

DOING BUSINESS IN THE EUREGIO MEUSE-RHINE
The newsletter of the Chambers of Commerce of the Euregio Meuse-Rhine

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Contents:

Chambers of Commerce

- Meuse-Rhine Infrastructure Atlas
- Export/import seminar
- Cross-border chances & risks
- VOKA demands nuclear rethink

Business and Industry

- New energy at Avantis
- 13th century shopping center
- Alro Group for sale
- Mithra signs with Solvay
- NetCologne takes over Westend
- BST at Hermalle-sous-Huy
- Biogas in Baesweiler
- Nonox at Avantis
- DTZ to sell La Meuse
- Veldhoen & Co sign with TBI
- Viessmann in Welkenraedt
- Structuring gas procurement
- Fortum signs with Trianel
- Vodafone and Maastricht U
- Aachen energy managers
- Belovo egg plant goes chinese
- Leoni AG to take over Kerpen
- Stake in Aachen Arcades
- Wirth drilling for EUR 118m
- EVS gains BskyB contract

- Benvitec takes over Soval
- Sabca Lummen A400M: EUR 15m
- Bullet-proof limos for Saudis
- Cross-border acquisitions
- Soptim revenues up
- Wiel Arets' Brusselse Poort
- Berries are good for you
- Trianel EWMR portfolio
- AMOS satellite simulator
- Walloons go Dutch
- Crombach at Avantis
- Westend Aachen VOIP
- Heinsberg ahead of the game
- Ijsboerke takes over Mio
- FEV: new sites and capabilities
- Jumbo maintenance from Nuth

Logistics and Infrastructure

- Arrow device logistics
- Malaysia Airlines to MAA
- Activity at Liege Airport

Life Sciences and Sci-Tech

- UM, AZM & DSM: 'Biotericals'
- RFID to take over barcodes
- Aachen: 'Science City'

This Newsletter is a common initiative of the Chambers of Commerce of Aachen (D), Eupen-Malmedy-St Vith (B), Belgian Limburg (B), Liège-Verviers (B), and Southern Limburg (NL).

Industrie- und Handelskammer
Aachen



CHAMBERS OF COMMERCE

MEUSE-RHINE INFRASTRUCTURE ATLAS

[COM: Maastricht, October 6]

The third edition of the Meuse-Rhine Infrastructure Atlas has been published with the support of the Intereg III project and the European Union. It provides the reader with 180 pages of information on the economic, social, cultural, and natural assets that Meuse-Rhine has to offer. It gives the technology potential, the logistical infrastructure, and provides an opening to the local international home market. It's available as a PDF file on the Internet and there is an interactive version on the Chambers website (address given below).

The Internet site has been set up with two objects: to provide information and knowledge about Meuse-Rhine and to provide instruments for companies that want to do business there. The Internet Business Network provides a database of more than 70,000 businesses.

For further information contact Saskia Gorgels-Lindelauf on 31 43 350 65 19 or Bernard Piette on 31 43 350 65 13.

Check the link.

<http://www.euregiochambers.com>

EXPORT/IMPORT SEMINAR FOR BEGINNERS

[COM: Aachen, October 6]

On October 26 there will be a Chamber sponsored export and import seminar for beginners in Erkelenz. The seminar is designed for people who are exploring foreign markets for the first time or those who want to develop their international activities. The Chamber is offering this seminar at Erkelenz after success elsewhere.

It's free and takes place for half a day on October 26 at the old Alten Rathaus, Erkelenz, and will assist in orientation into foreign trade and answer beginners questions on the topic of export and import — all the way from certificates of origin, conditions of payment, and customs related matters. The Chamber team will give examples and practical tips. The talks will be in German.

Further information is available from Gudula Krauzheck at the Aachen Chamber on 00 49 241 4460 129 or via e-mail to gudula.krauzheck@aachen.ihk.de.

<http://www.aachen.ihk.de>

CROSS-BORDER CHANCES & RISKS

[COM: Eupen, September 29]

EWIV WestLex, which is made up of law firms of Meuse-Rhine and the chambers of commerce, is holding a session on Wednesday November 9, at Hotel Kasteel Bloemendaal in Vaals from 18.00 to 20.00 hrs to provide information on the opportunities and risks of cross-border business: discussing the services provided by the Euroregional chambers and practical solutions for cross-border legal issues. Places are limited, so please apply before October 24.

<http://www.ihk-eupen.be>

VOKA DEMANDS NUCLEAR RETHINK

[BIZ/INFRA: Hasselt, August 22]

Voka, the Flemish Business Association has asked the Belgian Federal Government to review its decision to abandon nuclear power by 2015. "We are going to import nuclear power, but we don't want to have any power plants on our own territory", said Philippe Muyters, the President of Voka. He called this attitude hypocritical and shortsighted. "At the same time, we will be throwing economic prospects and hundreds of jobs overboard", was his comment in a Voka press release.

