



Garnier-Thiebaut: A Story of Passion

The history of Garnier-Thiebaut is not just a chronology, but a story of passion. This chronicle is about the men and women who have succeeded through the ages to give Garnier-Thiebaut the foundation required to make it a worldwide leader in luxury linens.

Like many good stories, it begins with a marriage celebrated in the house of cloth merchants; Virginia Thiebaut and Jean-Baptiste Garnier. In the early nineteenth century, the Vosges region of France was already known for its cloth, which had exceptional finishes due to the optimal acidity of the water streams feeding Lake Gerardmer. But this recognition did not mean that the newlyweds were content. In 1833, when the marriage was fairly new, the miracle of electricity came to the region and brought with it the seeds of industrial revolution. The Garnier and Thiebaut families were quick to recognize its importance and employed their knowledge to use this new form of energy for improving their new home (business?).

A youth full of promise

Arrival of power looms gave birth to the story of the pioneers of the manufacturing era. The first textile factory owned by the Garnier-Thiebaut Brothers was constructed at Kirchompré in 1870. The business soon prospered and became the largest company in the region. Local life blossomed around it with the construction of a nursery, school and a church. As recognition, Garnier-Thiebaut received several awards at various European expositions.



Life at Garnier-Thiebaut continued to prosper until the end of the Second World War. In 1944, Gerardmer was destroyed, sending the industrial heritage of the company up in smoke, as recalled by Ms. Chabert, CEO of the company at the time, in her article entitled, 'Le Feu Dans Les Maisons' (Houses on Fire), which appeared in a 1947 edition of 'Asatia'.

It took five years for the plant to be rebuilt from the ashes and for the looms to be humming again.

Despite this rather gloomy episode, the company quickly resumed its business with vigor. Products rolled out of the plant nonstop, and still it was difficult to meet the demands of clients, who lined up in large numbers. In 1969 the heirs of Garnier-Thiebaut decided to sell the family business that had preserved its name until then.

Fate hangs by a thread

With arrival of the 1970s, the economic crisis that affected the entire industry and the society at large did not spare the world of textiles. Despite their reputation and expertise, times were hard for Garnier-Thiebaud, especially as the crisis penetrated deeper and longer than anticipated. Ownership of Garnier-Thiebaud changed several times but still the company failed to overcome its financial difficulties. Finally, in 1985, the company was acquired by the oldest textile family of France; the Montclos, together with the Central Linière, France's textile specialist for hotels and restaurants.

Herve Montclos took the first steps to export Garnier-Thiebaud products and began collaboration with Genevieve Lethu. However, for nine years, the anticipated upturn did not occur and the company remained mired in persistent financial difficulties.

As if the national economic situation was not enough, the final nail was driven in Garnier-Thiebaud's already terrible weakened economic situation by a textile tycoon who bought all launderers of Paris. Garnier-Thiebaud lost 30% of its inventory.

Faced with adversity, Montclos did not intend to give up. In 1995 Garnier-Thiebaud, far ahead of the existing trends, launched its coated fabric, which proved to be an unprecedented success.

Somehow, the company was then able to survive, working with the Centrale Linière, until the merger of the two companies into a single entity 'La Société de Tissage de Gérardmer', The Weaving Society of Gerardmer, (although still retaining the name of Garnier-Thiebaud) in 1995.



Industry – A Love at First Sight

That same year, at the request of Herve Montclos, the company was audited by his brother Paul, the operations manager.

Love at first sight or a gamble?

Paul Montclos decided to take control of the destiny of the Vosges house. He settled in Gerardmer, renewed and rejuvenated the team, instilled a new energy and took the game to a new level. The company dusted itself off and turned to the future with investment techniques that allowed it to remain competitive and control the industrial chain end-to-end.



Garnier-Thiebaud experienced fifty years of industrial growth in just 10 years!

The firm recovered and returned to the level of innovation that enabled it to conquer the market for the first 150 years of its existence.

Garnier-Thiebaud also turned to diversification by creating a range of products for individuals while continuing to offer professionals the opportunity to customize their products. Nothing compares with talent to achieve an ambitious goal. Paul Montclos knew where to go. For the first time in the history of the respected company, top-notch designers joined the team. They replicated the cool style of Hermès, modernized their design, embraced color and launched two new lines. These creations become the core business of Garnier-Thiebaud, and its engine of growth.

These dynamics provided a new impetus and the company began to experience regular renewal (rejuvenation?) of its products without overlooking the traditional quality always was Garnier-Thiebaud's hallmark. An essential part of this



reorientation included the designers printing a Garnier-Thiebaud trademark on the cloth which became its signature. The brand also began to be recognized as a high quality product internationally. Major successes include international luxury hotels such as The Four Seasons, Ritz Carlton, Hyatt, and Sheraton, which were smitten with Garnier-Thiebaud's new branded products. The once little-known brand from Vosges knows no boundaries; Garnier-Thiebaud products are now found everywhere: The United States, Gulf countries and throughout most major European capitals.

Paul Montclos – The Fiber family

It can be said that Paul Montclos was born in fibers. He represents a unique family. In 1680, when Louis XIV ruled over France and most of Europe, the Denantes family conquered the world of textiles. This is another love story. By marrying Denantes Melle, the grandfather of Paul Montclos, he brought the company into the folds of the family. For 12 generations, the heirs remain dedicated to fiber trade and the

development of the 'Denantes Weavings'.

