

# EXECUTIVE EVENTS<sup>®</sup>

INSIGHT FOR CORPORATE SPORTS AND ENTERTAINMENT PROFESSIONALS

## INTO RARE AIR



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## MORRES MEUBEL: INTO RARE AIR

You might think, upon first hearing the name, "Morres," that you don't recognize it. It sounds foreign and vaguely familiar, but you can't place it. Until someone mentions the guy in the shiny white jumpsuit leaping from a hot air balloon into the sparkling Alps air with a snowboard attached to his boots. "Hey, I saw that!" you say. Almost everyone did, and remembers it...the amazing footage of a world first on NBC's "Sports Extra." "Morres" stretched in huge letters across the balloon's side... "Morres" in black again on the bottom of the snowboard... "Morres," after hundreds of theater screenings across the Benelux countries, now a household word in Europe...now an actual part of Dutch speech. Morres Meubel (pronounced mor-RES

MUR-bl) is an international furniture company founded by Frederik Morres in 1909, almost 90 years ago, in the small medieval Netherlands town of Hulst. Frederik made tables and chairs to order, as villagers needed them. After World War II, sons Jo and Anroine Morres bought several factory buildings, and the family business expanded. In 1957, Morres was one of the first companies to distribute a printed catalog to its customers. This totally new concept, ordering furniture on the telephone, placed Morres at the forefront of direct marketing in its infancy, their foresight paralleling the thinking of those pioneers, Sears & Roebuck, in the USA. The 1960s saw Frederik's grandsons Etienne, Paul and Pedro move Morres into the

next generation with an astonishing 1,333,000 square feet of showrooms, warehouses and factories on the outskirts of Hulst, where it all began. The showrooms of Morres Meubel now attract customers from neighboring countries who drive halfway across Europe to choose bedroom suites.

Morres came to identify itself with extreme sports almost by accident. Managing Director Etienne Morres wanted "to do something wild" to surprise his wife of 12 1/2 years at their anniversary party.

"That's why I let a hot air balloon inflate and take off during my garden party. I became immensely fascinated by the whole hot air balloon phenomenon. Later on, our company used balloons on several other occasions.

"A few years ago, we chose the balloon

as our trademark. And that was when we saw things get big. The marketing strategy was so successful, it made it necessary for us to choose between specializing or growing in our European market. We chose the latter. From that moment on, the balloon served as a universal approach, a flying bill-

board at mass events."

That universality makes ballooning the perfect medium to convey a powerful message, completing the first part of Morres' formula for attaining its aggressive goals. The formula is simple: increased name and brand awareness create a larger customer base, thereby increasing overall sales. Greater sales volume equals greater leverage with suppliers, which increases efficiency and creates greater appeal with potential world partners. And what could be more appealing than the "up, up and away" of ballooning to an upscale, progressive furniture clientele... in any language. The formula itself may be

simple, but finding the right 'hook' can seem permanently elusive. And herein lies the genius of Morres. Its directors recognized a creative opportunity to associate the Morres name with an exciting attention-getting vehicle, one that would capture the hearts of buyers and media alike. The media factor was locked in nicely when the company aligned itself with pilot Wim Verstraeten, who is to ballooning what Michael Jordan is to basketball. Holder of a number of world records, Verstraeten was the pilot for Morres' amazing balloon skydiving commercial, the one filmed by NBC that flashed "Morres" all over the world. What began as a promotional device, to drop a snowboarding skydiver from a balloon 13,000 feet in the air directly





into the middle of a Morres three-piece livingroom suite, became an international sensation. The resulting attention allowed Morres to solidify relationships with European partners and enter into joint

into sponsorship of the Albuquerque Geckos, a team that won US Soccer's Division 3 in its first year, and a terrific US complement to Morres-sponsored first and second division teams back in Europe. So much so, in fact, that a player loan/exchange program will begin in January 1998, including the opportunity for player education on both sides of the ocean.

Anxious to form the same alliances in America that have made Morres Meubel so strong in Europe, Etienne Morres says,



The celebration in Albuquerque: (L to R) For Morres Meubel, Advertising and PR Manager Rudi Van Der Elst, Managing Director Etienne Morres and Balloon Pilot Wim Verstraeten, followed by Mark Sullivan, President of the Kodak Albuquerque International Balloon Fiesta, Commercial Director Paul Morres and Johan Schotte, Chairman of E3 Corporation.