The employers' organization (Voka) was responding to a decision of the European Court of Justice, which insures that competition on the high-voltage network between France and Belgium is able to develop. An important part of the network capacity that had been reserved for holders of long-term contracts has been released. Freer import of French power will mean less of a monopoly in the power market and the import capacity at Belgium's southern border will be increased. This is good news, in Voka's view, because it can lead to lower electricity prices. However, on the other hand, the more rapid import of French nuclear energy highlights the hypocrisy of Belgian plans to cease producing nuclear power in 2015. [This was a decision largely forced by the Belgian green parties when they were in the ascendant. Ed].

<http://www.voka.be/>

BUSINESS AND INDUSTRY

NEW ENERGY AT AVANTIS

[BIZ/GOV, Avantis, September 13]

At the request of Deputy Martin Eurlings, Paul Hamm, Chairman of the Green Raw Materials platform at the Ministry of Economic Affairs and former senior executive with DSM, is going to play an active role in new energy for Limburg. The new energy focus will be included in the acceleration agenda as a potential new campus. Paul Hamm with players from Parkstad and Meuse-Rhine will refine this vision of new energy and transform it into major projects. A focal issue will be to establish a cooperative agency, with North-Rhine Westphalia, Flanders and the Netherlands, for new energy at the Avantis cross-border science and business park.

<http://www.limburg.nl>

13TH CENTURY SHOPPING CENTER

[BIZ: Maastricht, September 9]

The new Entre Deux shopping area scheduled for completion in September 2006, and representing an investment of EUR 100m, will add 12,000 m² to the retail and restaurant and café space in Maastricht, and 200 private parking spaces. The renovation and upgrading of the Entre Deux shopping area in the heart of Maastricht will include the 13th century Dominican church. This was announced by the City of Maastricht, represented by Mayor Gerd Leers, and the investor Fortis Bank, represented by its chairman, Jacques Van Ek, together with Nico Eurlings, MD of the 3W construction company, and Jaap Gillis, a member of the Board of AM NV.

The old Dominican monastery church with its exciting open architecture, use of high-quality material and a glazed roof will provide an unusual aspect. The church, which is seven centuries old, will be part of the shopping area that runs from the market to the Vrijthof Square in Maastricht, and will retain the essential structures of the church. It will be transformed into a book

<http://www.3wvastgoed.nl>

ALRO GROUP FOR SALE

[BIZ: Dilsen-Stokkem, September 8]

The Limburg (B)-based group Alro, which specializes in the surface treatment of trucks and passenger vehicles, is for sale again. The current owner Luc Thijs sold Alro in 1998 and bought it back again in 2000. Deloitte is again charged for looking for a new owner. Alro has 900 employees and has eight companies in Rotem, Genk, Lanklaar and Dilsen. Last year it achieved revenues of EUR 145m. Alro also produces the exploding cases on which we reported earlier.

(Source: Zi-Biz)

<http://www.alro.be>

MITHRA SIGNS WITH SOLVAY

[BIZ/LIFE-SCI: Liège, September 5]

Mithra, the Liège pharmaceutical company that specializes in the production of gynecological products, has signed a contract with the Belgian pharmaceutical and chemicals company Solvay Pharma.

Mithra is going to sell Solvay products to combat the symptoms of the menopause in Belgium and Luxemburg, and this should lead to a doubling of revenues to EUR 4.2m. Thanks to this contract the company is expecting to be out of the red for the first time. The objective is to become the most important firm on the gynecological front in Belgium and Luxemburg. An interesting aspect of this is that the smaller business is going to operate for the larger one in the shape of Solvay.

(Source: Zi-Biz)

<http://www.mithra.be>

NETCOLOGNE TAKES OVER WESTEND

[BIZ: Aachen, September 5]

Just before entering the telecom market in Aachen and Düren, NetCologne, the telecommunications provider, has taken over the Aachen Internet provider Westend GmbH.

Westend is a well-known company in Aachen and provides Aachen market options. The entry into Aachen will take place after the results are published in October. NetCologne, employing 570, produced revenues of EUR 171m in 2004. Westend, employing 13, achieved sales of EUR 2.6m last year.

Westend is one of the leading internet providers in the region, growing fast with an excellent customer base and a modern high tech base. EUR 10m will be invested in expanding the network.

The regional fixed-network operator NetCologne has thus far provided telecommunications to the Cologne/Bonn area. By the end of 2005 the company is expecting to have 240,500 telephone and 241,500 Internet clients.

