

Diego Elizarrarás

Todo De Cartón



“ I saw an opportunity to help companies get organized. ”

COUNTRY	Mexico
INDUSTRY	Business/Professional Services
EMPLOYEES	168
YEAR SELECTED	2003
WEBSITE	www.tododecarton.com.mx/

COMPANY SNAPSHOT

Diego Elizarrarás , together with his brother Pablo, are second-generation entrepreneurs and innovators. More than a decade ago they took over the family business and turned it into a vehicle for innovation in organization and filing solutions. Todo de Cartón has been present in the Mexican market for over 25 years and has always differentiated itself through an out-of-the-box approach to product design and development. The Elizarrarás brothers have deployed an innovative distribution scheme and allowed the company to grow beyond its original conception. The company has a strong commitment to creativity in its designs and takes a proactive approach on issues such as social and environmental responsibility. The entrepreneurs are convinced that Mexico has much more to offer than just being a manufacturing country, and are committed to changing the concept of “*Made in Mexico*” into “*Created and developed in Mexico*”.

Their father, Alfonso Elizarrarás, founded Todo de Cartón in 1975, with a simple and original idea: he designed new products with cardboard, creating innovative, new uses in addition to serving as a packaging material. In the 1970s, the Ministry of Finance began requiring all companies to keep their files for at least five years. Alfonso was aware that there were no adequate filing systems available that met official standards; thus he designed and patented (patent awarded in 1989) the first cardboard box for “concentrated archives” which had the commercial name of *Archivo Muerto?*

(Dead File). This product and vision targeted the yet untapped Mexican file organization market, which led Archivo Muerto? to become a standard in every office in Mexico – the name Archivo Muerto became a generic name just like Lycra, Kleenex or Xerox. The Mexican Public Register Office chose Todo de Cartón’s products because of its cost, convenience and superior protective qualities.

Pablo and Diego Elizarrarás took leadership of the company 10 years ago and were able to identify new avenues of growth. Under their administration Todo de Cartón has diversified its designs and patents. The entrepreneurs do not consider themselves to be in the packaging business; rather, they sell “Organization Solutions”, which has been the company’s vision since the brothers took over. For instance, the company has developed the first sliding cardboard file box in México, called *Archizable*, and other products that have the characteristics of being durable and transportable. Tens of products have been developed to fulfill organization needs in all aspects of everyday life for office, home and industry use.

In order to expand reach and meet increasing demand for Todo de Cartón’s products, a number of proprietary retail outlets were opened in the mid 1980’s, growing to the company’s current total of 35 stores all over Mexico. In addition, over the last decade, the products started to be sold with wide acceptance in leading supermarket chains, office supply stores, and home and do-it-yourself stores, becoming an important additional revenue source.

However, Pablo and Diego perceived that the scalability of this system was somewhat limited. Thus they conceived a franchise system in year 2000, which has turned out to be a great success – eventually all existing points of sale will be substituted for franchises. The franchise system rigorously defines the profile of the franchisee through a strict screening program and sets the guidelines necessary for the franchisee to extract the highest possible value from the investment, making Todo de Cartón a highly attractive franchise. The franchised stores are not only distribution points for the cardboard products of the company, but also provide an array of additional services such as packaging and shipping services, gifts and greetings, and promotions. Today, Todo de Cartón franchises number a total of 45 across Mexico, and Pablo and Diego hope to expand to the rest of Latin America in the coming years.

Pablo and Diego’s commitment to natural resource preservation has been a cornerstone in defining the operation. One of their most important objectives is to direct all activities in such a way as to cause low environmental impact; thus, the products are made from recycled materials, and can be recycled themselves.

ENDEAVOR AND TODO DE CARTÓN

In addition to benefiting from the Global eMBA program and Entrepreneur Summit, the Entrepreneurs have worked with a local advisory board on key issues, and are developing a new product line with a fellow Endeavor Entrepreneur.

Diego and Pablo demonstrate commitment by sponsoring Endeavor events, and have served as panelists for candidates in the pipeline.