

## Company of the month: Schur Inventure

1) Read the first part of the text. Complete the text using words from the box.

world	boxes	packaging	labels
founder	grandsons	business	son

Schur Inventure is a small business based in Vejle in Denmark. It is part of a much larger and older \_\_\_\_\_<sup>1</sup>, Schur International. Schur International claims to be the oldest, family owned packaging business in the \_\_\_\_\_<sup>2</sup>.

The \_\_\_\_\_<sup>3</sup> of the business, Johan Wilhelm Schur, was a lithographic printer. In 1846 he opened a printing works in the city of Horsens in Denmark. He specialised printing in wine labels and sheet music. His \_\_\_\_\_<sup>4</sup>, Fritz Schur developed the business into producing printed \_\_\_\_\_<sup>5</sup>, the first step into the world of \_\_\_\_\_<sup>6</sup>.

In 1915, the \_\_\_\_\_<sup>7</sup> of Johan Wilhelm Schur were using a two-colour offset printer to produce cigar boxes, porridge cartons, containers for scouring powder as well as continuing to print for \_\_\_\_\_<sup>8</sup> tinned milk, wine, beer, and mineral water.

2) Discuss.

- a) Why are printed packages and labels important in business?
- b) How do they serve the customer?
- c) How do they serve the producer?
- d) How do they serve the sales operation?

In the 1950s more and more women in Denmark started going out to work. In the same period, the idea of the 'self-service' shop was imported from the U.S.A. In a 'self-service' shop, printed packages became more important. With no sales person to help the customer to make purchase choices, products had to 'sell themselves'. In this commercial environment, attractive printed packaging became more and more important.

In the 1950s the first plastics were being introduced and Schur developed techniques for producing plastic packaging.

Now Schur International operates in four main business sectors:- cardboard, plastic, packaging machines and consumer products.

Schur Inventure is part of the consumer products sector.

Schur Inventure was established following the invention of the disposable ice cube bag.

### 3) Discuss.

a) Why is packaging more important in self-service shops?

### ***Inventing the disposable ice cube bag***

4) Complete the text with the correct form of the words in the table.

small	invent	freeze	fill
cube	cool	become	base

How do you make the ice cubes you need for \_\_\_\_\_<sup>1</sup> your drinks?  
 Probably, you fill ice cube trays with water and put them in your \_\_\_\_\_<sup>2</sup>.  
 In 1976, Erling Vangedal-Neilsen \_\_\_\_\_<sup>3</sup> a better way. He used a hot electric iron to divide a simple plastic bag into many \_\_\_\_\_<sup>4</sup> sections. He \_\_\_\_\_<sup>5</sup> the bag with water and put it in his freezer. The water froze and \_\_\_\_\_<sup>6</sup> ice but it was not a large solid block of ice. The ice was in small convenient \_\_\_\_\_<sup>7</sup>. In 1977 he patented the first ice cube bag \_\_\_\_\_<sup>8</sup> on a tie-top design.

Erling Vangedal-Neilsen formed a company to produce the bags. In 1985 he sold this company to Schur Consumer Products. Since then Schur have produced and sold ice cube bags around the world.

### ***Protecting and developing a patent***

**patent**<sup>1</sup> – n [C,U] a special document which gives you the right to make or sell a new INVENTION or product that no one else is allowed to copy

Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English

A patent protects the inventor of a new product for a limited period of time. At the end of the patent period, other manufacturers can produce and sell copies of the product. In order to protect the business, the inventor must develop the product and get a new patent.

As the patent protecting the original design for the tie-top ice cube bag came to an end, Schur and the original inventor, Erling Vangedal-Neilsen, developed the self-sealing bag. After you fill this bag with water, it seals itself so the water cannot come out. Schur got a new patent for this new design. Since then they have developed 'easy-release' bags. If you pull these bags from the top and bottom, they become a single bag containing sixteen ice cubes.



**5) Answer the questions**

- a) How does a patent protect the inventor of a product?
- b) What can happen at the end of the patent period?
- c) How did Schur and the inventor maintain their business after the end of the patent period for tie-top ice cube bags?

***Selling to the public***

**6) Identify and correct eight spelling mistakes in the next paragraph of the text.**

Schur manufactures thier ice cube bags in a small, extremely clean factory in Vejle, Denmark. The bags are sold to majur supermarket groups around the worl as 'own-brand' products.

The box of 20 ice cube bags which you migth buy from Sainsbury's, Spar, Tescoor another supermarket do not cary the name of Schur Inventure, but they are manufactured by Schur Inventure. The only clue to their origen on the packaging is PRODUCED IN DENMARK.

***Other products***

**7) Many words in English have double letters. Restore the double letters in the next paragraph.**

Schur Inventure is sucesful because it ofers inventors of consumer products a means to develop and sel their ideas. In the same way as a bok publisher attracts authors or a record company attracts performers, Schur Inventure attracts inventors. Erling Vangedal-Neilsen, the original inventor of the ice cube bag has now made a bag for forming and frezing home made hamburgers. He has also invented the 'salad spiner' which can be used to remove the exces water from salad which has been just washed.

Another inventor, Brian Vang, invented StopDrop®, discs cut from metalised plastic which can be curled and inserted into the neck of a glass wine bottle to prevent any drops of wine falling on the table.

***The future***

**8) The last word has been removed from the last ten sentences. The missing words are in the box below.**

well	product	product	period	idle
Idea	expand	destroyed	business	bomb



There is an old saying that ‘*the business of business is* \_\_\_\_\_<sup>1</sup>’. Like all businesses, Schur Inventure, cannot be \_\_\_\_\_<sup>2</sup>. They understand the laws of patent very \_\_\_\_\_<sup>3</sup>. They know that under these laws, their exclusive right to produce and sell a new product is restricted to the patent \_\_\_\_\_<sup>4</sup>. After the patent period, any manufacturer is free to copy and sell the \_\_\_\_\_<sup>5</sup>.

During the patent period, they must develop the cheapest methods for producing the \_\_\_\_\_<sup>6</sup>. They must also find customers around the world who want to buy the \_\_\_\_\_<sup>7</sup>.

The patent protects the manufacturer but it is also like a ticking time \_\_\_\_\_<sup>8</sup>. When the patent expires (comes to the end of the protection period), their business may be completely \_\_\_\_\_<sup>9</sup>. So Schur Inventure must constantly develop their products and search for new products which will allow their business to continue and \_\_\_\_\_<sup>10</sup>.

You can get more information on Schur Inventure and see pictures of the products and inventors at <http://www.schurinventure.com/?setlanguage=2>