<http://www.aachener-zeitung.de>

BST AT HERMALLE-SOUS-HUY

[BIZ: Antwerp, September 2]

Belgian Scrap Terminal (BST) is expecting to employ another 45 jobs in its new, state-of-the-art dismantling and recycling facility at Hermalle-sous-Huy. The first contact of the SPI+ (Liège Development Agency) with BST goes back to the end of 2000.

Based at Willebroek and at the port of Antwerp, BST is a company active in the recycling and re-use of scrap metal (vehicles, scrap electronic and electrical equipment, etc). It currently employs around 50. Its future installations will be located on a 6 ha lot, with a new unit for the crushing and industrial preparation of scrap and metal: press, cutter, crushing mill, dismantling and decontamination infrastructure. Storage areas are also envisaged as well as storage tanks and a shipping quay. Noise and visual pollution will be countered by grassy mounds of earth and a screen of trees.

<http://www.investinwallonia.be>

BIOGAS IN BAESWEILER

[BIZ: Linnich, September 2]

Natur-Power GmbH is optimistic that the planned biogas plant at the Baesweiler swimming pool can be built soon. The farmers involved in the project in this region have already sown 300 hectares with special energy maize that will be harvested at the end of the month.

The maize will be used to produce biogas that will be turned into power in the plant. The additional heat produced will be used to heat the indoor swimming pool.

Similar Natur-Power plants are being planned for Jülich and Linnich.

<http://www.aachener-zeitung.de>

NONOX AT AVANTIS

[BIZ: Hoensbroek, August 29]

Nonox, which has been developing a Natural Compressed Gas Engine (NCGE) for heavy-duty vehicles (Buses/Trucks, etc.) over the last 8 years, is moving to Avantis, the cross-border Science and Business Park, set to spearhead new developments in Meuse-Rhine. If tests are successful, the first 5000 engines will go into production at Avantis next year, providing 25-50 jobs.

The engine, which runs on Natural Gas (either compressed or liquefied) has been developed by the Nonox team of professional automotive engineers and has now reached the stage of "Ready for series production". The requirement for particle filters and the 50% cost saving against other fuels provided by natural gas mean this engine has arrived at the right time. An intelligent mechatronic valve makes the engine not only more economical and just as powerful as a diesel engine, but also more environment friendly: with CO2 emissions down 25%. It fulfils the strict environmental policy standards set for 2008.

http://www.nonox-bv.com/NONOX_BV.pdf

DTZ TO SELL LA MEUSE

[BIZ: Liege, August 29]

Liege real estate specialist DTZ has been appointed exclusive agents for the sale and/or rental of the 8,000 m² plus building at 8 Boulevard de la Sauvernière in Liege, the old "La Meuse" newspaper building owned by "Sud Presse".

The company estimates that a complete upgrading/renovation of the building would represent an investment of EUR 4.5m. It has been unoccupied since 2001 and is located just across from the Royal Walloon Opera.

<http://www.dtz.be>

VELDHOEN & CO SIGN WITH TBI

[BIZ: Maastricht, August 27]

Veldhoen and Company, an international advisory organization in Maastricht, and TBI, a construction and technology company from Rotterdam - with revenues of EUR 1.8bn in 2004 and more than 10,000 permanent staff, recently (end June), signed a declaration of intent to jointly set up a new enterprise as a new division of TBI. It will bring true innovation to the construction sector, integrating the chain from concept to implementation.

The vision of Veldhoen and Company will now be linked to implementation by the construction and Technology Company within TBI, with which sustainable relations are being developed.

<http://www.veldhoen.nl>

VIESSMANN IN WELKENRAEDT

[BIZ/LOG: Welkenraedt, August 27]

The German central heating specialist has opened a new sales office in Welkenraedt. This will replace the Verviers building and should encourage ongoing growth for the company.

The new development represents an investment of EUR 4m. The center is at "Les Plenesses" Business Park. Worldwide the company specialized in central heating employs 7,000 in 110 locations in 30 different companies. The new location has 1,000 m² of office space and 4,800 m² of warehousing, two training centers and a showroom.

<http://www.netecho.de>

STRUCTURING GAS PROCUREMENT

[BIZ: Aachen/Bochum, August 26]

Using a new Excel-based software called GasOpt, EWMR and Trianel have equipped themselves with a straightforward approach to the structured gas procurement process. GasOpt, a tried and tested software program, is able to provide the energy business with a complete procurement portfolio. Contracts, products, prizes, systems, market access conditions are all included in the program.

<http://www.trianel.com>

FORTUM SIGNS WITH TRIANEL

[BIZ/INFRA: Aachen, August 25]

Fortum Service has signed a 15-year operation and maintenance agreement with Meuse-Rhine-based Trianel Energie. The agreement covers the 800 MW combined cycle gas turbine (CCGT) power plant in Hamm-Uentrop, Germany. The mobilization phase of the contract will start in September 2006. The combined cycle gas turbine power plant represents state-of-the-art technology and will be ready for commercial use in September 2007.

