

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

Q1, 2004

Issue 6

February, 2004

Contents:

Chambers of Commerce

- Aachen's foreign relations
- Hanover Messe 2004
- A trip to Futurallia (Poitiers)
- Walloon-Dutch Business Club
- Bella Italia as a market
- Logistical lunch in Aachen
- Limits on cash
- Meuse-Rhine freight trains

Business and Industry

- Knowledge management
- Treating wood
- Liege Airbus engine modules
- EUR 60m for Tongres projects
- Amb assets merger: EUR 56 bn
- Flanders hi-tech marketing
- Slice of Philips for Munters
- EUR 6m cinema complex
- TV Limburg
- Docmorris for Avantis?
- New spa center
- New website for WFG
- Sinfilo to upgrade hotspots Splintex service Wildenrath
- Automatics for China
- Smart biomaterials

Logistics and Infrastructure

- Lyreco distribution center
- Exel european LLP for Terumo
- Signposts in Parkstad
- Cat opens Harley EDC

Life Sciences and Sci-Tech

- Long wavelength VCSELS
- Maastricht life science park
- Porous silicon mirrors
- Biomed booster
- Data mining for medications
- Shape-memory polymers

This project has been made possible thanks to the European Interreg III program for the Euregio Meuse-Rhine, the Région Wallonne (B), the Provincie Limburg (B) and the Land Nordrhein-Westfalen (D).



CHAMBERS OF COMMERCE

AACHEN'S FOREIGN RELATIONS

[COM: Aachen, February 10]

Over the following months the Chamber of Commerce and Industry in Aachen will host various events on the foreign trade front:

- 9. March: **GO CIS** - Individual intensive market consulting for local companies with experts from the German Chambers of Commerce in the Russian Federation, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan and the Ukraine.
- 10. March: **Quo Vadis Russia?** The German-Russian Yearbook 2003/04, with focus on Kaliningrad, will be presented. Afterwards Prof. Wjatescheslaw Daschtschew, of the Russian Academy of Sciences in Moscow, will talk about where Russia is going to (politically, economically and socially).
- 12. March: **The environmental market in Hungary** – Opportunities for German Business. Consultancy provided by the German-Hungarian Chamber of Commerce for companies in the environmental market who want to expand to the east. Presentation of projects and financial aid programs.
- 4. May: **Western Europe Conference** - Business opportunities in strong European Markets. Members of 15 German Chambers of Commerce in western Europe will give an overview of their markets and services. Good platform for information and first contacts.
- 11. May: **Prix de Charlemagne** - Ireland as a model for a successful EU-integration process. The Irish Ambassador in Germany, S E Sean O´Huiginn will talk about how Ireland managed to develop from a poor country to an economically strong EU-member-state.

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

HANOVER MESSE 2004

[COM: Maastricht, January 28]

As reported earlier there will be a dedicated Chamber flight to the world's biggest IT fair in Hanover on April 22. To participate, you must complete the registration form and submit it to reach us by February 20, 2004 at the latest. Information can be obtained by phone at 0031.43.350.6511, or by e-mail to aassink@maastricht.kvk.nl. The plane leaves at 07.30 hrs from Maastricht Aachen Airport and has been chartered by the Meuse-Rhine Chambers and will land in Hanover at about 09.00 hrs. The visit ends 20.00 hrs when the charter returns to Maastricht. The price is EUR 175.- per person, including the trip, airport tax, local transport (U-Bahn) and a guide. The admission ticket EUR 18.- and catalogue EUR 25.- are not included. The trip is supported by Interreg III funding

<http://www.maastricht.kvk.nl>

A TRIP TO FUTURALLIA (Poitiers)

[COM: Maastricht, January 28]

Futurallia is an international matchmaking event that has been held by the Chamber of Commerce in Poitiers (France) since 1990. It gives you a unique chance to have 12 targeted appointments with potential business partners over two days. The last meeting held in Quebec in 2003 led to 8,000 appointments in two days. 700 Companies with 1200 participants from 28 countries participated. Futurallia has a focus on the metalworking industry, biotechnology, IT, food processing, synthetic and performance materials, electronics, construction and engineering, graphics, technology and health products. Complete the form from the Chamber of Commerce if you want to attend and the matching procedure will be initiated by the Chamber of Commerce. Profiles appear on the Futurallia website and then you make your choice after which you receive a program in Poitiers. The program costs include three overnight stays, catering facilities, interpreter services and the organization of all the appointments. Travel expenses have to be paid by the participants individually. It is possible to make a group arrangement by TGV. The minimum number for this arrangement is ten.

