

Our History

Enriching People's Lives for Over 150 Years

Our story is, in many ways, the history of globalization and charts the rise of Asia from its initial opening to where we are today, the Asian century.

In 1865, three Swiss pioneers – Casper Brennwald, Wilhelm Heinrich Diethelm, and Eduard Anton Keller – made their

way to Asia and founded flourishing trading houses. Over the next 150 years, these companies grew, diversified, and merged; offering high-quality products and services to enrich people's lives across the region.

Our history has laid the foundations for the company we are today and feeds the entrepreneurial spirit that remains at the heart of DKSH. See the milestones below:

Three Swiss entrepreneurs embark on a journey to Asia

● 1865 - 1871

Siber & Brennwald founded in Yokohama, Japan (1865)

Eduard Anton Keller joins C. Lutz & Co. in Manila, Philippines (1868)

Wilhelm Heinrich Diethelm joins Hooglandt & Co. in Singapore (1871)

Establishing flourishing trading houses

● 1885 - 1887

Keller acquires C. Lutz & Co. and renames it Ed. A. Keller & Co. (1887)

Diethelm acquires Hooglandt & Co. and sets up Diethelm & Co. Ltd. (1887)

Creating local industries and the beginning of globalization

● 1890 - 1900

Siber & Brennwald enjoys leading position in raw silk market and promotes Japanese silk industry (1890)

Diethelm & Co. markets kerosene, a new phenomenon used for lighting, in Singapore and beyond (1892)

20th century opportunities and challenges

● 1900 - 1940

SiberHegner & Co. in Japan hit by Great Kanto Earthquake, and made into public company (1932)

Diethelm & Co. opens new offices in Penang (Malaysia), Saigon (Vietnam), and Bangkok (Thailand)

Continued



Tiger Economies, Asian crisis, and death of trading companies prophesized

● 1980 - 2000	Rejuvenated Asian economies deliver impressive growth until outbreak of Asian financial crisis (1997)	SiberHegner is re-structured and turns around (2000)	Diethelm and Keller join forces to found Diethelm Keller Holding Ltd. (2000)
● 2002	DKSH is founded and reinvents business model to specialized service provider		
● 2006	New category is created: Market Expansion Services		
● 2012	DKSH goes public on SIX Swiss exchange		
● 2015	DKSH celebrates 150th anniversary		
● 2020	DKSH launches revised Identity: your trusted partner		

Stories From Our History

“Go East, Young Man”

The DKSH journey began in 1865. Asia’s vast, untapped opportunities encouraged three adventurous Swiss entrepreneurs to venture into the unknown. Caspar Brennwald (who later partnered with Hermann Siber), Wilhelm Heinrich Diethelm, and Eduard Anton Keller followed the prevailing advice of the day to: “go east, young man.” Independently, they sailed the oceans and endured many setbacks to reach new territories in Asia.

The three pioneers established flourishing trading houses, importing goods from Europe to Asia. In 1865, Siber & Brennwald was founded in Yokohama, Japan. In 1887, Eduard Anton Keller founded Ed. A. Keller & Co. in Manila, Philippines, and Wilhelm Diethelm founded Diethelm & Co. Ltd. in Singapore. And so began our role in helping to establish local industries and facilitating globalization.

A Bear Keeps Us Ahead in Thailand

After World War II, Diethelm Bangkok took over the rights to sell products for the Bernese Alpine Milk Company, which produced a sweetened condensed milk, called Bear. It was challenging to sell the product as cow’s milk had never been part of the Thai diet.

promote the new milk brand in less accessible districts. The publicity blitz for the Bear milk was very powerful indeed – so powerful that Thai people might have got the impression this milk actually came from bears.

In addition to targeting cinema audiences, the company used floating cinemas – boats equipped with a film projector and a screen – which travelled along Bangkok’s canals to

Such innovative and creative marketing efforts paid off. With more and more Thais consuming milk, sales steadily increased and the new brand found its way into many local kitchens.