



Media Release

COMET confirms full-year forecast at Investor Day

FLAMATT, Switzerland – November 19, 2009. At its Investor Day held today, the **COMET Group, one of the world's leading manufacturers of systems and components for non-destructive testing, security, and semiconductors, reiterates its forecast for the second half of the year.**

The top-line results of the COMET Group in the third quarter were in line with expectations. In the Vacuum Capacitors activities, the beginning upturn in the semiconductor industry is driving a significant improvement that is reflected in continual growth in new orders over the past several months. Thus, this product area was able to return to a normal schedule after a period of reduced shifts. In the Group's non-destructive testing business, the outlook still remains subdued as a result of continuing stagnation in the automobile industry. However, various signs indicate that the sector has reached the bottom of its trough. The Group's book-to-bill ratio in October was 1.03.

The restructuring projects in the COMET Group are progressing as planned. All workforce adjustments are now completed. The integration of the Feinfocus activities previously located in Hannover-Garbsen was accomplished as early as the end of October, upon completion of a new facility in Hamburg. The relocation of the generator business to Flamatt will, as planned, be concluded by the end of the year and forms the basis for the further development of the integrated X-ray source. These cost-reduction measures are generating annualized savings of CHF 9 million to 10 million.

For the second half of 2009 the management continues to expect sales in excess of the level of the first six months, and within the earnings result there will be no further significant one-time expenses for restructurings or for staff measures. The lower cost base now achieved by the streamlining measures taken will probably permit a profit to be recorded at EBITDA level in the second half of the year.

With its growth initiatives in the product areas of RF modules, e-beam, high voltage X-ray modules and computed tomography, the COMET Group remains on track to win additional market shares and open up new markets.

For example, the Vacuum Capacitors business was successful in recent months in winning further designs for RF modules with well-known semiconductor equipment manufacturers and thus expanding its market shares in this segment. Likewise, in the solar market, attractive projects were won with key accounts.



With e-beam technology, COMET was able to distinguish itself in the prestigious Swiss Technology Awards competition, taking first place among more than 40 contenders. By virtue of e-beam's many potential applications, this is a cutting-edge technology with great promise for the future. The application for which e-beam development has progressed furthest to date is sterilization. The market launch for this application together with industrial partners is planned for 2011.

The relocation of the generator activities from Hamburg to Switzerland has set the stage for the aggressive further development of the X-ray tube into an integrated X-ray source and thus for realizing promising future potential. In this way, COMET aims to significantly increase its market share in X-ray generators in the medium term.

In the Systems division, COMET sees further growth potential in computed tomography (CT). In this market segment as well, which is growing at rates in the double digits and in which COMET today has an approximate market share of 10 percent, the goal is to achieve, through innovative CT methods, a significant expansion in market share over the next several years.

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Key dates

Press conference marking the publication of the annual results for 2009

April 1, 2010

The COMET Group is one of the world's leading manufacturers of systems and components for non-destructive inspection, security and semiconductor manufacturing. Since acquiring the YXLON group, COMET has been the global market leader in X-ray-based non-destructive testing and examination. Based on the core competencies of vacuum technology, high voltage engineering and materials science, as well as the core products of X-ray tubes and vacuum capacitors, COMET supplies a complete and highly flexible range of components, modules, systems and services from a single source.

COMET was founded in 1948 and is based in Flamatt near Berne, Switzerland. The COMET Group today has a presence in all world markets. The company manufactures in Switzerland, Germany and Denmark and maintains subsidiaries in the USA, China and Japan. The business segments are reflected in divisions for OEM and end-customer business. COMET's stock (COTN) is traded on the SIX Swiss Exchange.

COMET – Technology with passion.

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