<http://www.maastricht.kvk.nl>

WALLOON-DUTCH BUSINESS CLUB

[COM: Maastricht, January 28]

Bernard Piette of the Maastricht Chamber has been working behind the scenes for almost a year on the development of the Walloon-Dutch Business Club. When he moved from the Liège Chamber in 2002, one of his jobs was to set up a Walloon-Dutch club. He was and is concerned to strengthen relations between the Walloon country and Limburg and is pleased that it is about to get started. The first meeting will be held on March 10 from 16.00 –19.00 hrs and information is available from Bernard Piette on 0031.43.350.6613 or by e-mail to bpiette@maastricht.kvk.nl. The principal objective is to get people to meet one another. It is not just a question of language and culture, there is a great deal of ignorance in the Limburg business community about what is going on in Liège. There are all sorts of opportunities, logistics with Liège airport and Europe's second largest in-land port is an example, but there is a great deal more. It is a two-way street, because Walloon business is ignorant of Limburg too. A think-tank has been set up with the Liège Export Club and ten people in the border area will be running the program and coming up with new ideas. Among the ten are the Belgian Consul in Maastricht P.Schols and former RTBF journalist Henk Heuberger.

<http://www.maastricht.kvk.nl>

BELLA ITALIA AS A MARKET

[COM: Maastricht, January 28]

A business-matching trip to Italy from May 9 through 12. The project is concerned with entering the Italian market and costs EUR 2,900 excluding travel and hotel expenses. There are circumstances which give access to a 50% subsidy on these costs (PSB). The idea is to make matching appointments with businesses in northern Italy. Italy have 57.6 potential consumers and is a major market close at hand. For a few years, the Netherlands has been third in the rankings of exporters to Italy with a turnover of EUR 14bn. Areas of interest are engineering machine building, transport, chemicals, pharmaceuticals, electrical and electronic goods as well as fashion and design. If you are interested, the Chamber will make up a free program for you with your assistance on March 3 or 4. Contact is by email to aassink@maastricht.kvk.nl or by phone 0031.43.350.6511.

<http://maastricht.kvk.nl>

LOGISTICAL LUNCH IN AACHEN

[LOG: Aachen January 22]

Meuse-Rhine's Chambers of Commerce are organizing a 'Euregional Entrepreneursmeeting LOGISTICS' in Aachen, on March 26, 2004. This is a chance to develop new business contacts with business in the Euroregion. The meeting is targeting carriers, movers, barge skippers, service companies and representatives of rail, port and airport authorities. The luncheon will provide participants with the opportunity to exchange ideas. For further information please contact your local chamber.

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

LIMITS ON CASH

[COM: Hasselt, December 11]

The Belgian parliament has decided that cash payments above EUR 15,000 are no longer to be permitted. This also includes payments to lawyers and diamond merchants, who are now required to report transactions to the Department of Financial Information (CIF), which is concerned with detecting money laundering that is the result of criminal activity. Among those specifically concerned are diamond dealers, insurance brokers and lawyers and people selling objects of great value (art, antique, diamonds). In the purchase of a house, only ten per cent deposit may be made in cash, the rest must be by cheque, bank transfer or credit card.

<http://www.hbvl.be>

MEUSE-RHINE FREIGHT TRAINS

[COM: Maastricht, November]

A report in the Maastricht Chamber News says that the petrochemicals company SABIC has sent a freight train with 20 containers from Geleen via Aachen to Italy by way of experiment. This experiment was established with the assistance of the railway companies in Belgium, the Netherlands and Germany and various authorities, including the Province of Limburg (NL), the Cologne region, a working group on rail cargo in Meuse-Rhine and various other institutions, such as the Aachen Chamber.

Sabic, which produces raw materials for plastics in Geleen, wanted to know if it could save time and money by using rail. The other parties were interested in the effects of traffic flows. Normally 50 trucks are necessary to carry this material on the A76 and A4 to Cologne and to discharge the bulk cargoes at the transit station into train tankers. As these highways are already congested carrying 70,000 vehicles daily, including 20% road cargo, they are among the busiest in Germany and, despite the plan for a 6-lane highway, the problems are still considerable.

