

June 5, 2024, Press release

Axopar acquires majority in its biggest OEM Markos Sp.

Z.O.O.

Finnish Axopar Group has on June 4, 2024, acquired a majority shareholding in Markos Sp. z.o.o. through its newly founded subsidiary AX Composites Ltd, with the intention of becoming one of the world's leading manufacturers of composite technology.

Strengthening the foundation

Markos, located in Slupsk, Poland, specializes in building componentry for heavy industry as well as the energy, marine and leisure industries and is a leading manufacturer of fiberglass-reinforced composite products used in, for example, boats, motor vehicles, transport, and wind power. The infrastructure at Markos is unique, and the company has over 30 years of experience in component design, construction, and fabrication. The net sales of Markos were over EUR 71 million in 2023, and the company employs over 1,200 professionals.

A major milestone in Axopar's 10th anniversary year

In line with Axopar's growth strategy, the investment is a strategic move marking a significant expansion for Axopar's business, strengthening its leading position in the adventure boat industry. Despite a market slowdown, Axopar is accelerating, achieving a 15% revenue growth in 2023 while also increasing its profitability. The acquisition of Markos shows Axopar's commitment to the long-term development of the company and its operations.

"We promised that our 10th anniversary year would be full of surprises. The investment in Markos stands as one of the most significant announcements during this milestone year. A strategic expansion of this kind is more than just an investment; it is a testament to our commitment to constantly taking steps forward, innovating and growing," says Jan-Erik Viitala, founding partner of Axopar.

Future growth

With this investment, Axopar gains access to Markos' state-of-the-art composite manufacturing facilities, technologies, know-how and their highly skilled workforce in Poland, renowned for their expertise in original equipment manufacturer (OEM) production. This will enable Axopar to enhance its R&D and production capabilities, streamline its operations, increase efficiency, and meet the growing demand for its innovative products.

There will not be any immediate changes to Markos' current business and relations, as Markos continues to serve its customers, including other boat brands, as usual. Furthermore, this investment and the mutual development of Markos' business will benefit all of Markos' customers and strengthen Markos' growth plans for the future.

Axopar's ambition is to develop the company into one of the world's leading composite manufacturers together with Markos, and to deliver and produce components also for other boat brands than Axopar.

Commitment to excellence and innovation in Poland

“Taking pride in one's employer is an integral part of Markos' company culture, and we seek to foster this culture and the company's strong employer brand also going forward. We are very excited to announce this strategic investment that aligns perfectly with our commitment to delivering exceptional value and disruptive innovations for our worldwide customers to enjoy in the future,” says Ari-Pekka Saarikangas, CEO of Axopar.

Since the beginning of 2014, Axopar has also been in a long-term partnership with another OEM, **MPPB J.W. Slepsk**, and will continue to deepen its collaboration with Slepsk in the future, making Poland one of the hubs of manufacturing Axopar-branded boats in Europe.

Shared values

The investment does not entail any organizational changes. Szymon Koseski will continue as CEO of Markos, and Cesary Koseski will join as advisor for Markos' Supervisory Board. The only changes will be made in Markos' Supervisory Board and Management Board. The Supervisory Board will consist of Ari-Pekka Saarikangas, Frans Zeiser and Sebastian Temporale. Szymon Koseski and Albert Zaleski will form the Management Board and support the current management.

“As family-owned companies, Markos and Axopar share the same values when it comes to building brands based on experience, solid reputation and dedication. Strengthening our relationship with Axopar enables us to enter new markets with our products. This investment is a matter of pride for our company and team, and a great distinction for the entire region in which we are located,” summarizes Szymon Koseski, CEO of Markos.

Another family-owned company, Gebr. Fassmer AG, has been a minority owner of Markos since 2001 and will continue as a shareholder together with Axopar. “We are thrilled to welcome Axopar as Markos' new majority shareholder and eagerly anticipate combining our

strengths to develop Markos' operations," says Holger Fassmer, managing director of Fassmer.

"Markos is one of Europe's leading sustainable composite manufacturing and boat building companies, and we recognize the increasing importance of investing in sustainability, and together we aim to spearhead this movement," says Saarikangas.

Despite the announcement of the transaction, the specific financial details, including the sales price of shares, remain undisclosed.

For more information:

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About Axopar:

Axopar, the adventure company, is one of the fastest-growing boat brands in the world. Its success derives from the "one boat, one world" concept. It stands for boats that are multi-functional and accessible for the many, anywhere around the world. As a forerunner committed to continuous innovation, the company listens to its global community of Axoparians and shares the same respect and passion for nature. Axopar's mission is to open new perspectives by bringing people out on the water and creating boats that make waves in the boating industry.

For more information about Axopar and its products, please visit www.axopar.com.

About Markos:

Markos specializes in fiberglass-reinforced composites, based on more than 30 years of experience in design, construction, and fabrication. The company was founded in 1991, and its products are offered in 30 countries today. Markos' facilities are located in Slupsk, Poland.

For more information about Markos and its products, please visit <https://markos.pl/en>.

About Fassmer:

Fassmer is a German, fifth-generation family-owned company headquartered in Berne, Germany. Renowned for its expertise in special purpose shipbuilding, Fassmer is also a global leader in the construction of lifeboats and rescue crafts. Furthermore, Fassmer manufactures spinners and nacelles for the wind power sector as well as components for the automotive and leisure industries.

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