

# Filofax®

## Organisation, 21st century style



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**FILOFAX**

**Owning a Filofax organiser used to be a badge of business success, along with a brick-like mobile phone and power dressing. However, changing times call for changing needs, something Filofax implicitly understands.**

While many associate Filofax with the 1980s world of the upwardly mobile, the brand's heritage goes back much further – 1921 to be precise – when an Englishman working in the US came across a file containing technical notes for engineers, quite literally a 'file of facts'. The idea was first marketed back in London before Filofax became a registered trademark in 1930, proving a surprising hit with the military.

Had it not been for the 'organisation' of a secretary named Grace Scurr, Filofax might not have survived the Blitz. When its offices were destroyed in the 1940s during a bombing raid it was thanks to her foresight (of listing all supplier and customer details in her personal Filofax which she took home with her every night) that the company was rebuilt – Grace retired from her role as chairman 30 years later.

When the company was acquired in 1980 by two Filofax devotees, the brand came into its own. By 1987 it had built up a retail network of 1,250 outlets in the UK alone, and many others in major cities worldwide. The Filofax personal organiser had developed from a simple loose-leaf diary and notebook into an indispensable organiser and status symbol for the 1980s, stocked by prestigious stores worldwide; Harrods and Harvey Nichols in London, Neiman Marcus and Bloomingdales in the US, Bon Genie in Switzerland, Galleries Lafayette in Paris and Seibu in Japan.

As a status symbol its success was assured with revenue increasing from £75,000 to £12 million between 1979 and 1985.

The Filofax collection now offers over 20 different ranges of personal organisers in six different sizes, in addition to conference products, men's and women's briefcases, small leather accessories and pens. A range of over 250 papers, diaries and accessories is available to fully personalise Filofax organisers, while Filofax Address Book Software enables computer users to download contact information from universal programmes on to Filofax computer paper.

The ongoing appeal of Filofax remains. Essentially it offers simple and fast access to both a diary and a notebook, crammed with useful information – from addresses and telephone numbers to maps, CD or business card holders as well as a calculator. According to a survey carried out by the brand, 57% of top-level managers still prefer paper-based organisers to their electronic counterparts.

Because electronics have become ubiquitous in all aspects of modern life, using pen and paper is now seen as quirky – 'breaking the mould'. Over the past two decades working culture has shifted from the 1980s ethos of making



money, to making time – the ultimate work/life balance. Accordingly, Filofax has changed its focus from being a business tool to a lifestyle essential, empowering people to free up their time through organisation rather than allowing the dictates of modern life to take control. More organisation means more free time, which ultimately means more leisure time.

In October 2006 Filofax launches its first-ever UK nationwide advertising campaign created by acclaimed advertising agency St. Luke's. As part of an integrated marketing communications campaign, the advertising will focus on increasing general brand awareness, refreshing the brand image and reinforcing the relevance of Filofax to today's lifestyle. With the use of handwritten feel-good lifestyle messages, the brand aims to further build on its cult status – mirroring the widespread shift in use of Filofax from business to personal use.