Through 2015, an increase of 60% is expected, so a gridlock would appear inevitable: reason enough to get the trucks off the road. The experiment would appear to be successful and it is clear that there is still sufficient rail capacity and that cooperation between the authorities and business can produce results. The fact that Sabic saves on rail transport emerged from the project. There are also opportunities for forwarders and businesses in Meuse-Rhine. Infrastructure and transfer facilities need improvement, but this is clearly a start in making rail competitive with road.

<http://www.kvkkrant.nl/>

BUSINESS AND INDUSTRY

KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT

[BIZ:/SCI-TEC: Maastricht, December 25]

Sopheon has its European research headquarters at the heart of Maastricht's burgeoning science city, a natural home for the knowledge management industry. The company, which now has branches in the UK and the US, started in 1993 as PolyDoc in the Netherlands.

Building on special competencies in linguistics and language management, the company developed software applications to capture, organize and access knowledge through structured authoring tools, terminology management and thesauri. One of its initial focuses was on hospital protocol management. After acquiring AppliedNet, it expanded its activities in the UK and changed its name to Sopheon.

In 2000, it made acquisitions in the US and Germany and in 2001 took over Orbital Software with its Organik technology which captures the questions and answers of knowledge workers within an organization, automatically locating the best people to answer users' questions. In 2003, it began to focus on its flagship technology Accolade. Accolade provides a complete view of a product portfolio. It enables early decision-making on which concepts to promote and which to kill, the products to fund and the types and levels of resources to invest in. It embeds best practice methodologies, guidelines and implementation support for content at each stage in development. It manages the process and strengthens innovation.

On the Dutch front in Meuse-Rhine, the company has been instrumental in DSM patents submissions and the University Hospital's (azM) protocol management. It has worked with Vodafone UK and Sappi and is advancing its system for clinical trials management at the heart of what is to be a major life sciences campus. Local boss Dr Huub Rutten has got his network ticking over and is tuning up his compliance monitor for future triumphs.

<http://www.sopheon.com>

TREATING WOOD

[BIZ: Susteren, December 23]

Inverdo Packaging from Susteren is prepared for changes on the wooden packaging market. From January 1, there is to be change in the regulations governing the use of wood in packaging. If you send materials in wooden boxes to the US, Canada or Mexico, Australia or China the wood must be treated before shipping. Inverdo in Susteren produces custom-made boxes, which were previously entirely of wood but are now in multiplex board. Sixty percent of the goods that they pack go to the US, Canada and Mexico. This is why, this company has a focus on the proper treatment of the material ensuring that vermin and molds do not travel with the wood. Wood has to be gas or heat-treated before it can be processed. The package then needs phytosanitary certification. Inverdo does not need this certificate, because its materials meet the requirements. The company was able to develop its new products with the assistance of Syntens, specialists in SME innovation.

<http://www.inverdo.nl>

LIEGE AIRBUS ENGINE MODULES

[BIZ: Liège, December 18]

Techspace Aéro (shareholders: SNECMA with 51%, the Walloon Region with 30% and Pratt & Whitney 19%), which is based at Milmort near Liège and employs 1200, has delivered the first GP 7000 engine modules for the next A 380 Airbus to Pratt & Whitney's program managers. The company presented the first low pressure compressor and front bearing compartment for the test engine which will be fired up on the testing bank in the first quarter of 2004.

Techspace Aéro signed the contract in 2002 to develop modules for Pratt & Whitney and they will form 7.5% of the total engine. The A 380 is expected to fly with the GP 7000 engine on November 9, 2005. Currently, 130 A 380s have been ordered by the airlines, 61% of which will be equipped with the GP 7000 engine. The run is projected to last 4 to 5 years and will involve 100 engines annually.

<http://www.lameuse.be>

EUR 60M FOR TONGRES PROJECTS

[BIZ/LEI: Tongres, December 17]

The city of Tongres is receiving EUR 12,500 from the Flemish Minister of Tourism Renaat Landuyt to develop a strategic plan for tourism. This is intended to deal with the flood of visitors who will be coming to the city in future when the new EUR 42.3m Land van Ooit theme park starts up. 'Land van Ooit', translated by the company as 'the land of in between', perhaps better translated as 'the land of once upon a time', is a theme park for children scheduled to open in 2006 and covering 34,000 m². There is also to be an extension to the Gallo-Roman museum in Tongres and extra museum space. The Flemish government has already allocated EUR 3.88m via LRM, the Limburg Development Company, for the extension of this, with an additional 3,000 m² building. The new wing is scheduled to open in 2006. In the same year, the Basilica in Tongres is to be upgraded and an underground museum is planned. It looks like 'big Bucks' (close to EUR 60 million for Belgium's oldest city.

