

A family-owned holding & investment company

KIRKBI A/S is the long-term owner of the LEGO® brand



Our history

In 1932, Ole Kirk Kristiansen started making wooden toys in a workshop in Denmark and began selling them as LEGO® toys two years later. Fast-forward 87 years, and under the stewardship of the fourth generation of the Kirk Kristiansen family, the LEGO® Group has evolved into the largest toy manufacturer (globally, by sales) and a leading global brand. The LEGO® brand's mission is to "inspire and develop the builders of tomorrow" by providing creative LEGO® play to children of all ages.

Our purpose

To do so, KIRKBI was established to manage, protect and develop the LEGO® brand, its activities and attractions under long-term family ownership. KIRKBI's strategic activities to achieve this purpose include:

The LEGO® Group

The Group is the manufacturer of all LEGO® play experiences including the iconic LEGO® bricks. KIRKBI owns 75% and the LEGO Foundation, the Kirk Kristiansen family's philanthropic research foundation, owns the remaining 25% of the Group.

LEGO® trademarks

KIRKBI wholly owns the Kirk Kristiansen family's intellectual property via the LEGO® and LEGOLAND® trademarks.

Merlin Entertainments plc

KIRKBI is a long-term strategic shareholder in Merlin Entertainments plc, and maintains a significant 29.6% shareholding. Merlin has an exclusive global licensing agreement with KIRKBI to use and maximise the LEGOLAND® trademarks across Merlin's brand-led estate, whose assets provide 'fun learning' experiences for children and their families through the LEGOLAND® Parks and LEGOLAND® Discovery Centers.

Milestones in the evolution of the LEGO® brand and the LEGOLAND® Parks 87 years of family ownership

- 1932** Ole Kirk Kristiansen creates a toy workshop in Billund, Denmark
- 1934** The workshop is named LEGO® from the Danish words "Leg GOdt", or "play well"
- 1949** LEGO® bricks first produced as "automatic binding bricks"
- 1953** LEGO® becomes a registered trademark and the bricks become known as LEGO® bricks
- 1955** LEGO® begins to export its products
- 1958** The current LEGO® "stud-and-tube" coupling system is patented
- 1968** LEGOLAND® Billund, Denmark opens
- 1996** LEGOLAND® Windsor, UK opens
- 1999** LEGOLAND® California, USA opens
- 2002** LEGOLAND® Germany opens
- 2005** LEGOLAND® Parks are sold to Merlin Entertainments, majority owned by The Blackstone Group, with KIRKBI maintaining a significant minority shareholding
- 2010** Merlin develops the LEGOLAND® Discovery Center brand
- 2011** LEGOLAND® Florida opens, the world's largest LEGOLAND® Park
- 2012** LEGOLAND® Malaysia opens
- 2013** Merlin Entertainments plc is listed on the London Stock Exchange. KIRKBI maintains a 29.9% shareholding after the listing
- 2014** The first LEGO® Movie is released, produced by Warner Bros. Entertainment Inc
- 2016** LEGO® factory in Jiaxing, China opens
LEGOLAND® Dubai opens
- 2017** Merlin Entertainments announces LEGOLAND® Park no. 9 to open in Goshen, New York in 2020
LEGOLAND® Japan opens
- 2018** Merlin Entertainments announces LEGOLAND® Discovery Center in Beijing to open in 2019, building on its existing attractions in China
- 2019** The second LEGO® Movie is released, produced by Warner Bros. Entertainment Inc
The LEGO Group opens its 1st flagship store in Beijing
Merlin Entertainments announces LEGOLAND® Park no. 10 to open in Korea by 2022

Key facts (FY2018)

Full-time employees

15,523¹

Total Assets

DKK 103bn
c.£11.8bn

LEGOLAND® Parks

8

LEGOLAND®
Discovery Centers

20

1. Exclusive of employees in Merlin Entertainments plc.

Our people

Søren Thorup Sørensen

- CEO KIRKBI A/S (2010 – present)
- Non-Executive Director, Merlin Entertainments plc (2013 – present)
- Former CFO, A.P. Møller - Mærsk A/S, KPMG



Jørgen Vig Knudstorp

- Executive Chairman of LEGO Brand Group and LEGO A/S (2017 – present)
- Board observer, Merlin Entertainments plc (2017 – present)
- LEGO Group CEO (2004 – 2017)
- Consultant, McKinsey & Co.



Fun facts (FY2018)

7

the number of LEGO® sets sold by retailers every second

100,000

the number of LEGO® elements manufactured every minute

5,000,000,000

the number of hours children spend a year playing with LEGO® products

Our contacts

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