



The Swissdis team in its anniversary year (from the left): at the back: Heinz Sollberger, Barbara Hasler, Angelina Attinger, Patrik Sollberger, Marc Schaarschmidt – at the front: Heidi Schorr, Evelyne Schaad, Hugo Schaad, Claudia Schüpbach

15 years of Swissdis – design-in expertise, customer proximity, reliability

"I have never regretted the decision"

Swissdis AG founded in 1999 sees itself as a reliable and flexible supplier of passive and active components. Our core expertise is in design-in and its associated services. With these market services the distributor plays an important part on the Swiss market. Founder and managing director Evelyne Schaad provides all the answers.

» Daniel Böhler, Text, Norbert Heim, Images

You founded Swissdis AG 15 years ago.

What prompted you to do this?

Evelyne Schaad: It was a need for independence. After my former employer sold his company to a foreign distribution chain, the decision was obvious to me. I ventured the step towards independence.

What was the portfolio like back then, what's it like now?

Schaad: We started with chip resistors and chip capacitors – ceramic and tantalum. Today our range includes resistors, capacitors, inductors, crystals,

LEDs, displays, optocouplers and IR opto components.

How is your turnover distributed over pure retail and consulting solutions?

Schaad: Roughly 45 percent are components requiring intensive consulting that need design-in services by the development department. The rest of the components fall under the heading Standards. It is incredibly important to have the housing sizes and quantities tailored to the Swiss market in stock.

What is your USP, Unique Selling Proposition?

Schaad: Firstly, our consulting expertise, which is based on a great deal of experience and knowledge as well as great relationships with our Asian suppliers, secondly our well stocked warehouse, thanks to this we can always supply our customers on time at the right price.

Looking back, what would you do differently?

Schaad: By and large I would approach everything the same way again. The start in 1999 was in an ideal time window in terms of the market and we were able to quickly gain a foothold with the established

warehouse and necessary sales activities. And in fact even during some difficult times this warehouse has, I don't want to say saved us, but allowed us to sleep well or better.

For me there are three categories of distributors: major, small and online/catalogue distributors. As a small distributor, who worries you most?**Schaad:** Clearly the online/catalogue distributors. The reason: for prototypes, engineers often purchase the components from these online distributors today. As a result the manufacturers who are favoured there are already predetermined.



Successfully leading the skills of Swissdis AG (from the left): Hugo Schaad, Evelyne Schaad, Marc Schaarschmidt and Heinz Sollberger

Online/catalogue distributors worry me more

With series production later on it is then difficult to release another manufacturer as second source even if the price and procurement time are more interesting and there are technical advantages. That is why it is very important for us to be in constant contact with the development departments. With design-in components we also sell individual units or rolls that have been opened, as the online distributors also do.

The big fish swallow up the little fish – what do you say to that?

Schaad: That's not how we see it. The "big fish" are often occupied with internal organisation and restructuring. We concentrate on our customers and suppliers, are dynamic and flexible. We also have short decision-making processes and can adapt our procedures at short notice to new circumstances and customer requests.

What do you think of a network, an interest group or purchasing association under the name "Swiss Small Distributors"?

Schaad: A smart idea, we would view this in a positive light.

What part does the trendy term IoT – Internet of Things – play

and what expectations are associated with it?

Schaad: There are constantly new terms – to be honest so far I don't associate any expectations with it yet. If our customers contact us regarding this and need appropriate technologies and components we are ready. We don't see any direct benefit yet in this Internet of Things. But we will stay on the ball.

Where are your customers based, in which sectors, in which countries?

Schaad: As a Swiss SME we still focus on the Swiss market. Although we are also open to selling our products worldwide. Today we are already serving various EMS from the Asian and

Major companies are often occupied with internal processes

eastern European region, which are managed under the Swiss flag though.

If you had one wish left, what would it be?

Schaad: That I may continue to enjoy my good health for a long time to come and keep active for my customers and staff. Everything else can be sorted and what will be will be.



Evelyne Schaad: "I would like to be active for my customers for as long as possible"

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