<http://www.hbvl.be>

AMB ASSETS MERGER: EUR 56 BN

[BIZ: Aachen/Cologne, December 17]

Both asset management companies of the Aachen-base AMB Generali Group, AM Generali Invest Kapitalanlagegesellschaft mbH and AMB Generali Finanzanlagen-Management GmbH, the internal asset management company of the group, have been merged into AM Generali Invest Kapitalanlagegesellschaft mbH backdated to July 1, 2003 (pursuant to an incorporation document dated November 14, 2003).

Accordingly, in addition to roughly EUR 6.6 bn in the 15 mutual funds and the 27 'Spezialfonds' AM Generali Invest has now direct assets of EUR 49 bn under management. With a total of EUR 56 bn assets under management AM Generali Invest is among the leading asset management companies in Germany.

<http://www.amb.de>

FLANDERS HIGH-TECH MARKETING

[BIZ: Hasselt, December 17]

Flanders Multimedia Valley (FMV) has been a success, but has come to the conclusion, together with lot of high-tech operations, that marketing skills are not the forte of high-tech people. FMV wants to do joint research on this problem with the Limburg University Center (LUC). A technology marketing focus to assist the IT sector in marketing is starting at the site linked below, where a technology marketing poll has been held. FMV, VIGC (the graphics innovation center), VSP (the Flemish Software platform) and Medianet are asking all technology companies to take part in this. The launch of the enquiry was, in any event, a success and, in the first few days, FMV noted that more than ten companies had completed the questionnaire each day. This enquiry is just the first part of multimedia research and, in the long term, this website is to develop into a source of information for the Flemish multimedia sector. At present there is a survey of all sectors of study by FMV in the last few years with some interesting results.

<http://www.multimediarsearch.be>

SLICE OF PHILIPS FOR MUTERS

[BIZ: Aachen, December 12]

Muters Euroform, the world leader in humidity control, wants to take over 12,000 m² of the Philips site in Aachen, Rothe Erde. This is a quarter of the LG Philips Displays site - where Philips is downsizing. Muters which produces products and services for water and fire damage restoration, dehumidification, humidification and air cooling for the insurance, utilities food, pharma and electronics industries, employs 100 and would also like to take over 15 staff from Philips, whose plant will be closing down next year.

<http://www.wdr.de>

EUR 6M CINEMA COMPLEX

[BIZ: Genk, December 12]

The former mine site at Winterslag in Genk is to be the location for a new cinema complex with seven auditoriums and seating for 1800. The Senden cinema group from Lanaken is investing EUR 4.5m in the project and the municipality of Genk is adding EUR 1.5m. The complex should open in 2005.

<http://www.brf.be>

TV LIMBURG

[BIZ: Maastricht, December 11]

TV Total and TV Sittard, TV stations that have already merged, are going to cooperate with TV Limburg in Hasselt and from January they will all be operating under the name of TV Limburg. MD Wim Claessen and his Belgian colleague Ernest Bujok released this information yesterday. The idea is to better inform Limburgers about what is going on in the Euroregion. TV Limburg is arriving precisely at the right time, according to Claessen. Bujok adds that L1 is the dominant player in the market and that cooperation between TVT and TV Sittard must be a good thing. Both stations are going to exchange news and cooperate at a commercial level.

Plans have still to be finalized. 'We are going to acquire commercials for Hasselt and they will acquire commercials for us. This must provide EUR 200,000 – EUR 300,000 extra per year. We are also going to develop programs and train staff', says Claessen. L1 the state-supported local station has recently been put on the satellite in Europe and wants to be on the Belgian cable. Deputy Odile Wolfs (PvdA, Media Affairs) is pleased with the prospect, on the understanding that TV Limburg in Hasselt can also be received on the Dutch side of the border. A meeting with all parties involved in this was held on December 10, at the Province in Maastricht.

An earlier attempt to exchange programs did not succeed. The problem is that the program committees of Essent Kabelcom and Nutsbedrijven Maastricht did not give the legally required permission. In Belgium this type of permission is also required. It should be resolved by February 1 and then both cable networks can be linked. This costs EUR 80,000 with a EUR 60,000 annually for maintenance. 'That will have to be paid for by the province', says Odile Wolfs. (Source: Bart Ebisch).

