



Essilor develops its global Low Vision offering with the acquisition of Humanware

Charenton-le-Pont, France (October 17, 2013) – Essilor International has announced the acquisition of a majority interest in **Technologies Humanware Inc.**, a world leader in the design and distribution of electronic assistance products for the blind and vision impaired.

Founded in 1988 and based in Drummondville, Quebec (Canada), Humanware offers a wide array of equipment that is marketed mainly in visual rehabilitation clinic networks. The company recently launched Prodigy, a two-in-one magnifier that helps the vision impaired whether they are sitting or moving about and which was awarded a Silmo d'Or gold medal at the Silmo international optics show in Paris in September. This configurable personal vision assistant combines a portable tablet and a touchscreen desktop device that automatically adapts text size and format to each user's vision. It also includes a text-to-speech feature.

Low vision concerns people whose visual acuity, after correction, is less than 3/10, meaning that the person's autonomy is limited. Due to the lack of affordable, easily accessible solutions, only around 5% of the 140 million affected people worldwide own low-vision equipment. According to demographic forecasts, some 400 million people will suffer from low vision in 2050.

Commenting on the partnership, Hubert Sagnières, Essilor Chairman and Chief Executive Officer, said: *"Helping the vision impaired to gain greater autonomy is the natural extension of Essilor's mission of enabling more than 4.2 billion individuals to enjoy a better life through better sight. Thanks to the partnership with Humanware, Essilor has taken a major step in the development of its offering of high-performance, affordable and widely distributed equipment."*

Essilor is already active in the field of low vision for several years. In cooperation with Institut de la Vision in Paris, Essilor conducted research to better understand the aging of the visual system, which is at the heart of the vision-impairment debate. Essilor has also developed lenses designed to prevent the occurrence of ocular pathologies and has begun marketing to eyecare professionals Crizal® Previa, a lens that reduces the harmful effects of blue light, which is partially responsible for age-related macular degeneration.



"We are very pleased to join Essilor, whose expertise in terms of optics and access to Eye Care Professionals distribution networks will speed the innovation process for the benefit of the vision impaired," said Gilles Pepin, Chief Executive Officer of Humanware. "Together, we will help to develop this notoriously underpenetrated market around the world."

Humanware's devices will extend the range of filtered lenses, magnifying glasses and other optical products and assistants that Essilor already sells to Eye Care Professionals. In the future, research teams from the two companies will combine their expertise in the area of portable optics and electronics solutions to design and develop new ergonomic, highly mobile equipment, such as devices that feature augmented reality technology.

With 150 employees, Humanware markets its products throughout North America and in a number of European countries, as well as in Australia and certain parts of Asia. Generating revenue of around 35 million US dollars, the company will continue to be led by the current management team.

About Essilor

The world's leading ophthalmic optics 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 more than €150 million to research and innovation every year, in a commitment to continuously bring new, more effective products to market. Essilor's flagship brands are Varilux®, Crizal®, Definity®, Xperio®, Optifog™ and Foster Grant®. It also develops and markets equipment, instruments and services for eyecare professionals.

Essilor reported consolidated revenue of approximately €5 billion in 2012 and employs around 50,700 people. It operates in some 100 countries with 22 plants, more than 400 prescription laboratories and edging facilities, as well as 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 Euro Stoxx 50 and CAC 40 indices.

Codes and symbols: ISIN: FR0000121667; Reuters: ESSI.PA; Bloomberg: EI:FP.

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