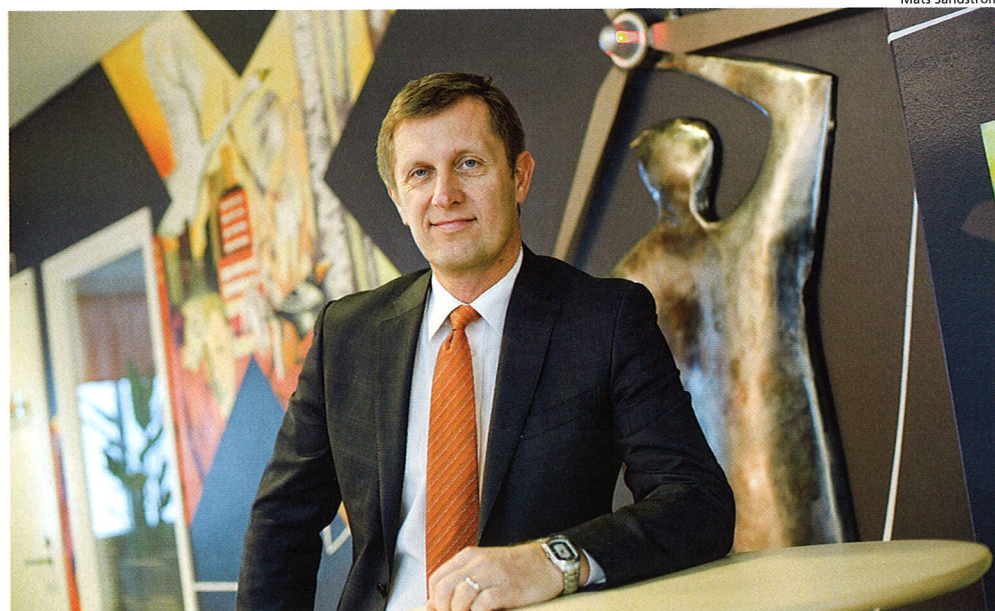


Maximizing energy

The Switch is enjoying a strong tailwind.



Mats Sandström

The global breakthrough of wind power has sent the demand for permanent magnet generators and power converters soaring.

The Switch, from Vaasa, is one of the manufacturers of electrical systems for renewable energy. In April 2008, the company built a new plant covering 4,800 square metres at the Vaasa Airport Park in the Runsor district. It also inaugurated a new model factory in Lappeenranta, Finland in 2009, and has plants in the USA and China, as well.

The Switch came into being in 2006, and has grown healthily ever since.

"Our revenue was around €10 million in 2006, €18 million in 2007, in 2008 it totalled €54 million, and the budgeted figure for 2009 is €80 million. That gives some indication of the upward trend," says Dag Sandås, the company's CFO.

According to Sandås, growth is especially robust in the Asian market.

"We're looking at a 'flat' market in Europe, but we're very strong in China, where growth is steep. In fact, it's our biggest market area at the moment."

Broad product range

Even though The Switch is a young company, it has managed to secure a strong foothold in the market for renewables.

"The future looks good, as long as we take care of our job properly," says Dag Sandås.

"We have perhaps the broadest product portfolio around. Big competitors obviously benefit from their brands, but we, too, have quickly constructed a quality brand that is widely known around the world."

Sandås points out three reasons for the company's success.

"We offer modern technology, such as permanent magnet generators and full-power converters, as well as a tailored customer model, which ensures that customers always get the right product for their needs. Our production concept is also quite unique. We only make the models and prototypes, while volume production is handled by our partners. This has proved an ideal way to work."

Well-functioning energy cluster

The expanding energy cluster in the Runsor district is also of great benefit to The Switch. Sandås lavishes praise on the region's know-how.

"Out here, people know how to build companies that are capable of operating globally. Many of our partners are located within the cluster, which is ideal for us – simply in terms of logistics."

The wind power industry has seen tremendous growth in the past years, and there are no signs of the trend being reversed.

"Forecasts and market research point towards continued expansion

in the field. Also of great value to us are the predictions saying that the technology we use will outperform overall market growth. The future looks good, as long as we take care of our job properly."

Sandås points out that The Switch benefits from an experienced and loyal staff who have acquired knowledge and expertise in various fields.

"What is more, many staff mem-

bers have invested money in the company, showing that they believe in the business."

The company's future challenges are related to the acquisition of bigger customers. This would lead to big production volumes, which is one of the goals.

"We would like at least some of our customers to be Top Ten companies – to boost our credibility. Our biggest

customer is, in fact, among the Top Ten, and we hope to attract one or two more of the same rank. We are also gradually moving into the solar energy market, where we have already made our first prototype deliveries," says Sandås. ☐

The Switch operates in the growing wind power market.

The Switch

Tel. +358 6 282 8900
info@theswitch.com
www.theswitch.com

Business sector:
Innovative power electronics and drive trains for distributed power generation systems.
Turnover 2009: €80 million
Employees: 180
Export: 98%
Main markets: China, Europe, USA

