986 make Adia the European leader. Its success is partly down to a focus on quality and high-value services. The 1990s see a growing trend towards specialised skills, e.g. accounting and word-processing, including in-house training programmes.

1990s

Further acquisitions from the late 1980s onwards strengthen the presence in highly skilled, specialised fields. Also, moves are made into socially related programmes for mature workers in the USA, promoting the

benefits of temporary work for retirees and the value for companies of tapping into their experience, skills, and dedication. In 1991, recognising the importance of the industry's role in job creation and its growth potential, Klaus J. Jacobs invests in Adia on the way to becoming its majority shareholder.

1996

Adia and Ecco merge to form Adecco. Two of the world's top three personnel services firms, with complementary geographical profiles, merge to form a strong global leader with annualised revenues of over EUR 5.4 billion. Operations are combined to form a global network of 2,500 branches. The new company has an exceptional range and quality of services. The core staffing business places around 250,000 people in work each day.

1997–2000

The 1997 acquisition of TAD Resources International strengthens Adecco's technical and IT staffing business in the USA. In 2000, Adecco acquires the IT and generalist staffing

business of the Olsten Corporation to become the no. 1 staffing services business in the USA and worldwide leader in the IT sector. The merged companies' revenues reach over EUR 11.6 billion, reflecting organic growth and successful acquisitions. Partnerships with Monster.com and Jobs.com mark Adecco's intent to be at the forefront of harnessing the web in the recruitment process.

2002

To keep at the forefront of the trend towards increasing demand for professional and expert services, Adecco consolidates its business under three operating divisions: Adecco Staffing; Ajilon Staffing/Managed Services; and Career Services/e-Business. Legislative change in Germany creates a more favourable environment for the growth of temporary staffing, reflecting greater acceptance of the industry's positive role in generating employment and economic growth.

2004

The acquisition of PeopleOne Consulting in India signals Adecco's commitment to play a leading role in the industry's development in the Emerging Markets. As a result of the delay in the audit of the 2003 financial statements in early 2004, the Group strengthens its financial reporting and governance structure.

2005–2006

In 2005, Klaus J. Jacobs assumes the Chairman and CEO roles, initiating a strategy review. The Group's focus on professional staffing services intensifies. To create a strong platform for growth, Adecco's existing operations are realigned into global business lines defined by specific occupational fields, complementing the established office and industrial offering with professional staffing lines.

Acquisitions of Altedia and HumanGroup strengthen Adecco's involvement in professional segments in Europe. In 2006, the acquisition of DIS AG in Germany gives Adecco leadership in the German professional staffing industry. Adecco adopts a dual strategy focused on professional and general staffing.

2007

Jürgen Dormann is appointed Chairman of the Board. Rolf Dörig becomes Vice-Chairman. As planned, Klaus J. Jacobs hands back his mandate. Adecco acquires Tuja Group, an industry leader

in Germany, one of the world's fastest-growing temporary staffing markets.

2008

Adecco acquires the professional staffing businesses DNC in the Netherlands and IT specialist Group Data-avance in France. Country operations take greater responsibility for growing professional business as the dual professional and general staffing model becomes further embedded.

Klaus J. Jacobs, co-founder and Honorary President of the Adecco Group, passes away. Jürgen Dormann steps down as Chairman of the Board at the end of the year. He is succeeded by Rolf Dörig.

2009

Patrick De Maeseneire becomes Chief Executive Officer of the Adecco Group. Adecco acquires Spring Group in the UK, bolstering the Adecco Group's UK Professional and General staffing business.

2010

The acquisition of MPS Group, a leading professional staffing firm based in the USA, is completed. With MPS' strength in North America and the UK, the Adecco Group also becomes the world leader in professional staffing.

Adecco sets up a joint venture in Shanghai with leading Chinese HR services company Fesco. FESCO Adecco begins

operations on January 1, 2011, with over 100,000 associates and a well-established local and multinational client base.

2011

Adecco acquires US-based Drake Beam Morin Inc., taking the worldwide lead in career transition and talent development services.

2012

Adecco acquires VSN Inc., a leading provider of professional staffing services in Japan. The acquisition expands the professional staffing exposure in the world's second-largest staffing market.

Henri-Ferdinand Lavanchy, the founder of Adia, passes away.

2014

Adecco acquires OnForce to expand its Beeline service offering, creating a unique integrated solution for managing contingent workforces.

The Jacobs Group sells the vast majority of its 18% stake in the Adecco Group.