

**Malar Llopis Amorós
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Pilar Pérez Ruiz**

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There is a teacher's manual intended as a pedagogical complement.
It is available to teachers who use this document as teaching material.
editorial@esic.edu



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*Original case written by **Malar Llopis Amorós, Vanessa Roger Monzó, María Arnal Pastor and Pilar Pérez Ruiz**. The authors do not intend to illustrate either effective or ineffective handling of a managerial situation.*

The data used are based on public information of the company obtained through its website and other sources of information. The characters and situations expressed are fictitious, except for public statements.

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The meeting at Vicky Foods head office was over. The atmosphere was relaxed on that December morning in 2019. The financial results for the year had been very positive. However, sales of packaged sweet pastries had suffered a steady decline in recent years. Although Rafael Juan, CEO since 2007, sensed the reasons, he needed to implement new strategies and a different approach to achieve the repositioning of this product category. For this reason, he called in a team of consultants to exceed his expectations on this regard with a disruptive proposal.

1. History and evolution

Dulcesol was founded by the current CEO's parents, Victoria Fernández and Antonio Juan, in 1952. The small family business grew under the leadership and tenacity of his mother, and thanks to her talent in the production and sale of bread. In 1964, the firm expanded by incorporating the production of pastries.

In 1973, the company took off thanks to Victoria's creativity. She invented the «Glorias», which are high quality square muffins sold at a very competitive price. The «Glorias» were Dulcesol's first innovation, a square product of easy storage and distribution. The success of the «Glorias» favored the company growth and the construction of a new industrial production plant in Villalonga. It was then that the brand Dulcesol was born, a brand that in a few years would become a benchmark in the sector. Its national expansion led to the construction of a second production plant in Gandía by the end of the 70's, being this today's headquarters.

Having consolidated in the production of industrial bakery products, in 2006 the production of bread was resumed with the brand Dulcesol Buen Pan. Nowadays, the company boasts more than 20 varieties, consolidating Buen Pan as one of its most important product categories.

The year 2019 marks a milestone for the company. The decision is made to change the name of the holding from Dulcesol to Vicky Foods. The name was chosen as a heartfelt and well-deserved tribute to its founder Victoria Fernández and to underscore a management model based on her values and principles, authenticity and uniqueness.

2. A management model that ensures successful results

Under his mother's leadership of the company, Rafael learned how commitment, simplicity and agility were qualities that contributed to the evolution of the company. Vicky Foods follows a participative and cross-sectional organizational model, with leaders capable of generating challenges, involving the team, encouraging collaborative work, all with a strong commitment and belonging to the organization.

Currently, the Vicky Foods holding is made up of the brands Dulcesol, BePlus and Hermanos Juan and employs over 2.000 people.



Dulcesol is the brand for different bakery products (Dulcesol Buen Pan), the black line (Dulcesol Black) and cocoa creams (Dulcesol Top Cao).



BePlus is the brand of healthy and baby products, such as natural smoothies, salads and spreads.



Hermanos Juan, meanwhile, covers refrigerated products such as berlinas, croissants, canes, muffins, palmeras, xuxús, filled rolls and various types of sliced bread.



3. Vicky Food's financial results in 2019

In 2019, an overall turnover of €352 million was achieved, representing an increase of 5.5% over the previous year and a production of 155,584 tons. In addition, investments of €36.2 million were made for the incorporation of state-of-the-art machinery, development of R&D projects and more nutritious products.

The international market continues to be the main growth driver for Vicky Foods with a turnover of close to €65.8 million and an increase of 14.5% compared to 2018. Out of the total revenues, 18.7% correspond to exports, with bread and pastries being the categories that have grown the most in absolute terms.