



Press Release

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iXEN and Barclays Private Equity sell Maisons du Monde as part of a secondary LBO

Barclays Private Equity and iXEN have sold the group Maisons du Monde to a new dual partnership comprised of funds managed by LBO France and Apax Partners. CIC, Calyon, Natixis and Euromezzanine, partners in the first LBO, will finance the operation with senior and mezzanine debts. "Private Equity funds are always able to find financing for excellent assets such as Maisons du Monde", stated Gonzague de Blignières, President of the Barclays Private Equity France Executive Board.

The new investors will now back the Group, which intends to pursue its strategy of expanding its network in France and accelerating duplication of its model abroad: "Maisons du Monde has firmly established itself as the leading name in youthful styles for the home; as a minority re-investor in the secondary LBO, iXEN is very pleased to be continuing the adventure and, on behalf of the Group, backing the ambitions of an exceptional entrepreneur such as Xavier Marie", stated Caroline Rémus, General Manager of iXEN Partners.

Maisons du Monde is a distribution chain specialising in home décor and furnishings. Established in 1996 by Xavier Marie, the Group has experienced strong growth and now has close to 2,200 associates and 175 wholly-owned stores, and posted consolidated sales of €233 million at the end of December 2007.

With chains in France, Belgium, Spain and Italy, Maisons du Monde has opened more than 40 stores and doubled its EBITDA (€48 million at 31/12/2007) since its majority takeover in July 2005 by Barclays Private Equity France and iXEN funds, alongside Xavier Marie and his team.

Backed by an original concept and a strong position in the world of home décor, the success of Maisons du Monde is primarily due to the company's ability to offer an ever-changing line of products, as demonstrated by the incredible growth of its furniture line, which was highlighted in 2006 in its exclusive catalogue.