

# Bulgaria



MILLIONS OF BULGARIANS CHOOSE DEVIN PRODUCTS OWING TO OUR CONSTANT COMMITMENT TO DO BUSINESS RESPONSIBLY.

**Borislava Nalbantova**  
General Manager Devin



## A YEAR OF TRANSFORMATION DURING UNPRECEDENTED TIMES

The pandemic situation resulted in many difficulties for the local industry of bottled water with HoReCa being closed and on-the-go consumption being strongly restricted. On top of that, tourism and international travel – also a major driver for the category - being affected. This resulted in bottled water market in Bulgaria marking a significant drop of 8.3%, incl. seasonal.

## AGILITY AND DEDICATION

Our local Devin brand managed to outgrow the market more than 10 times: in terms of volume, the company maintained its leadership position and marked a record-high increase of 3.6%, compared to 2019.

Borislava Nalbantova, who was appointed General Manager in April 2020, says “even though it was a year like no other, Spadel Bulgaria and its team demonstrated agility and remained focused, mutually supportive, dedicated and committed to their goals and all strategically important projects”.

In operational and strategic terms, 2020 saw the successful merger of Spadel Bulgaria with its subsidiary Atlantic Divine, responsible for the HOD channel. The launch of a master plan worth EUR 17 million for the installation of two new bottling lines and high bay to double the capacity of the plant; and the implementation of a total digital transformation (switch to the SAP system, CRM and BI upgrade and start-up of a digital project for consumer engagement).

Without doubt Spadel Bulgaria is proud of the fact that no staff, regardless of the department and function, have been laid off because of the pandemic. On the contrary, the company has continued to hire people and has even filled certain key positions.

As part of the critical infrastructure of the country, Devin supplies over 35,000 points of sale across the country,

without interruption and on schedule, thereby avoiding any shortage even during the confinement after the pandemic outbreak in Bulgaria.

## FIRST ANNUAL REPORT ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

While 2020 was extremely intense on a day-to-day basis, this was not to the detriment of environmental and sustainability issues. On the contrary, Spadel Bulgaria continued its undertaking to considerably reducing the use of resources. In 2020 alone, the volume of plastic used per bottle fell by an average of 9.4% across the portfolio as a whole. The plant has moved to 100% green electricity, thereby avoiding emissions of over 6,000 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> per year (bringing Devin’s total carbon footprint down by 18%). During the year, Spadel Bulgaria published its first annual report on sustainable development. The company became entirely CO<sub>2</sub> neutral, including on a product level. Furthermore, the efforts being made to preserve the local biodiversity in the Devin region, among other things via innovative surveillance of bee pollen, were recognised by two green awards. Consumer education and engagement has



not been left behind, either: the brands started actively promoting separate collection and zero waste.

### CONSUMERS IN THE SPOTLIGHT

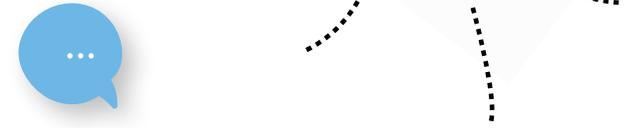
Devin remained the only bottled water company to actively communicate through its brands on the most relevant topics in 2020. The Devin spring water brand highlighted the need to stay hydrated in times of stress as well as its mission to nurture the inner hero of Bulgarians every day. All this was done through a social experiment, captured in a film which won international recognition following its selection by Ads of The World.

Moreover, Devin Mineral brand continued to promote healthy living, sports activities and regular exercise, by supporting projects and events encouraging consumers to stay fit even during they were confined at home.

Devin continued to innovate the products by renewing and improving the design of its 2.5-litre bottle which

is frequently used at home. As for its 1-litre On The Go bottle, launched in 2019, this has joined the prestigious ranking dedicated to mass consumption products of the magazine Progressive by winning the award for the 'Best new product in the drinks category'.

Spadel Bulgaria has set itself three priorities for 2021: to innovate in the field of hydration; to continue its sustainable development and communication actions; continue to put special care to health and well-being of its employees.



WE REMAINED FOCUSED AND COMMITTED ON OUR DAY-TO-DAY AND STRATEGIC PROJECTS, DELIVERED AS A TEAM WITH SKILL, AGILITY AND EXCELLENCE.

### COMMITMENT TO COMMUNITIES BOTH LOCAL & NATIONAL

Throughout 2020, and especially during the period when the state of emergency was in force, Devin undertook various social actions. These included a donation of over 200,000 litres of bottled water to help meet the needs of medical staff and hospitals, volunteers and members of the public in difficulty, in partnership with the Bulgarian Red Cross and the delivery of hot meals to 300 homeless people in collaboration with the municipality of Sofia and other private partners.

As the main employer in the city of Devin, the company supported the local community by donating medical and test equipment to the local hospital, the improvement of waste management infrastructure of the city and the renovation of public spaces. Finally, it provided grants, placements and practical expertise for students from the local secondary school, twice as many of whom benefited compared to the previous year.

