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HASSLACHER Group will become a strategic partner of LIP BLED, d.o.o.

HASSLACHER invests 35% in LIP BLED, a Slovenian sawmill and plywood corporation.

“We would like to work together in the future”, declares Alojz Burja, manager of LIP BLED, d.o.o. Together with Christoph Kulterer, manager and owner of HASSLACHER, Burja signed a contract, allowing HASSLACHER to attain a 35% share of the sawmill and plywood corporation, today. “The international market environment is difficult at the moment, as the financial crisis also affects our industry. This is the reason why intense cooperation between our companies is necessary and sensible in order to increase productivity. This strategic investment provides enormous benefits to both operations”, assures Christoph Kulterer.

Future synergies in the area of technology, raw materials, and process optimisation will be utilised through close cooperation. LIP BLED will be able to secure its growing need for raw materials in the area of lumber with its reliable partner from the Austrian sawing industry, and use the know-how of its partner in international sales. Moreover, the exchange of product ranges and/or quality of raw materials will also positively affect local log wood suppliers.

Consolidated efforts in research and product development projects will also be tackled together. As the technical degree of development increases, Slovenia, in particular, wants to set an example in the industry. Thus, the number of qualified employees will increase. HASSLACHER is expanding its own product range through plywood, and hopes to gain easier market entry into the eastern European region.

The purchase price of the corporate shares has been kept completely confidential. LIP BLED is Slovenia's second-largest wood-working operation. Currently, the company employs over 600 people, and has an annual turnover of € 42 million. At both its locations in Recica Bled and Bohinjska Bistrica, interior doors, solid wood furniture, and plywood is produced. LIP BLED generates around 40% of its turnover with the production of 1.500.000m² plywood per year. 50% of this amount is sold in Slovenia and in EEC countries, while the rest is exported to Western Europe. LIP BLED was only privatised in 2007 through a management buy-out. The general owner and manager is Alojz Burja.

The HASSLACHER Group is one of the largest timber industry operations in Austria. The group has an annual turnover of around 140 million euros and 400 employees. Three sawmills in Sachsenburg, Arnoldstein, and Liebenfels (Carinthia), generate an annual cutting capacity of 1.000.000fm of log wood. The locations in Sachsenburg and the group headquarters also encompass a planning factory, a glued wood factory, and two biomass plants. The family business, which has over 100 years of tradition, produces lumber, glulam, dual-balks, tri- balks, glued wall slats and ceiling components, as well as bio-energy. The export quota of the group is 75%, and the most important export markets are Italy, Germany, Spain, Japan, and the Levants.