<http://www.limburger.nl>

DOCMORRIS FOR AVANTIS?

[BIZ: Luxembourg, December 11]

The European Court of Justice (ECJ) ruled on Thursday (11.XII.03) that a national prohibition on the sale of non-prescription medicines via the Internet breaches EU law. This means that The Internet pharmacy, DocMorris, in Landgraaf (see issues 20 & 58) is free to do business. Rumor has it they are contemplating setting up a call center and distribution facility at the Avantis cross-border business park. Similar Internet pharmacies based in Canada are highly active on the US market.

The Luxembourg-based court ruled that restrictions on sales by DocMorris, which has been selling medicines via the Internet to customers in both Germany and the Netherlands since June 2000, would infringe EU laws on the free movement of goods. However the ECJ ruled that only non-prescription medicines could be sold via the web "since it is impossible for adequate advice and information to be provided". Prescription medicines however remain a no-go area in this context since it would "increase the risk [of the medicines] being abused or incorrectly used".

The ECJ ruled on the case following a complaint from 'Deutsche Apothekerverband', an association of more than 19,000 pharmacists in Germany, who objected to DocMorris offering this web-based service. The European Commission from Brussels welcomed the court ruling. The judgment "shows a useful balance between the protection of human health and the internal market," said a spokesman for EU commissioner Frits Bolkestein.

<http://www.eupolitix.com>

NEW SPA CENTER

[BIZ: Spa, December 10]

A new 10,000 m² thermal center is being developed at Spa by the well-known Liège architect, Claude Strebelle. The Center is expected to receive 150,000 visitors annually and represents an investment of close to EUR 15m. Aqualis, the company set up to develop the tourism in the Verviers area, is the owner of the building. Spa Monopole is providing equipment and investing EUR 1.2m. The city is also cooperating and Eurothermes, a French company specialized in running thermal centers, which will manage the operation. (Source: Régine Kerzmann).

<http://www.lalibre.be>

NEW WEBSITE FOR WFG

[BIZ: Eupen, December 9]

The East Belgian Development Company, WFG, has launched a new website for exporters to Germany which provides information on trade fairs in Germany; on the commercial and cultural approach to the German market; it also answers questions and points to pitfalls that might be avoided. Apparently the site will also soon appear in German.

<http://www.exporthservice.be>

SINFILO TO UPGRADE HOTSPOTS

[BIZ/SCI-TECH: Hasselt, December 2]

Sinfilo, a Hasselt-based, Wireless LAN Operator makes High-Speed Wireless Internet Access available at 'hotspots' in public places such as Airports, Hotels, Conference Centers and Restaurants, using Wireless LAN technology (Wi-Fi 802.11b), which delivers speeds of up to 11Mbps.

The Company has recently concluded agreements with Selexion to market 50 Sinfilo hotspots in the retail sector (bars, restaurants, laundries etc.) and to offer reconfiguration services and with Telenet to expand and optimize the hotspot network to SMS etc.

<http://www.sinfilo.be>

SPLINTEX SERVICE WILDENRATH

[IND/BIZ: Wildenrath, November]

Splintex, specialists in the field of automotive glazing, passenger security and product quality, is supplying the smart forfour and Mitsubishi lines at NedCar in Born. It is now also setting up a 30-agent customer service center in Wildenrath in the Heinsberg district to serve the Euroregion. Its 2,800-m² location provides the know-how, service and technical advice of the Glaverbel group, a subsidiary of the Asahi Glass Company, the biggest glass producer worldwide.

<http://www.wfg-kreis-heinsberg.de>

AUTOMATICS FOR CHINA

[IND: St. Trond, November]

ZF Getriebe, the St Trond-based producer of continuously variable transmission (i.e.: automatic car transmissions), gearboxes, general transmission and components for the BMW, Rover Group among others, has won a contract for the production of 5000 transmissions from the Chinese automobile producer Saic (Shanghai Automotive Industry Corp) Chery Automobile CO. This also means 20 new jobs at the St Trond plant. The contract is part of a bigger contract between ZF and the Chinese automotive industry, dated November 11.

