

P R E S S R E L E A S E

THE GROUP ALTITUDE EXPANSION ON AN INTERNATIONAL LEVEL

The group ALTITUDE, the first worldwide manufacturer of barometers for boats, is also the inventor of the world leading radio compass AXIUM.

Since 1991, the company is headed by Mr Jean-Louis Dabrowski, with an absolute vision for expansion.

Jean-Louis Dabrowski, an experienced navigator, graduated economic expert with MBA of the group HEC, managed previously with success the operations and the marketing segments of two large French companies. He is currently also president of URIMEC (Industrial Association of the Mechanical and Microtechnology Companies with over 1'500 companies and over 80'000 employee members). Mr Dabrowski serves as well as vice president of the Chamber of Commerce of the region Doubs/France.

The group operates in Morteau (France) two production sites with a surface of approx. 7000 m². In these two facilities over 6'000 individual products are manufactured and assembled daily. Half of this production is exported, mainly targeted for the American market. The US sale reached already 12% of the total company sales.

The steadily growing sales in France as well as on the international level let Altitude become the world leader of these markets. With the innovative and creative company philosophy several new products have been launched over the past years:

- 1996 : New generation of radio compass
- 1997 : The first recorder barometer completely electronic
- 1998 : The first electronic barometer for navigation purposes
- 1999 : New technology "HI-SENSITIV" for high precision barometers

The sales of the products are specially arranged with exclusive dealers and sales focus points. The packing is multilingual and special sales displays in an interactive fashion enhance the sales to represent the trademark BAROSTAR and VION on the market. Both trademarks are targeted to be the world leading brands for this kind of product.

Due to the high quality standard of its products, Altitude serves as well as a supplier for military applications.

The closing down of the German based Kundo-Staiger company enabled Altitude to take over the world famous "SCHATZ" trademark with all its manufacturing technology. The trademark "SCHATZ" stands since 1881 for high precision in the field of marine instruments, predominately for barometers and clocks. Precision and dependability have been always affiliated with the name. Due to advanced technology, high class workmanship and tremendous know-how these products are found in many world class ships across the world. The reproduction of the "Royal Ship's Bell Clock" is a piece of legend. Precision parts and the heavy brass alloy used in combination with old tradition, proof the perfect workmanship.

The sound of the quarterly hour time keeping is the guarantee for a masterpiece. Collectors worldwide are proud of it!

No doubt, you find the trademark "SCHATZ" on many instrumentation panels of yachts and ships with high prestige throughout the world.

The group Altitude decided to continue with the production of the world famous "SCHATZ" brand and established a new production site of 400 m² at Collège 90 in La Chaux-de-Fonds / Switzerland.

The close proximity to the mother company Altitude, the local talents from the heart of Swiss watch making in La Chaux-de-Fonds will assure that the spirit of the "Swiss Made" reassures the continuation of the legend "SCHATZ". With the help of the Economic Promotion, the new production site was officially presented to the public in May 2001.

In the future, Altitude will enhance the international activities and establish the research and development for VION products in the Canton of Neuchâtel.

Indeed, the market potential and the acceptance for electronic barometers in the marine application is growing. As world novelty in 1998 at the DAME in Amsterdam (Design Award Met's) the electronic barometer was nominated and awarded. Ever since, Altitude enhances its production activities in this field.

In the year 2001, the new weather station "METEO-EXPLORER" will be launched and made available to the public. The product includes electronic outside sensors to measure the change of atmospheric pressure, humidity and temperature. The impulse is transmitted wireless via radio signal. With this system, it is for the first time possible to preview a weather forecast, for example frost warnings, up to 8 hours ahead of time.

Altitude is producing future orientated products on a high tech level with excellent quality standards combined with an added value for the finished products. Approx. 30 to 40 jobs will be created by the new establishment.

For more information, please contact:

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