



## Canon acquires 17% stake in I.R.I.S. Group

***Investment to create long term commercial opportunities for both companies  
in document solutions***

**Louvain-la-Neuve, July 16, 2009** – I.R.I.S. Group, listed on Euronext Brussels and specialised in Intelligent Document Recognition<sup>1</sup>, in electronic Document, Content and Process Management<sup>2</sup> and in optimised IT infrastructure<sup>3</sup>, announces that Canon, via its subsidiary Canon Europa NV, world-leader in imaging solutions, has acquired a 17% stake (314,790 shares) in the group for approximately €22 million.

The stake now held by Canon includes I.R.I.S. Group shares previously held by Sofinim NV (a subsidiary of Ackermans & van Haaren NV - AvH), Compagnie à Nationale de Portefeuille SA (CNP), and approximately 60% of the I.R.I.S shares which were held by Pierre De Muelenaere and Etienne Van de Kerckhove, who will remain the co-CEOs of the I.R.I.S. Group.

Two directors from Canon will join the I.R.I.S Group board, replacing the two directors currently representing AvH and CNP. The two existing independent directors will remain in place and a new third independent director will also be appointed.

Canon is committed to developing its existing business partnership with I.R.I.S. on an EMEA basis, in the area of products and solutions sales. Such as providing its customers with an expanded portfolio of solutions for large volume scanning and indexing, document compression and OCR (optical character recognition), invoice recognition, digital mailroom, forms and free forms extraction. In addition, Canon is also interested in the expertise of I.R.I.S in large scale ECM solutions projects, particularly in pan European accounts.

Ryoichi Bamba, President & CEO of Canon Europe explains: *“We are looking forward to developing a closer commercial relationship with such a talented company. I.R.I.S and Canon share a belief in the importance of R&D, and a complementary approach to the strategic development of products and solutions for the document solutions market. Investment in the solutions business is part of our long term strategy and through future collaboration we are confident both companies will increase the value of the services and solutions we can offer to our customers.”*

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<sup>1</sup> **IDR (Intelligent Document Recognition)** : automatic recognition of the content of structured documents (forms) or non-structured documents (free-forms, invoices, incoming mails,...)

<sup>2</sup> **DCPM (Document, Content & Process Management)** : abbreviation used to designate technologies used for Intelligent Document Recognition (IDR), Electronic Document Management (EDM), Electronic Content Management (ECM), and Business Process Management (BPM)

<sup>3</sup> **Optimized IT infrastructure** : best-in-class architecture for servers and storage, including consolidation and virtualisation

Pierre De Muelenaere, co-CEO, I.R.I.S. Group declares: *"I founded I.R.I.S. in 1987, with the financial and managerial support of AvH. Over the last 10 years, (the I.R.I.S. IPO took place in 1999), I maintained my stake in I.R.I.S. Group practically unchanged. I have now decided to sell 60% of my shares to Canon, who will be an excellent commercial partner and shareholder of I.R.I.S. and will nicely complement our other quality shareholders. I will remain the largest non-corporate shareholder in I.R.I.S. Group, still totally committed to the success and development of this company in the years to come. With the arrival of Canon, I would like to thank CNP and AVH for having supported the growth of I.R.I.S. and passing the torch to an industrial partner who will further help develop the company"*

Etienne Van de Kerckhove, co-CEO, I.R.I.S. Group declares: *"I am very happy and proud that Canon is willing to further develop its relationship with I.R.I.S. Arrangements are in place to maintain the independence of the company, so allowing maximum flexibility, autonomy and ability to grow the business with all our existing partners. I.R.I.S. has been successful for many years, thanks to the confidence of our customers and business partners, and thanks to the dedication and commitment of our managers and teams. With the assistance of all our teams, I will continue to work hard to grow this company further, to the benefit of all our stakeholders."*

**About I.R.I.S. - [www.iriscorporate.com](http://www.iriscorporate.com)**

**I.R.I.S.' mission** is to increase our customers' productivity and knowledge through helping them better manage their documents, data and information.

**I.R.I.S. Products & Technologies** develops technologies and products for Intelligent Document Recognition and markets its portfolio on a worldwide basis through strong partnerships.

**I.R.I.S. Professional Solutions** enables companies and administrations to find in one company the innovative expertise and hi-tech solutions to efficiently manage documents, information flows and IT infrastructure.

In 2008, the revenue of I.R.I.S. Group was 109.325.772 €.

I.R.I.S. has more than 600 employees based in Louvain-la-Neuve, Brussels and Antwerp (Belgium), Orly (France), Windhof (Luxemburg), Amsterdam and Maastricht (The Netherlands), Aachen (Germany), Delray Beach (USA), Hong-Kong (China) and Oslo (Norway).

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**About Canon Europe**

Canon Europe is a subsidiary of Canon Inc. of Japan, a world-leading innovator and provider of imaging solutions for individuals and businesses.

The main business focus for Canon Europe is in two clearly defined markets: Business Solutions (developing IT products, solutions and services for the office and professional print environments) and Consumer Imaging (photo, video, printers, scanners, fax machines and multifunction devices).

Canon Europe also provides Industrial Products including broadcast lenses, semiconductor and medical equipment.

Canon Europe employs over 11,000 people across Europe, the Middle East and Africa (EMEA).

Further information about Canon Europe is available at: [www.canon-europe.com](http://www.canon-europe.com)

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