The former VCST Variable Transmission NV plant at St Trond was taken over in May 1998 by ZF Getriebe GmbH of Saarbrücken. With about 53,300 employees at 119 locations in 25 countries, the ZF Group is a worldwide leading automotive supplier of driveline and chassis technology. In 2002, ZF achieved a sales figure of EUR 9.2 bn. In the ranking of the biggest automotive suppliers of Germany, ZF is in third place. In the world ranking list of automotive suppliers, ZF is in place 15.

[The Saic Chery is not unlike the Chevrolet Spark though somewhat less expensive]

<http://www.zf.com/default.asp>

SMART BIOMATERIALS

[BIZ/LIFE-SCI: Aachen, November]

A subsidiary of the leading North American medical technology company C.R. Bard, Inc. and the Aachen (Germany) - based mnemoScience GmbH have reached an agreement on a strategic alliance for the development of innovative medical products.

Goal of the partnership is to jointly and successfully develop and commercialize medical products. In this case, the innovative mnemoScience technology of shape memory polymers will be used as a material platform, refined and employed as a foundation for new medical products. Due to the use of a new class of intelligent materials, the potential products will set new standards in biomedical materials applications and open decisive market advantages, for example in the field of minimal-invasive surgery.

C. R. Bard, Inc. is a leading multinational developer, manufacturer, and marketer of innovative, life-enhancing medical technologies in the fields of Vascular, Urology, Oncology, and Surgical Specialty products. The Company employs approximately 7,700 people worldwide and the worldwide acceptance of Bard's products is shown by USD 1bn in annual sales.

mnemoScience GmbH is a leading product developer and production partner for custom-made polymers with shape-memory properties. The company places its internationally protected technology platform at the disposal of selected cooperation partners in the scope of joint development activities.

According to statements from recognized studies, shape memory polymers currently offer a high potential for new and further development of products in the field of medical technology as well as in other fields. The current Frost & Sullivan market study "Smart Materials" (2002) confirmed that mnemoScience GmbH holds an exclusive position in the field of intelligent polymers with shape memory properties. A study recently performed by the highly acclaimed Life Magazine has forecast that intelligent, self-repairing materials will play a key role in the technological progress in this century.

"The future of shape memory materials has just begun, and we look forward to an increase in the significance of this new type of material with great interest. In this context, the contract settlement with C.R. Bard confirms the current technological and economical potential of the company in the biomedical field as well," said Dr. Dietmar Hellenbroich, managing director of mnemoScience GmbH, about the alliance with the C.R. Bard subsidiary.

<http://www.mnemoscience.de/>

LOGISTICS AND INFRASTRUCTURE

LYRECO DISTRIBUTION CENTER

[LOG: Liège, December 20]

The 20,000-m² distribution center, worth an initial investment of EUR 14m, to be built over the next ten years in two 10,000 m² phases with an office complex of 1,000 m² for the sales and customer service department for Lyreco. This French-based, business to business distributor of office supplies, among the world's leaders in the sector, is building at the Hauts-Sarts location (Milmort) in 2004 - not in Herstal, as had earlier been suggested. The company achieved revenues of more than EUR 1.4bn in 2002. It is active in 18 countries and employs 6,935.

<http://www.lyreco.com>

EXEL EUROPEAN LLP FOR TERUMO

[LOG: London/ Opglabbeek, December 16]

Exel, the global leader in supply chain management, has announced a significant contract with Terumo Europe NV, an affiliate of Japanese-based Terumo, a global medical technology company that develops, manufactures and markets a broad range of products and services for cardiovascular systems, angiography and cardiology systems, transfusion systems, laboratory systems and patient monitoring. The contract, worth more than GB 11m over five years, secures Exel's position as European lead logistics partner (LLP) for the company.

Terumo is the latest customer to move into Exel's healthcare campus in Opglabbeek, Belgium. From here Exel manages a dedicated stockholding and distribution service delivering direct to hospitals and wholesalers throughout Europe.

The dedicated operation within Exel's healthcare campus environment represents the completion of a successful rationalization of Terumo's European supply chain – consolidating eight separate warehousing operations into the Opglabbeek site. Stock control and inventory management will be provided through Exel's well-established warehouse management system, Unison.

Supporting the Belgian facility is Exel's Hospital Logistics Center in West London that facilitates the healthcare supply chain between hospitals and suppliers in the UK.

