

# Unification Church business activities

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The Unification Church has been noted for its support and ownership a number of businesses in various countries.

David Bromley, a sociologist at Virginia Commonwealth University, said: "The corporate section is understood to be the engine that funds the mission of the church. The wealth base is fairly substantial. But if you were to compare it to the LDS Church or the Catholic Church or other churches that have massive landholdings, this doesn't look on a global scale like a massive operation."<sup>[1]</sup>

In Eastern Europe Unification Church missionaries are using the church's business ties to win new converts.<sup>[2]</sup>

## Contents

- 1 Manufacturing
- 2 Automotive
- 3 Media
- 4 Other
- 5 References
- 6 See also

## Manufacturing

In South Korea the Tongil Group was founded in 1963 by church founder Sun Myung Moon as a nonprofit organization which would provide revenue for the church. Its core focus was manufacturing but in the 1970s and 1980s it expanded by founding or acquiring businesses in pharmaceuticals, tourism, and publishing.<sup>[3]</sup> In the 1990s Tongil Group suffered as a result of the 1997 Asian Financial Crisis. By 2004 it was losing money and was \$3.6 billion in debt. In 2005 Sun Myung Moon's son, Kook-jin Moon was appointed chairman of Tongil Group.<sup>[3]</sup> Among Tongil Group's chief holdings are: The Ilwha Company, which produces ginseng and related products; Ilshin Stone, building materials; and Tongil Heavy Industries, machine parts including hardware for the South Korean military. The Tongil Group funds the Tongil Foundation which supports Unification Church projects including schools and the Little Angels Children's Folk Ballet of Korea.<sup>[4]</sup>

## Automotive

Pyeonghwa Motors is an automobile manufacturer based in Seoul (South Korea) and owned by the church. It is involved in a joint-venture with the North Korean Ryonbong General Corp. The joint venture produces two small cars under license from Fiat,<sup>[5]</sup> and a pick-up truck and an SUV using complete knock down kits from Chinese manufacturer Dandong Shuguang. Pyeonghwa has the exclusive rights to car production, purchase, and sale of used cars in North Korea. However, most North Koreans are unable to afford a car. Because of the very small market for cars in the country, Pyeonghwa's output is reportedly very low. In 2003, only 314 cars were produced even though the factory had the facilities to produce up to 10,000 cars a year.<sup>[6]</sup> Erik van Ingen Schenau, author of the book *Automobiles Made in North Korea*, has estimated the company's total production in 2005 at not more than around 400 units.<sup>[7]</sup>

## Media

News World Communications, is an international news media corporation.<sup>[8]</sup> It was founded in New York City, in 1976, by Sun Myung Moon. Its first two newspapers, *The News World* (later renamed the *New York City Tribune*) and the Spanish-language *Noticias del Mundo*, were published in New York from 1976 until the early 1990s. In 1982 the *New York Times* described News World as "the newspaper unit of the Unification Church."<sup>[9]</sup> Rev. Moon's son Hyun Jin Moon is its chairman of the board.<sup>[10]</sup> News World Communications owns United Press International, *The World and I*, *Tiempos del Mundo* (Latin America), *The Segye Ilbo* (South Korea), *The Sekai Nippo* (Japan), the *Zambezi Times* (South Africa), *The Middle East Times* (Egypt).<sup>[11]</sup> Until 2008 it published the Washington D.C. based newsmagazine *Insight on the News*.<sup>[8]</sup> Until 2010, it owned the *Washington Times*. On November 2, 2010, Sun Myung Moon and a group of former *Times* editors purchased the paper from News World.<sup>[12]</sup>

## Other

Isshin Hospital is a church sponsored hospital in Japan which practices both modern and traditional Asian medicine.<sup>[13][14]</sup>

In the United States the church owns fishing and sea food interests. Among them are Master Marine, a shipbuilding and fishing company in Alabama;<sup>[15][16]</sup> International Seafood of Kodiak, Alaska;<sup>[17][18]</sup> and True World Foods, which runs a major portion of the sushi trade in the USA.<sup>[19]</sup> In 2011 Master Marine opened a factory in Las Vegas, Nevada to manufacture a 27-foot pleasure boat designed by Moon.<sup>[20][21]</sup>

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## See also

- List of Unification Church affiliated organizations
- Unification Church of the United States

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