Press Release

Schneider Electric takes a leading position in the wiring devices market in Russia with the acquisition of Wessen

Rueil Malmaison, France – April 17, 2008 – Schneider Electric has signed an agreement to acquire the Wessen Group, a leading Russian manufacturer of wiring accessories, primarily switches and sockets, from Ahlström Capital.

Wessen designs, manufactures and markets a comprehensive range of wiring devices. In 2007, it generated sales of nearly €24 million, of which 90% in Russia. The company has a leading position on Russian residential programs.

With this acquisition, Schneider Electric will significantly reinforce its exposure to the low voltage installation market in Russia, which is expected to grow annually by 15% in the next 5 years. Wessen products will also further complete Schneider Electric’s offering in wiring devices.

Christian Wiest, Executive Vice-President of Schneider Electric’s International Operating Division, commented: “The acquisition of Wessen will give a unique opportunity to capture growth in one of the most dynamic residential markets in the world. It will also contribute to accelerate our development in emerging countries, which already accounted for 32% of Schneider Electric’s sales in 2007.”

Subject to the authorisation of the Russian antitrust authorities, the transaction is expected to be finalised in the second quarter of 2008. This acquisition meets Schneider Electric’s Return on Capital Employed criteria.

About Wessen Group
Founded in 1966, under the name of Potencial, the company adopted the Wessen brand in 2002 and employs about 1,800 people in 1 factory in the city of Kozmodemiansk and 7 sales agencies in Russia. The group sells through more than 3,000 distributor outlets or retailer outlets in Russia, Ukraine and Kazakhstan.
www.wessen.ru

About Schneider Electric
Schneider Electric, who helps people and organisations make the most of their energy, anticipates and satisfies its customers’ requirements in the residential, building, data centers and networks, industry, and energy and infrastructure markets. With 120,000 employees, Schneider Electric generated revenues of €17.3 billion in 2007 through 15,000 distributor outlets in 190 countries.
www.schneider-electric.com
About Ahlström Capital
Ahlström Capital is a private equity investment company that creates value for its owners by channeling its investments primarily into industrial companies. With roughly 190 million euros in capital, the company is one of Finland's biggest private equity investors. Ahlström Capital's strengths are solid industrial expertise, long entrepreneurial traditions, and substantial financial resources.

www.ahlstromcapital.com