"Service won the deal in a tough international bidding race. Our merits were our long-term references in operating and maintaining combined cycle gas turbine plants, experience with similar types of plants, as well as our competitive, customer-specific concept", explains Osmo Lähelmä from Fortum Service.

Fortum Service provides operation and maintenance services for industry and energy companies in the Nordic countries and in selected international markets in Europe and Asia.

<http://www.trianel.com>

VODAFONE AND MAASTRICHT U

[BIZ/EDU: Maastricht, August 25]

Vodafone Netherlands and the University of Maastricht have started a cooperative project in which large private and non-profit employers in the region are going to combine forces. Both parties are convinced that cooperation in the area of mobile communication will be beneficial to the organizations and produce substantial added value.

John Samarron, board member of Vodafone Netherlands, said: "We are aware of our role as a major employer in the region and are continually looking for new partners with whom we can exchange information. For Vodafone, cooperation with the University of Maastricht means a sustainable relationship with an innovative and international educational institution".

<http://www.Vodafone.com>

AACHEN ENERGY MANAGERS

[BIZ/EDU: Aachen, August 25]

October 17 for the third time, the University of Aachen and the Aachen Global Academy (AGLAC) will be running their successful certificate program for 'Aachen Energy Managers in Electricity and Gas'. The program provides its students with far-reaching information on modern gas and electricity management. Current developments in the liberalized energy markets mean there are new requirements for the procurement and sale of electricity and gas. The Institute of Power Systems and Power Economics at the Energy Research Institute of Aachen University (RWTH) is the leading institute in this area. With Trianel European Energy Trading GmbH, also based in Aachen, the company has a substantial European base for the program. Check the website.

<http://www.aglac.de/energiemanager.htm>

BELOVO EGG PLANT GOES CHINESE

[BIZ: Bastogne, August 22]

Belovo is going to dismantle its plant in Bastogne and take the whole thing to China, where it will be reassembled to produce egg powder. Belovo S.A. has acquired a solid international reputation in Egg Science & Technology, over a period of 30 years, for its range of highly functional and healthy egg powders (egg albumen powder, whole egg powder and egg yolk powder), its portfolio of fine egg chemicals (Lysozyme, Avidin, Ovotransferrin, Phospholipids) and its successful transfer of technology to international partners. In Bastogne itself, they will be building a new plant for the same company at an ultramodern site with a high-degree added value. It will not effect employment in Belgium. It is appointed to the future, where China is on the front page every day.

(Source: Kanaalz)

<http://www.belovo.com/>

LEONI AG TO TAKE OVER KERPEN

[BIZ: Stolberg, August 17]

Last year, the Stolberg cable manufacturer Kerpen took over the production of copper data cables from Leoni Kabel GmbH. Now Kerpen is to be taken over by the MDAX exchange-quoted concern in Nuremberg. After the close of the exchange on Tuesday, Leoni AG announced that a binding declaration of intent had been signed with Kerpen. Leoni press contact informed the Aachener Zeitung that the Kerpen partners in Stolberg had signed the agreement followed by the board in Nuremberg. In the case of a successful completion of the negotiations, the complete takeover of the shares will take place on October 1. As far as the workers in Stolberg are concerned, most probably nothing will change, said spokeswoman Böll. The locations will be retained.

No other changes in management are planned. Kerpen develops, produces and runs data communications systems on copper and fiber optic cables. The company also offers special cable solutions for measurement and control engineering and industry for major projects in the area of oil exploration, refineries and major chemical plants. In Stolberg, the company employs 610 and achieved revenues, in 2004, of around EUR 100m. The Kerpen works council and the IG Metall union in Stolberg were apparently surprised by the news.

<http://www.aachener-zeitung.de>

STAKE IN AACHEN ARCADES

[BIZ: Aachen, August 17]

On August 5, TCN Property Projects GmbH & Co. KG (Düsseldorf) and AMW Projekte GmbH (Aachen), a major stakeholder in International PCM Property Projects, with its base in the Netherlands, announced a major participation in the project development company, Aachen Arkaden Real Estate GmbH; and, in consequence, in the completion of the first Aachen Arkaden shopping center. The Aachen Arkaden Real Estate project development company successfully planned and started the project in December and will now be joined by other partners.

