

15b

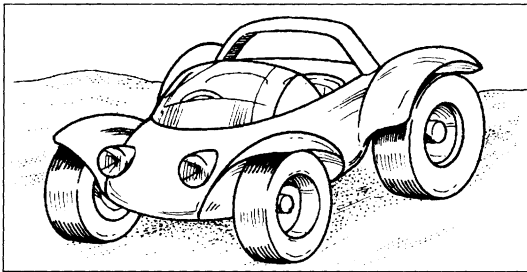
Case study: Amicar



AMICAR

A message from the chairman

'As we come to the end of another successful trading year Amicar is still the leading company in the small recreational vehicle sector. We are

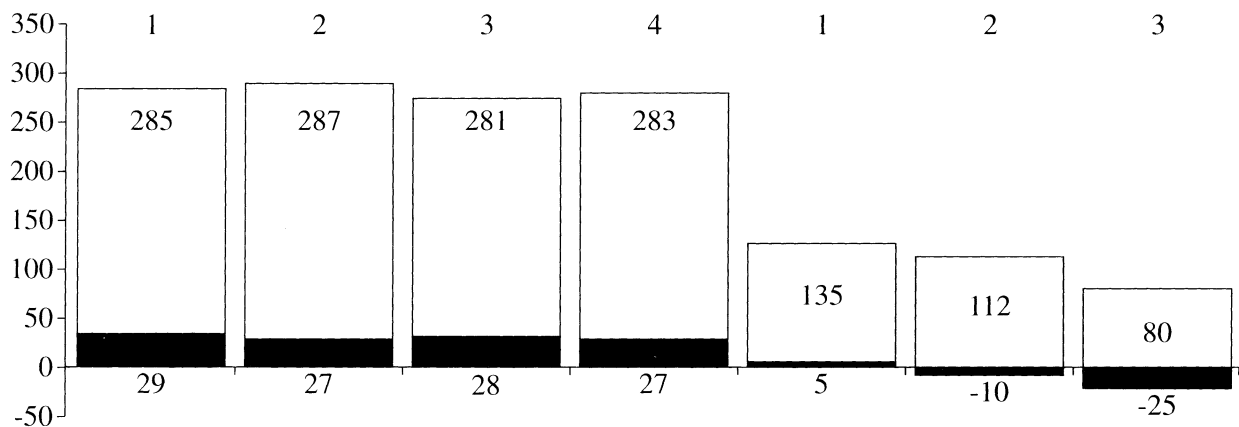


entering the new year with optimistic policies. We will be making a big push for new customers. At the same time we will be completely redesigning the Minx, our number one selling product, and increasing its price by 15%. Thank you for all your efforts over the past twelve months, and best wishes for the new year.' (from Amicar News, the company newsletter of Amicar Corps, at the end of last year) ■



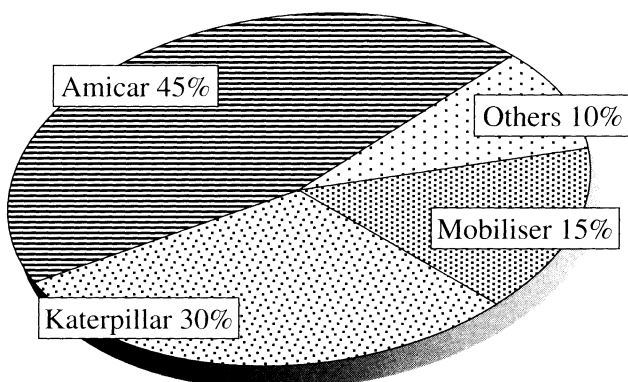
Amicar sales and profits

Last year and first three quarters of this year

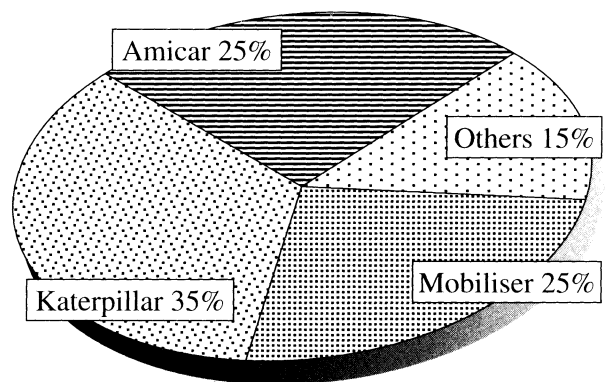


Amicar market share

Last Year



This Year



Case study: Amicar

Worksheet

15b

ACTIVITY

Groupwork: speaking

AIM

To exchange information about a company and speculate about the causes of its current problems.

GRAMMAR AND FUNCTIONS

Speculating about the past (*Maybe/Perhaps they thought that... They might have thought that...*)

VOCABULARY

trading year, leading company, sector, market share, redesign, product

PREPARATION

Make one copy of the worksheet for each group of three students and cut it up as indicated.

TIME

5-15 minutes

PROCEDURE

- 1 Tell the students that you are going to tell them a true story from the world of business.
- 2 Tell them the following story in your own words.
Not long ago Gerald Ratner, head of Ratners, a chain of high street jewellery shops in the UK, made an extraordinary statement at the company's annual general meeting: in the presence of the board of directors, the press and shareholders he cheerfully referred to the company's products as 'rubbish'. The statement was reported on the TV and in the press.
- 3 Ask the students what they think the result of Gerald Ratner's statement was. (Ratners' sales collapsed and at the time of writing still had not recovered.)
- 4 Ask the students what they think of Gerald Ratner's behaviour and how they think he feels now. Write their statements on the board, correcting the English if necessary. For example: *He probably wishes he'd never said it; He should have been more diplomatic; Perhaps he meant it as a joke.*
- 5 Divide the class into groups of three or four.
- 6 Give each student in each group one section of the worksheet. Where there are four students in the group, appoint one as chairperson.
- 7 Ask the students to exchange - orally - information about Amicar to build up a picture of its current situation. Allow 5 minutes.
- 8 Ask the students to talk about what might have gone wrong for Amicar and what the company could do to regain leadership.

FOLLOW-UP

Students write a press release (150 words) announcing their plans for the company.