Specializing in table linens for professional use in hotels and restaurants, the company struggled with the turmoil of the 1970s, which was rectified by the father of Paul and Herve Montclos, who understood the importance of technical innovation and introduced polyester into hotel tablecloths. In 1985, the family business again began to thrive, redeeming Garnier-Thiebaud. Herve took control of the company and asked Paul to help the company on its path to recovery.



The Garnier-Thiebaud story takes a new turn.

Garnier Thiebaud: an exception in the world of textiles

Toward the end of twentieth century many professionals of the textile world were forced to look for new avenues or to outsource production. Garnier-Thiebaud, however, remained committed to its origins and chose to remain in France, renouncing a great deal of money in favor of quality, service and responsiveness. Today it is the only French company that has maintained its manufacturing in Vosges while retaining full control of its production.



Thus, once raw cotton is imported, coloring, weaving, finishing and clothing take place in Gerardmer and Granges-sur-Vologne, justifying the 'Made in France' label that appears on all Garnier-Thiebaud products. In total, the company employs 230 people.

The company produces table linens, bed linens, terry cloth and accessories that include kitchen towels, cushions and more. The jacquard weave is its core business. This special weave consists of intersecting a combination of warp and weft that can achieve embossed designs on the front and reverse of the cloth. Jacquard Weaving, the original source of success for the brand, which the company has been using for generations, forever remains relevant to its success.

Garnier-Thiebaud is also distinctive for its finishing touches to the cloth. The technique based on specific and targeted chemical actions enhance the work of weavers and cloth making.

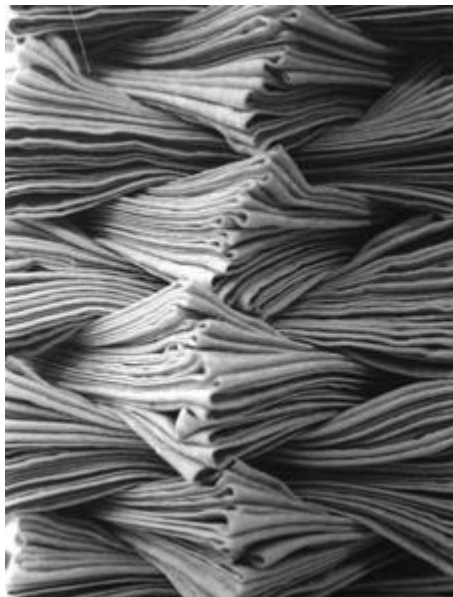
Garnier-Thiebaud now has two distinct brands for its distinguished clientele. The Garnier-Thiebaud label offers a variety full of freshness and gaiety, in smooth and colorful designs, to meet contemporary expectations of household linen. The Héritage label constitutes a more classic style, offering table linens of traditional, exceptional designs in white, ivory, and beige, ideal for making family events beautiful. The success of Garnier-Thiebaud is based on its ability to provide custom designed, high-quality products for professionals or families – creating bold, unique and elegant patterns that are perfect for everyday or for special events and occasions. Garnier-Thiebaud also creates custom designed models in harmony with the hospitality industry – restaurants, hotels, resorts and casinos.

About Garnier-Thiebaud

- 800 retailers in France (BHV, Printemps ...)
- 3,000 outlets worldwide
- 80 countries and 20 salons worldwide.
- 2006 – Opened 1st brand store in the Paris region in the Domus commercial centre, the first commercial centre dedicated to the house.
- 2009 – Opened 1st outlet in Paris.
- Annual turnover of 20 million euros (60% in hotels / 40% for individuals).
- 40% of turnover coming from exports.

Garnier-Thiebaud weaves the future

Garnier-Thiebaud is now at a crossroads. The company that for so many years has focused on household linen is managed as a fashion business: responsive and creative and always on the lookout for trends.. Garnier-Thiebaud launches at least two collections each year as limited editions. Paul Montclos, Garnier-Thiebaud's CEO, intends to increase the company's number of the outlets, as was the case with the opening of the first store in Paris in early 2009, and also aims to further diversify by developing partnerships with top designers. Garnier-Thiebaud has benefited from the inspiration of Robert Le Heros in recent years, Jose Levy in 2008, and Jean-Charles Castelbajac, who displayed his creative spark in 2009.



Garnier-Thiebaud also plans to establish itself in the world of decoration.

Leader of upscale market

Among professionals, Garnier-Thiebaud is now positioned at the very top. Its "French touch" seduces customers and prestigious hotels and restaurants worldwide. For example, Addis Ababa Sheraton in Ethiopia has become Garnier-Thiebaud's largest customer. Paul Montclos spends much of his time putting his mark on international luxury hotels. In France, Garnier-Thiebaud has already found a place in the Senate, the Elysee Palace of Monaco and with stars



like Paul Bocuse, Anne-Sophie Pic, Alain Ducasse, and Joel Robuchon.

Ambassador of Vosges region

While traveling in France and the world, Paul Montclos has become a true ambassador of the Vosges region. He is deeply involved in promoting the wealth of the Vosges and Lorraine region and is also president of the Eastern Textiles Union.

Press Contacts:

[France]

Monet Communication
2a, Malar Street 75007 Paris
Christelle Montbel / Maud Olivier
Tel. 01 47 05 09 08
cmontbel@monetcom.com / molivier@monetcom.com

[North America]

MVB Communications
202.255.1798
michele@mvbcomm.com

0410