The project is the idea of the project developer and investor Norbert Hermanns of Aachen's Norbert Hermanns holding company. In TCN, the Aachen developer has found an experienced and competent partner. The scheduled completion and opening date in the fall of 2007 means that TCN Property Projects and Aachen Arkaden will have to keep to a tight schedule. The work on the project by the architects Gerkan Marg and Partner (GMP) has started and will be completed by the end of this year. Aachen Arkaden will offer 27,000m² of rental space for retail, gastronomy, leisure and services. The rental will be run by iPC Immobilien Project Consulting GmbH in Hürth near Cologne.

<http://www.aachenarkaden.de>

WIRTH DRILLING FOR EUR 118M

[BIZ: Erkelenz, August 17]

The drilling specialist Wirth, originally founded in 1895 and based in Erkelenz, where they have been producing drilling machines and pumps since 1916, and tunnel boring machines since 1965, have EUR 118m worth of contracts on their books as of June 30. Wirth exports 90% of its production worldwide to more than 60 countries. On August 1, following a decision by the partners, Wirth GmbH and NFM Technologies in Lyon in France merged.

(Source: Aachener Zeitung)

<http://www.wirth-drilling.com/>

EVS GAINS BSKYB CONTRACT

[BIZ: Liège, August 16]

Liège-based, EVS, Broadcast Equipment, which designs media servers, with the associated control software and production networks and an early specialist in LSM (Live Slow Motion), has won a multimillion order from BskyB in the UK. The contract is for 30 XT (2) hybrid SD/HD servers for the transmission of high-definition TV pictures of the Premier League football. EVS will be releasing its H1, 2005 results on September 7

(Source: De Tijd)

<http://www.evs.tv>

BENVITEC TAKES OVER SOVAL

[BIZ: Beringen, August 16]

Group Benvitec Environmental & Industrial contractors from Beringen has taken over the Temse Soval NV, specialist in fire security, industrial pipes and industrial installations.

The takeover will diversify Benvitec, contributing to its growth; revenues are now expected to rise above EUR 25m and more than 100 employees will work for the company now.

<http://www.gomlimburg.be>

SABCA LUMMEN A400M: EUR 15M

[BIZ: Lummen, August 16]

Sabca Limburg, the Aerospace Design Technology and Manufacturing specialist - with a focus on composite-based structural components, such as airfoil skins, ribs, spars and stringers for the leading aerospace companies - is to build a new production unit in Lummen this year. This involves an investment of EUR 15m. The new unit will initially focus on the production of parts for Airbus Military's A400M – the world's most modern military transport aircraft - and composite wing parts for Falcon business jets. Productivity has risen at Sabca in recent years and the order book for Lummen reached a record of EUR 27m at end 2004, six times its revenue (the Sabca group had an order book of EUR 354m; three times its annual revenue and also a record).

<http://www.gomlimburg.be>

BULLET-PROOF LIMOS FOR SAUDIS

[BIZ: Liège, August 18]

A major Saudi delegation, headed by Colonel Hathal al Dosar has visited Liège to place an order for 20 luxury armored limousines - Mercedes limos and MR 4X4s, at an estimated cost of EUR 10m. The vehicles will come from the Liège specialist Carat Duchatelet, which also, incidentally, has an office in Moscow. Carat Duchatelet specializes in armoring/bulletproofing luxury cars of the Rolls Royce, Bentley and Mercedes class and has access to military test facilities in Spa. It employs 100 and has annual revenue of about EUR 20m - which makes the Saudi deal a big one.

<http://www.carat-duchatelet.be>

CROSS-BORDER ACQUISITIONS

[BIZ: Maastricht, August 12]

Cross-border acquisitions need a special skill and a new Maastricht-based company called Avida is exploring the market. It can now look back on a successful first year, which has involved acquisitions of family-owned businesses in Belgium (Mazout Express in Bruges, Kortrijkspetroleum in Courtrai); the establishment of a new Belgian organization for a Dutch client - the van der Sluijs Groep based in Geertuidenberg; various partner searches for French groups (Cleach & Associés based in Paris and Groupe M8 based in Gentilly), both trying to gain a foothold in the Benelux countries; and sourced deals in the Benelux countries and France for Dutch private equity players (including Planet Capital for alternative energies). Currently, the company is assisting a client with an acquisition in France in the waste management sector. Avida has also formed alliances in Belgium (AKAM in Antwerp) and France (KPDP in Paris), both focused on post merger integration management.

Avida has a tripartite approach, which combines cross-border deal making and post-deal implementation. The stages are:

1. A structured negotiating process;
2. Deal valuation;
3. Hands-on post-deal implementation.

<http://www.avidaint.com>

SOPTIM REVENUES UP

[BIZ: Aachen, August 12]

The Aachen software company Soptim AG showed a clear rise in revenues last year. The company's turnover was EUR 10.2m, 9.8% more than the previous year. Soptim employs 120 in Aachen and Essen.

