



News Release

Essilor accelerates its expansion in Africa and Latin America and acquires CSC Labs, a major US prescription laboratory

Charenton-le-Pont, France (January 6, 2012 - 6:30 a.m.) – Essilor has further expanded its presence in fast-growing markets by signing five new partnership agreements in North Africa and Latin America.

After entering **Morocco** in 2011 through an equity interest in L'N Optic, Essilor has widened its national coverage by acquiring a 65% interest in **Optiben**, a major player in ophthalmic lens distribution, and a 65% stake in prescription laboratory **VST Lab**. With combined revenue of around €4 million and a network of 14 local branches, this base will manufacture and distribute BBGR[®]-brand products. These acquisitions will allow the Company to deploy its multi-network strategy in a market with a population of 30 million shaped by low penetration of corrective lenses and a particularly vibrant presbyopia segment.

In **Tunisia**, Essilor has signed an agreement to acquire a majority interest in prescription laboratory **SIVO** and its marketing subsidiary SICOM, both located in the central port city of Sfax. Tunisia's market leader, SIVO also operates in other North and West African markets through subsidiaries in Algeria, Morocco, Côte d'Ivoire, Togo and Cameroon. SIVO, which generated revenue of around €7 million in 2011, will continue to manufacture and distribute high value-added products in Tunisia under the Essilor[®], Varilux[®] and Crizal[®] brand names, and sell products under its own brand name in its export markets.

In **Latin America**, where Essilor is pursuing a very active partnership strategy with independent laboratories, the Company has considerably strengthened its presence in equipment with Satisloh's acquisition of a majority stake in **CM Equipamentos Ópticos de Precisão**. Based in Petropolis, Brazil, CM is active in the manufacture of ophthalmic lens surfacing machines, has nearly 90 employees and generates around €8 million in annual revenue. Combining Satisloh's technological expertise with CM's customer base will enable the Company to offer a wide range of machines, consumables and services to independent prescription laboratories throughout the region and to speed the spread of digital surfacing and coating technologies.

Essilor has also entered the **Dominican Republic** by acquiring a majority interest in **Opti Express**, a prescription laboratory with revenue of around €2.5 million that operates primarily in the Santo Domingo area.



In addition to these two new partnerships, Essilor in late 2011 set up a sales subsidiary in **Colombia**, Latin America's third-largest market with a population of 47 million. **Essilor Colombia** will be responsible for directly distributing products sold under various Essilor brands in this fast-growing market.

These various transactions, which represent aggregate annual revenue of around €21 million, give Essilor a foothold in three new countries and significantly increase the Company's exposure in these high-growth regions.

In the **United States**, Essilor has acquired a majority stake in **CSC Laboratories**, a large prescription laboratory based in Watsonville, California. Backed by leading-edge technologies, CSC has around 170 employees and generates annual revenue of close to \$32 million. It is also a distributor of the industry's major brands. This partnership will allow Essilor to enhance its positions in the San Francisco area. Lastly, Essilor has also acquired **Professional Ophthalmic Laboratories**, a company based in Roanoke, Virginia with revenue of around \$3 million.

About Essilor

The world's leading ophthalmic opticals company, Essilor designs, manufactures and markets a wide range of lenses to improve and protect eyesight. Its corporate mission is to enable everyone around the world to access lenses that meet his or her unique vision requirements. To support this mission, the Company allocates around €150 million to research and development every year, in a commitment to continuously bring new, more effective products to market. Essilor's flagship brands are Varilux[®], Crizal[®], Definity[®], Xperio[®], Optifog[™], Kodak[®] and Foster Grant[®]. It also develops and markets equipment, instruments and services for eyecare professionals.

Essilor reported consolidated revenue of more than €3.9 billion in 2010 and employs 42,700 people in around 100 countries. It operates 14 plants, 332 prescription laboratories and several research and development centers around the world.

For more information, please visit www.essilor.com.

The Essilor share trades on the NYSE Euronext Paris market and is included in the CAC 40 index.

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