

## EXERCISES ON PAST TENSES IN E4PS



### PAST SIMPLE

#### **B** The Dell story

Complete each paragraph with the verbs in the boxes.

have say begin introduce open

In 1984 Michael Dell .....<sup>1</sup> his computer business at the University of Texas in Austin. In 1986 his company .....<sup>2</sup> the 286-12 machine, which the magazine *PC Week* .....<sup>3</sup> 'may become the next industry benchmark'. The following year he .....<sup>4</sup> an office in the United Kingdom and soon .....<sup>5</sup> offices in 33 countries.

total decide employ run go

In the summer of 1988, Dell .....<sup>6</sup> public. By now the firm .....<sup>7</sup> 650 people and sales .....<sup>8</sup> over \$159 million. Then two years later employees .....<sup>9</sup> to celebrate 1 April by hanging a giant inflatable gorilla outside company headquarters, the first of many publicity stunts. On another occasion the CEO .....<sup>10</sup> around a stadium carrying the Olympic torch.

become expand launch overtake stay step down win

In 1991 Dell .....<sup>11</sup> its first notebook PC and in the same year .....<sup>12</sup> the first PC maker to install applications software free for its clients. The company .....<sup>13</sup> at a rapid rate with subsidiaries opening in Belgium, Finland, Luxembourg, Norway and Spain. In 1999 Dell .....<sup>14</sup> Compaq to become the largest seller of PCs in the United States with \$25 billion in revenue reported in January 2000. On 4 March 2004, Michael Dell .....<sup>15</sup> as CEO but .....<sup>16</sup> on as chairman of the board. The company is now the leading PC provider in the US and second worldwide. In 2007 Dell .....<sup>17</sup> more than 200 product awards.

4.4 Complete this article by putting the verbs into the past simple. Some are irregular.

### Samsung: from dried fish to high tech

In 1938 Byung-Chull Lee (1) started (start) a business in Korea called Samsung. He (2) \_\_\_\_\_ (sell) vegetables and dried fish to China. Ten years later he (3) \_\_\_\_\_ (have) his own manufacturing and sales operations, and the business (4) \_\_\_\_\_ (grow) quickly. Over the next few decades Samsung (5) \_\_\_\_\_ (buy) several insurance companies and department stores.

In the 1970s Samsung (6) \_\_\_\_\_ (invest) in heavy industries like chemicals and shipbuilding, but then in the 1980s they (7) \_\_\_\_\_ (begin) to focus more on technology and electronic products. In 1987 Kun-Hee Lee (8) \_\_\_\_\_ (take) the place of his father as Chairman of the company. In 1988 he (9) \_\_\_\_\_ (announce) the 'Second Foundation' of the company, directing Samsung towards becoming a world-class 21st century corporation.

**B** Complete the passage about the *Financial Times*, choosing active or passive forms of the verbs in brackets.



The *FT* was launched.....<sup>1</sup> (launch) as the London Financial Guide on 9 January 1888 by Horatio Bottomley. Soon after, on 13 February the same year, it .....<sup>2</sup> (rename) the *Financial Times*. It .....<sup>3</sup> (begin) as a four-page journal and .....<sup>4</sup> (read) by the financial community of the City of London.

In 1893 the *FT* .....<sup>5</sup> (print) in salmon pink for the first time – a smart move that .....<sup>6</sup> (make) it different from its nearest competitor, the *Financial News*. In 1993 this change .....<sup>7</sup> (commemorate) by a single white-paper edition.

In 1945 a decision .....<sup>8</sup> (take) by Brendan Bracken, who .....<sup>9</sup> (own) the *Financial News*, to merge the two papers. The *FT* .....<sup>10</sup> (grow) in size and .....<sup>11</sup> (establish) a network of journalists all over the world.

On 1 January 1979 the first *FT* .....<sup>12</sup> (print) outside the UK, in Frankfurt, and in 1986 the paper's circulation .....<sup>13</sup> (pass) the 250,000 mark. In 1995 the *Financial Times* website .....<sup>14</sup> (publish) on-line.