<http://www.wdr.de>

WIEL ARETS' BRUSSELE POORT

[BIZ: Maastricht, August 9]

Servatius has commissioned the Maastricht architect Wiel Arets to draw up plans for the expansion of the Brusselse Poort shopping center and for the construction of 138 apartments in the old GAK office building.

At the Brusselse Poort Artsenijstraat site, the existing shopping center will be extended by adding two stories and almost 10,000m² of shopping space, and on top of that will come six stories for apartments. The current parking lot will be replaced by underground parking.

Servatius had bought the GAK office (now called UWV) a number of years ago with a view to developing it. UWV is renting the building through to the beginning of next year then staff will move to a new building in Heerlen. Servatius hopes to start work in 2008.
<http://www.limburger.nl>

BERRIES ARE GOOD FOR YOU

[BIZ: Borgloon, August 9]

Fruit growers in the Hesbaya area are satisfied with the results this year. Blueberries have produced 10% more in revenues, while blackberries brought in 40% more than last year. Raspberries didn't do quite so well and the redcurrants were stuck at an average of EUR 1.50 a kilo (that's the auction price, they generally cost twice as much in the shops). According to Eddy Bal from the auction in Borgloon (where most Belgian soft fruit is sold), the sector regards it as being a good year overall.

Blueberries are 'in' at the moment because they are regarded as being good for cancer and Alzheimer's disease because of the anthocyanins in the berries. The same substance is found in strawberries, cherries, and redcurrants, but the concentration is highest in blueberries. Borgloon auction sells 98% of Belgium's blueberries, which are grown in Belgian North Limburg because they need acid sandy soil. The loess soil in South Limburg is too heavy for blueberries. There are four growers who have been in the market for 15 years and this year they are dealing with 170 tons of blueberries, which is about the same as last year but prices are higher.

<http://www.hbvl.be>

TRIANEL EWMR PORTFOLIO

[BIZ: Aachen, August 9]

EWMR, the energy and water supply company for the central Ruhrgebiet (the city works of Bochum, Witten, and Herne), has completed an agreement on its gas portfolio management for a further three years with Trianel European Energy Trading GmbH from Aachen.

In the terms of the agreement, Trianel will manage the portfolio of around 5.5 billion kW/h, part of the gas acquisition for EWMR. This service includes a shared definition of the strategy for gas procurement, daily market analysis by Trianel, advice to EWMR, and where required gas acquisition and the organization of gas transport by Trianel. Both businesses are continuing their strategic partnership, which has also included portfolio management with Trianel for the last two years. This portfolio management contract is a further step in the development of the Trianel group's portfolio management activities, which in 2004 accounted for services covering 4.8 billion kW/h.

<http://www.trianel.com>

AMOS SATELLITE SIMULATOR

[BIZ/SCI-TECH: Liège, August 8]

A vast cylindrical testing chamber, 10m long and 7.5m in external diameter, one of the biggest of its type in the world, is being shipped in five parts by Amos SA (Advanced Mechanical and Optical Systems) from the Renory terminal in Liège. It will pass through Antwerp on its way to India where the testing vessel will be used by the Indian Space Research Organization (ISRO).

The vessel is a custom-made satellite-testing simulator that is designed to determine how a satellite will function in the vacuum of outer space at temperatures of -180°C . The key issue in the current operation is mechanical viability.

This is another major contribution to international space exploration by the Liège-based aerospace company, Amos, with Ateliers de la Meuse as its manufacturing contractor. Amos has been involved in the Mars probes and the exploration of comets -all part of the highly differentiated Liège-based satellite service sector, which is becoming increasingly attractive in a commercial sense.

<http://www.amos.be>

WALLOONS GO DUTCH

[BIZ/LEI: Brussels, August 5]

The Walloon region is going to use additional funds to promote the region among the Flemings and the Dutch - the most important visitors to the region. The Walloon country wants to see more of them and the government is hoping that the private sector will also contribute to the campaign.

<http://www.kanaalz.be>

CROMBACH AT AVANTIS

[BIZ: Aachen/Heerlen, August 5]

The cross-border European Science and Business Park at Avantis, situated between Germany and The Netherlands, has welcomed a new business on board. This is HJ Crombach, a Dutch company from Voerendaal, specializing in heating and plumbing installations and also covering insulation, climate control, fire protection and acoustics. The company is taking over the former Isotis building. Isotis went public and was taken over by a Swiss biotech partner.

Crombach is planning extensive refurbishment of the 2,300m² building. The company will be ready for business within six months. Crombach follows Solland Solar Energy, a Dutch/German solar cell producer. It is the sixth new company for Avantis and the climate for further acquisitions looks good.