<http://www.exel.com>

SIGNPOSTS IN PARKSTAD

[INFRA: Heerlen, December 8]

An agreement was signed on December 8 at the Rolduc Conference Center on signposting in Parkstad Limburg. This joint project in Parkstad is the first visible project for business and citizens within the cooperative framework. The project is designed to improve efficiency and access to the 33 business parks and businesses to be found there. A numerical system will be used, allowing visitors to find their way from the national, provincial and municipal highway systems. Total cost of this program is scheduled at EUR 1.3m to be paid by Parkstad Limburg, the Province of Limburg (NL), the National Water Board and the European Fund for Regional Development (EFRD).

<http://www.parkstad-limburg.nl>

CAT OPENS HARLEY EDC

[LOG: Houthalen-Helchteren, November]

CAT Logistics has opened its European Distribution Center in Houthalen-Helchteren. CAT has leased the Maasland Beheer & Logistiek Center, a subsidiary of the Machiels group. It has been operational for a short time and CAT will have 20,000 m² of warehousing at this location. The company is responsible for the storing and distribution of Harley Davidson products for Europe, Africa and the Middle East.

<http://www.truck-business.com>

LIFE SCIENCES AND SCI-TECH

LONG WAVELENGTH VCSELS

[SCI-TECH: Aachen / Garching, December 18]

The Walter Schottky Institute (WSI), a central institute of the Munich's Technical University (TUM) has ordered a state-of-the-art AIX 200/4 MOCVD system ideally suited for complex research studies. AIXTRON's customized MOCVD systems are the key technology enabling development and manufacture of compound semiconductors and many other multi-component materials. Founded in 1986 the WSI is focused to strengthen the interaction between basic physics and semiconductor electronics research. With a total area of about 2400 m² laboratory and office space the WSI accommodates four research groups: Experimental Semiconductor Physics I, Experimental Semiconductor Physics II, Semiconductor Technology, and Theoretical Semiconductor Physics.

The Semiconductor Technology group headed by Prof. Amann concentrates on VCSELS (Vertical Cavity Surface Emitting Lasers) and edge-emitting lasers in the wavelength region up to 10µm as well as millimeter wave devices.

The WSI will utilize the new system for studies on long wavelength VCSEL layer structures with its unique Buried Tunnel Junction (BTJ). Based on the (InGa-Al) (As-P-Sb) material system, lasers with a wavelength of 1.55µm to 2.0µm will be manufactured. These devices are regarded as key components of future fiber optic communication systems. Prof. Dr. Amann comments: "We look very much forward to continue our research project on the promising Antimony compound layers with the state-of-the-art AIXTRON MOCVD equipment."

<http://www.aixtron.de>

MAASTRICHT LIFE SCIENCE PARK

[LIFE-SCI: Maastricht, December 16]

A new life science park, to be developed by the University (UM) with the University Hospital (azM), business and government in Maastricht's Randwijck district, is expected to produce 9,000 new jobs by 2014. The focus will be on supporting and marketing scientific research and setting up starter companies in biotechnology, medical technology/devices and the technology of care. The University of Maastricht sees the Science Park as more than a high-tech business park. It will be a benchmark operation. In addition to the University of Maastricht and the University Hospital, the government-funded Bio Partner Center Maastricht will participate, as will the Bio Tech Trade Center and the larger Life Sciences companies in the vicinity, such as Medtronic's Bakken Research Center, Pie Medical, Rhein Biotech/Rhein Immuno and Boston Scientific. The preparatory committee will be chaired by professor Harry Struijker Boudier of the University's Cardiovascular Department and will include Jo Ritzen, the chairman of the University Board, Jan Zuidam of the DSM Board, Professor of Human Nutrition Wim Saris, University innovation advisor Harry Fekkers and LIOF president Chris Dewulf.

Plans will be developed in cooperation with the City of Maastricht, the Province of Limburg and the Ministry of Economic Affairs. The EU has announced that the UM will be participating in more than ten research projects for which funding is available in the context of the FTP 6 Program. Each project in the coming four years will receive sums of between EUR 5m and EUR 25m to be shared among the partners. The UM share is estimated at EUR 20m. UM's successful projects are in the area of Citizens and Governance (Faculty of Cultural Sciences), Nutrition (NUTRIM research institute and Faculty of Law), Life Sciences (CARIM research institute, Brain and Behavior Institute and GROW) and World Change and Eco-systems (the ICIS institute). Earlier this month, the UM saw 11 of its 17 research proposals accepted in the areas of cardiovascular diseases, nutrition and sustainable development.