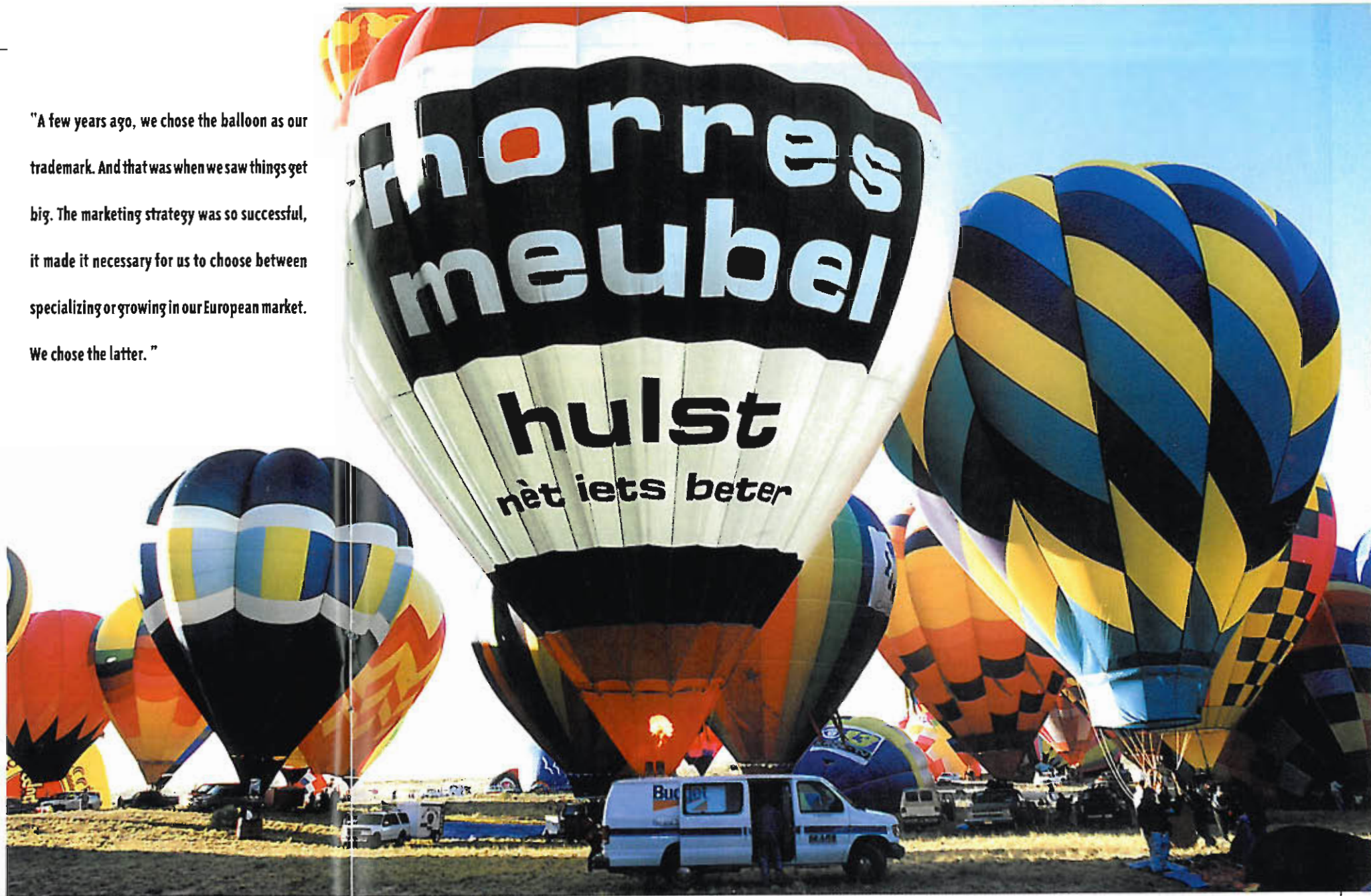
ventures with outlet companies in Poland, Russia, Asia and China.

Not content to rest on its acclaimed laurels, Morres capitalized brilliantly on this surge of commercial attention by commissioning the construction of a second balloon. Wim Verstraeten will attempt to beat his own special shape altitude record (around 29,000 feet) with a new Morres envelope and gondola next year in Albuquerque, New Mexico, home of the 1998 International Balloon Fiesta. And, although Albuquerque is probably the most famous ballooning locale in the world, the record attempt will be held there because the New Mexico city has been chosen as the site for the first Morres Meubel furniture center in the United States, a dazzling 330,000-square-foot showroom. The American debut was cinched during the 1997 Balloon Fiesta with the help of Entertainment Education Enterprises (E3) Corporation, a promotional partner in the Morres Meubel bid for the US market. E3 has acquired Morres

"We want to get in touch with companies with whom we can cooperate, to set up outlets with our furniture and brand name included."

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## SPONSORS! SPONSORS! SPONSORS!