<http://www.avantis.org>

WESTEND AACHEN VOIP

[BIZ: Aachen, August 4]

The Aachen internet provider Westend has started a VOIP (Voice Over IP) internet telephony service. Conversations via a DSL link will be possible without a 'normal' telephone connection. The service is being introduced in Aachen and Würselen.

<http://www.westend.com/voip>

HEINSBERG AHEAD OF THE GAME

[BIZ: Düsseldorf, August 2]

There has been a good deal of regional differentiation in economic development in the state of North-Rhine Westphalia since 2003, according to a recently revealed publication of regional economic data of the State Statistical Office (SSO). The SSO report says that business in Essen has improved by 4.7% against last year — this is the best performance state wide; the worst was Bonn, which fell by 7.2%.

On the investment front, Düsseldorf recorded 11.2% and Heinsberg, in the Aachen region, showed an investment level of 26.3%; on a statewide basis the average was 16.8%. Thus, Heinsberg is tops.

<http://www.aachener-zeitung.de>

IJSBOERKE TAKES OVER MIO

[BIZ: Liège, August 2]

The Liège ice cream manufacturer Mio has been taken over by the Flemish group Ijsboerke, which had 16% of the ice cream market in Belgium last year, coming second only to Ola. The Flemish company has bought all the shares in the Liège company. Mio made various types of ice cream with chocolate coatings and also produced the well-known Daskalides chocolate brand. The company was started more than a century ago by Antoine Marziale and was taken over by the Frenchman Vidal Ortis. It went through restructuring in 2002.

The new owners will issue a statement on the workforce prospects within three months.

(Source: Belga, RTC)

<http://www.rtc.be>

FEV: NEW SITES AND CAPABILITIES

[BIZ: Aachen/Auburn Hills, Michigan, August 1]

FEV Engine Technology has expanded its Detroit-area facilities with the addition of two new powertrain test sites at the company's North American headquarters in Auburn Hills, Michigan. The two test areas bring the total number of fully instrumented engine-development sites to 18.

Representing an investment of more than USD 2m, the new sites are fully equipped to conduct engine performance, fuel-economy, mechanical and emissions-development testing for diesel, gasoline and alternative-fuel powertrains.

"We continue to expand our facilities in response to increased demand from new and existing customers," said Gary Rogers, president and CEO. "We now have more than 200 employees in Michigan, an increase of nearly 15 percent in the past 12 months."

<http://www.fev.com>

JUMBO MAINTENANCE FROM NUTH

[BIZ: Nuth, August 1]

The Dutch-based wide body line maintenance specialists Direct Maintenance in Nuth has received approval from the Civil Aviation Authorities of The Netherlands to expand its European Aviation Safety Agency (EASA) Part-145 approval with the B747-400 and the DC10. This expanded Part-145 will allow Direct Maintenance to provide line and transit maintenance at Amsterdam-Schiphol Airport to operators of the following aircraft types: B747-200/300 (all engine types), B747-400 (all engine types) and DC10 (GE engines).

According to Roger Meels, Director Technical Services: "Since we received our initial EASA Part-145 approval over a year ago, we have noticed a particular interest in the level of service we are providing. Clients flying wide bodies into Amsterdam from the US, Asia, and Europe have been supported to their full satisfaction, and we have also deployed our activities to several other locations worldwide. Adding the B747-400 and the DC10 to our Scope of Work will allow us to reach a larger client base that can also benefit from our dedication, professionalism, and customer focus in wide body line maintenance."

For the future, Direct Maintenance will continue to investigate adding other aircraft types to the approval pursuant to market requirements and deploying line maintenance services to other airports within or outside Europe.

<http://www.directmaintenance.nl>

LOGISTICS AND INFRASTRUCTURE

ARROW DEVICE LOGISTICS

[LOG/LIFE-SCI: Tongres, September 3]

Arrow International (Reading, PA) develops and manufactures catheters and related medical products and has set up a logistics center in Tongres, close to other US companies (Black and Decker, Avnet, Evapco and Bose). The company combines technology and product innovation to extend the use of catheterization for the diagnosis and treatment of critically ill patients. Arrow disposable critical care catheterization products are used principally to access the central vascular system for administration of fluids, drugs and blood products. These products are also used for patient monitoring and diagnosis. The Company's Cardiac Assist Division is focused on mechanical devices that support the heart such as Intra-Aortic Balloon (IAB) Pumps and Catheters.

(Source: www.investinlimburg.com - undated)

<http://www.arrowintl.com>

MALAYSIA AIRLINES TO MAA

[LOG: Maastricht, August 4]

Malaysia Airlines is coming to Maastricht Aachen Airport (MAA) from September 3, providing a regular service to China and Southeast Asia. They will be flying three cargo flights per week to the airport from Kuala Lumpur in Malaysia and Hangzhou in China — Hangzhou is 150km from Shanghai.