<http://www.unimaas.nl>

POROUS SILICON MIRRORS

[LIFE-SCI: Jülich/Perth, Australia, December 16]

A biodegradable porous silicon mirror has been developed at Jülich, which can play a role in the detection of cancer tumors, and a company called pSivida of Perth Australia has signed a licensing agreement with the Jülich Research Center to acquire rights in the use of this porous silicon mirror technology. pSivida intends to commercialize in healthcare using newly acquired BioSilicon™ diagnostic technology from pSiMedica.

pSivida thus has exclusive rights to develop and commercialize a wide range of diagnostic applications using pSiMedica's BioSilicon. These BioSilicon mirrors are the first biodegradable surfaces to have been developed and are designed to dissolve harmlessly in the body over a period of time. The mirrors consist of tiny particles of silicon etched with a nanoscale pattern of pores making them extremely efficient light reflectors. They have been designed for the early stage detection and monitoring devices for diseases such as cancer.

This is achieved by the application of a selective tumor antibody. Cancers such as prostate and colorectal release chemical markers into the bloodstream as they progress. These markers can be monitored using the porous silicon mirror particles and measuring the reflected light from a simple handheld low power laser.

<http://www.fz-juelich.de>

BIOMED BOOSTER

[LIFE-SCI: Maastricht, December 12]

The Province of Limburg (NL) has approved the grant of EUR 600,000 for two years for a patent fund. This can lead to an increase in patent applications in life sciences in Limburg, which is important for life science start-ups. In addition to the province, the University of Maastricht-tUJ, the Maastricht University Hospital and the Dutch Ministry of Economic Affairs have indicated that they will participate. LIOF has taken the initiative in this plan.

The fund is also looking for contact with the expertise of DSM in this area. The patent fund will run in first instance for two years and in this period 15 to 20 patent applications must be made and a number of marketing proposals developed. If the project is continued, the proposal is that it should be self-supporting on the basis of licenses and royalties after five to six years.

<http://www.liof.nl>

DATA MINING FOR MEDICATIONS

[LIFE-SCI: Jülich, December 10]

It takes 10 to 15 years for a new medicine to get from the lab to the pharmacy. A data mining procedure has been developed by Grünenthal and partners at the Jülich Research Center to shorten this trajectory. Called GALA (Grünenthal Applied Life science data Analysis), the project is for development of a web-based tool that integrates different methods of searching chemistry databases (based on the Oracle DBMS system), visualization of 2D/3D molecular structures and properties, and data analysis, both on a 2D and a 3D representation of chemical structures.

The data analysis methods employed include statistics and a large number of data mining algorithms. As a part of the software development process novel models for data description, abstraction and manipulation are being created. Millions of substances have pharmaceutical potential, some of which only exist on paper in terms of formulae.

Computer programs such as those developed within the Gala project can sieve through the options and come up with the right matches in a much reduced period of time. Jülich experts have developed computer programs in the past three years that can detect erroneous data and discover dependencies between vast ranges of characteristics.

The scientists at the Central Institute for Applied Mathematics (ZAM) and a team from the Solid Body Physics research headed by Professor Heiner Müller-Krumbhaar are involved and Dr Wolfgang Meyers, responsible for the Gala project at ZAM says that classification in future will be pursued with the assistance of artificial intelligence methods. The project coordinator at Jülich is Dr Johannes Grotendorst.

<http://www.fz-juelich.de>

SHAPE-MEMORY POLYMERS

[SCI-TECH/IND: Aachen December 6]

Aachen's mnemoScience presented its unique polymer technology, heralding a new era of custom-made, shape-memory polymers at the Euromold trade fair (December 3rd - 6th) in Frankfurt. 'Design and Engineering' visitors were able to explore the shape-memory technology of mnemoScience and gain the information required to use these polymers in industrial applications.

Dr. Johannes Canisius gave a presentation on, "Shape memory polymers as stimuli-sensitive materials". mnemoScience also showed some fascinating video clips of the new shape memory technology at '10 years of Euromold'.

mnemoScience's activities focus on the development of a novel family of shape-memory polymers with extremely broad application potential. Independent of their present, temporary shape, these materials can also memorize a second, permanent shape. They are automatically transformed into this permanent shape when exposed to a suitable external stimulus, such as a temperature change.

<http://www.mnemoscience.de/>

©Meuse-Rhine Journal