Certainly, any adult who owns a TV or picks up a newspaper can attest to the exponential and sometimes overwhelming growth of sports, entertainment and arts programming, in the United States and worldwide. Now, ask E3 Corporation, "Why?" They will readily admit that the public's voracious event appetite is only growing, but E3 preaches insistently that the fire is fed by the strong financial support of sponsors. Entertainment Education Enterprises Corporation (E3 for short) knows the importance of corporate sponsors. It values the symbiotic relationship between these corporations and sports teams, entertainment events, cultural events...even political events.

"The days of large charitable giving to sports

and entertainment activities by successful and marketing-aggressive corporations is long gone," explains Pierre Koshakji, President of E3. "Corporations certainly understand the intrinsic value of community support in such giving, but now that has to be secondary to any corporation's desire to see a measurable business return on this giving. In reality, it is an investment to generate additional quantifiable sales, now or in the future. If you have a sponsorship to sell, you'd better know how it meets potential sponsors' corporate objectives."

E3 Corporation runs a business investment arm, a sports and entertainment investment and marketing group, and a film investment company. It followed the Disney model

before the industry labeled such a model. E3 plans to continue using quality sports and entertainment as profitable image enhancement vehicles for its clients. The corporation's principals have been involved in the marketing and production of events such as the FIFA World Cup, Superbowl and other events of world renown.

Chosen by Morres Meubel to serve as its US strategic business partner, E3 Corporation has been asked to organize all additional sponsorship activity associated with Morres' world-renowned pilot, Wim Verstraeten, and his attempt to break the special shapes hot air balloon world altitude record at the Albuquerque Balloon Fiesta in 1998. Earlier this year, Wim's close US competitor, Steve Fosser, received constant global media

attention for his effort to be the first pilot to go around the world non-stop in a balloon. No one can fully contemplate the billions of impressions Fosser and his balloon captured. Though it fell short of success, the attempt was nevertheless viewed by the world as heroic.

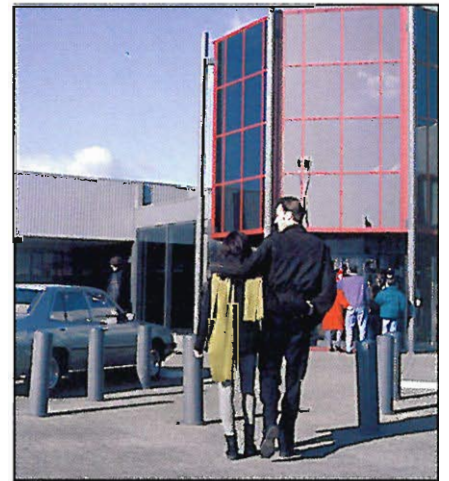
E3 sees Morres' altitude record attempt and the resulting international media coverage as business-smart and fully complementary to Morres Meubel's multinational growth plans. Johan Schorre, E3's Chairman and Executive Director of US Business Development for Morres Meubel, praises the company. "Few large multinationals have been as creatively successful as Morres in getting the word out, and literally up, about the quality of their product, their brand and their image," Schorre stated. "It's a real pleasure to work with them." E3 will offer a few

sponsor opportunities to other corporations interested in taking advantage of the media attention surrounding this world record attempt.

**NEED MORE INFORMATION?**  
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of the language. Yes, the Morres Meubel showrooms are so vast and captivating that to spend the day shopping there is "to morres." Ads now say, "Come and morresize for a day in Hulst," and every Dutch citizen thinks furniture...the furnishings of Morres Meubel. Ever humble, Etienne Morres responds to the accomplishment



Morres would also welcome joint sponsorship for some of its successful projects, from the right US sources.

All expansion plans have been mentally put aside for the short term, however, due



to another exciting "world attempt" opportunity for Morres. Most Americans recall the heavy media coverage surrounding last year's race among several renowned ballooning teams to circumnavigate the earth, a feat never accomplished in the history of humankind. The Breitling Orbiter, piloted by Morres' own Wim Verstraeten and

Bertrand Piccard, set off well in January but was forced down short of its aim by kerosene problems in the capsule. In a challenge for the best weather and equipment against Steve Fossett's Solo Spirit and the Abruzzo/Rutan, Branson and Uliassi entries, the Breitling Orbiter 2 is scheduled to depart from Chateau d'Oex, Switzerland in early December. Not to be outdone by donations of technological wizardry, Morres has designed custom bedding for the balloon capsule, assuring the safety of a good night's rest for three pilots this time around. Quips Etienne Morres, "Now we can say that our furniture brings its users literally into the clouds...about seven miles up!"

With innovative sponsorship projects like Breitling Orbiter, it's no wonder the name "Morres" has become the Bandaid, the Kleenex, of the Netherlands furniture community. What better testament to brand awareness than to become an actual part

by expressing his respect for the creative use of sports, sponsorship and entertainment in *this* country.

"This combination has been invented in the States. It's simply a golden formula. We still can learn a lot from you here in Europe." ♦

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