Malaysia Airlines will be using Boeing 747 jumbos for the new services. The three flights have been moved from Amsterdam Schiphol Airport to MAA. The reason given for this is that Maastricht Handling Services provides a rapid and inexpensive service; another reason is the distance to the markets. The southeast of the Netherlands is the focus of European distribution centers and in recent years almost all the large carriers have established offices at MAA.

<http://www.maa.nl>

ACTIVITY AT LIEGE AIRPORT

[LOG: Liège, August 1]

Since June, Cielos del Peru has been carrying out two flights per week between Liège, Lagos and Nairobi. The flight frequency has doubled since November. Emirates is planning five flights a week from September between Dubai, Istanbul and Liège. In May 2006, the accumulated activities of these two companies should raise the cargo tonnage at Liège to a level beyond that achieved in 2004 (382,325 tons). There could also be good news on the horizon in respect of low cost passenger flights. As a footnote to this story, a recent report in 'Dagblad De Limburger' noted that Cielos del Peru had not received a permit to fly from Nairobi to Maastricht Airport.

<http://www.liege4logistics.com>

UM, AZM & DSM: 'BIOTERIALS'

[LIFE-SCI: Maastricht, September 6]

Maastricht University and DSM: two of Limburg's biggest employers are neighbors. And yet, until recently, they were two completely separate worlds. About a year ago, that changed when Jo Ritzen (president of the UM Executive Board) and Jan Zuidam (vice-president of the DSM Board of Directors) talked about the options for strategic cooperation. This was the right time for both parties, as DSM had been working on a major change of strategy and has elected to focus on the life sciences since 2000. The result, with the participation of the university hospital (AZM) and CARIM, its world-famous cardiovascular research institute, is a cooperative project that will carry out research along three lines under the Biotericals' heading for a period of three years. Professor Leo Koole, Professor Extraordinary for Biomaterials was appointed project leader for UM.

The first research project focuses on the development of a new implant for local administration of medicines in the heart muscle. This can be used to regulate the cardiac rhythm of the patient with precision, for example after heart surgery. This can for example prevent a very common complication in bypass operations, post-operative auricle fibrillation.

In the second project new materials will be developed for application in heart-lung machines. This will meet the need for prolonged use of heart-lung machines in (sub-) acute heart failure. Blood can stream through a heart-lung machine up to a maximum of 24 hours. After that period of time coagulation or breakdown of red blood cells (haemolysis) occurs. The present UM knowledge about blood coagulation will be translated into new, bioactive surfaces via which the blood can stream undisturbed.

The third research project is Koole's favourite. "You see, it focuses on the treatment of a disease that has by now almost become a worldwide epidemic: diabetes. A complex syndrome with a big risk of complications. As a result of peripheral vessel problems the blood circulation of the legs is often disturbed (in medical circles known as the 'diabetic foot'). In serious cases even amputation is necessary. This can be helped when on the spot of a clogged vessel new blood vessels grow, which can take over the function of the clogged artery. Sometimes this process takes place naturally, but not in every diabetes patient."

<http://www.unimaas.nl/researchmagazine>

RFID TO TAKE OVER BARCODES

[SCI-TECH: Louvain, August 17]

IMEC, the Louvain based Flemish research center for nano-electronics and nanotechnology, has reached a breakthrough on Radio Frequency Identification (RFID - smart tags) thanks to its research into organic plastic semiconductors. This breakthrough could mean, in the longer term, the replacement of barcodes. However, the price is still too high.

RFID or Radio Frequency Identification is an electronic labeling device that stores information and transmits it by means of radio frequencies. Existing RFID tags are based on silicon and ten times more expensive than a barcode. Silicon is generally used in semiconductors in the electronics industry for the manufacture of chips, but has a relatively high price.

The August edition of the prestigious 'Nature Materials' magazine has published an article from IMEC, which proposes a solution to the problem. The new solution is an organic rectifier diode with a 150nm-thick layer of polycrystalline pentacene deposited on gold, with an aluminum top contact. This has the potential to power high frequency and ultra-high frequency passive RFID tags.

<http://www.rfidjournal.com/>

AACHEN: 'SCIENCE CITY'

[SCI-TECH: Aachen, August 9]

Aachen wants to be Germany's 'Science City' in 2007. A campaign is being put together with the universities, including the Jülich Research Center and the universities of Maastricht and Liège. Currently, Jülich boss Professor Joachim Treusch is the chairman of the selection committee.

The competition is held by the German Association for Science and the winning city provides its citizens with events, research projects, and information on science throughout the whole year. Bremen is this year's winner; next year will be Dresden's turn.

(Source: Aachener Zeitung)

<http://www.stadt-der-wissenschaft.de/start/starttag.html>

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