Since then, with print sites in many major cities across five continents, the *FT* has become a truly global business newspaper. Because it has many journalists in Europe, the *FT* .....<sup>15</sup> (consider) to be the authority on European corporate news, and in 2008 it .....<sup>16</sup> (given) three newspaper-of-the-year awards.



## PRESENT PERFECT

- 6.3 Complete this email by putting the verbs into the present perfect. There are affirmative, negative and question forms.

**Subject** construction of new line for Bucharest metro

Jim – (1) have you heard (you/hear) about the plans to extend the Bucharest metro? The European Union (2) \_\_\_\_\_ (announce) that they will provide funding for another line. All construction companies are invited to make a bid. Several points occur to me:

- Our big competitors like Alstom and Bechtel (3) \_\_\_\_\_ (not/make) any public statements yet, but I'm sure they will be interested.
- What about us? Should we put in our own bid? I (4) \_\_\_\_\_ (prepare) a short report with my own ideas. It's attached to this email. Let me know what you think.
- It would be good to talk to Dimitrie about this, but he (5) \_\_\_\_\_ (not/reply) to my last few emails. (6) \_\_\_\_\_ (you/see) him recently?

Anyway, my secretary will schedule a meeting on this issue at the end of March. Please discuss the matter with your team members before then.

- 7.1 Complete each sentence with one of these time adverbs: *already, ever, for, just, never, since, so far, yet*.

- The project is going very well – we've already finished phase one.
- I haven't finished the July sales report \_\_\_\_\_
- Sorry, I've been really busy – I've been in a meeting \_\_\_\_\_ nine o'clock.
- I'm a bit nervous – I've \_\_\_\_\_ spoken to so many people before.
- We've known each other \_\_\_\_\_ more than twenty years.
- We've had 120 registrations for the conference \_\_\_\_\_, and the maximum is 150.
- Have you \_\_\_\_\_ eaten sushi?
- I've \_\_\_\_\_ heard about your promotion! Congratulations!

- 7.3 Complete the sentences with *for* or *since*.

- I've been at KPMG \_\_\_\_\_ nearly a year, \_\_\_\_\_ January in fact.
- I haven't heard from her \_\_\_\_\_ the beginning of the month. So \_\_\_\_\_ the last few weeks I haven't been able to do anything.
- I've known Rafik \_\_\_\_\_ a long time, \_\_\_\_\_ we were at university together.

## PAST SIMPLE AND PRESENT PERFECT



8.2 Complete this article by putting three verbs into the past simple and three into the present perfect.

### Nike: the brand that keeps growing

An accountant and a sports coach (1) started (start) a small shoe company called Blue Ribbon in 1964. In 1971 it (2) \_\_\_\_\_ (change) its name to Nike, and since then it (3) \_\_\_\_\_ (become) one of the world's most successful brands. Originally Nike (4) \_\_\_\_\_ (be) only associated with basketball, but recently it (5) \_\_\_\_\_ (expand) into new markets like football. Now Nike (6) \_\_\_\_\_ (start) buying other fashion brands that are not even connected with sport.

#### **B** Market news in brief

These announcements were read out today during a radio programme called *Business in Action*. Complete each one with these verbs in either the past simple or the present perfect.

issue launch (x2) announce slump

Cable & Wireless .....<sup>1</sup> its agreement for a £1bn pension fund deal.

Shares in Marks and Spencer, Britain's biggest retailer, .....<sup>2</sup> by more than 10% in the last 24 hours after the firm .....<sup>3</sup> a profits warning.

Asda, the supermarket chain owned by Wal-Mart, .....<sup>4</sup> a non-food arm, Asda Direct, in a bid to grab market share from rivals Tesco and Argos. The website, which offers more than 9,000 products, will be accompanied by a print run of 3m catalogues.

Tesco .....<sup>5</sup> Tesco Direct two years ago and now offers about 12,000 products online and about 7,000 in its catalogue.