

PRESS RELEASE

Dietmar Hopp Again Invests in a Heidelberg Biotech Company febit biotech gmbh Founded in April 2005

- Investors Dietmar and Oliver Hopp again engage in biotechnology.
- "febit biotech gmbh" was established in April 2005 by staff, managers and supervisory board members of the former febit ag as well as TechnoStart, one of febit's early investors.
- febit biotech gmbh takes over the febit ag assets required to continue marketing of the **geniom**[®] genetic analysis device.
- The newly founded company will also take care of existing geniom customers.
- Shipment of newly manufactured geniom systems is expected to start in summer 2005.

Heidelberg, May 19, 2005. Dietmar and Oliver Hopp again choose biotech as they invest in the newly established "febit biotech gmbh". Prof. Christoph Hettich, a lawyer of the distinguished Rittershaus law firm (Mannheim), acts as a consultant and dealmaker.

The recently founded limited liability company takes over the assets required for manufacturing and marketing of the geniom device, the primary product of the former febit ag. Current plans envisage to build a system business based on the geniom platform.

Christoph Hettich: "This investment is an integral part of the development of the whole Rhine-Neckar region. Investor Dietmar Hopp is one of Germany's most successful businessmen. He increasingly engages in the biotech business, and his investments will have an urgently needed positive impact in this field. Precise timing allowed us to prevent the acquisition of the geniom platform by a foreign investors from the US and Asia and to keep this promising business in the region."

geniom had been invented in the late nineties by a group lead by Dr. Fritz Stähler, former CEO of Boehringer Mannheim Diagnostics and was developed into a marketable device by febit ag founded exclusively for this purpose. In summer 2004, controversies among the investors unexpectedly forced febit ag to close down its business. The geniom platform, whose market rapidly expands by the dynamic development of genomic research worldwide, now gets the chance to start afresh.

Dr. Fritz Stähler: „Establishing a system business based on a platform like geniom has several important advantages: It is a reliable and solid approach since it includes marketing of the instrument itself plus the required consumables whose share increases with every new customer. Due to the continuous growth of the customer base, the risk of a crash remains low. Using this kind of system-based strategy, Boehringer-Mannheim built up an international diagnostics business that still leads the market as a company of the Roche group.”

With the Hopp Family, a great name adopts the geniom biosystem. **Dietmar Hopp:** “The enormous potential of this device instantly caught our interest. We see a strong association with major trends in medical research and health care. There is a growing need for development and marketing of high tech made in Germany, particularly in biotechnology.”

Shipment of the first geniom systems manufactured in the new febit facilities is planned to begin in summer.

Cord Stähler, co-founder and CEO of febit biotech gmbh: “Marketing this innovative bioanalytic system has been a major challenge. The new perspective created by the engagement of the Hopp family allows us to broaden our sales base and establish a solid business – backed by farsighted entrepreneurship.”

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Dietmar Hopp: Together with a team of four colleagues, Dietmar Hopp founded **SAP**, today’s leader in corporate software. Based in Walldorf since 1972, SAP (Systems, Applications and Products in Data Processing) currently employs roughly 30,000 people in 50 countries. In 2002, total sales of SAP software solutions amounted to 7.4 billion €. In addition, the Hopp family holds shares of several smaller companies. They established several foundations and are enthusiastic sports sponsors.

geniom[®] is an innovative DNA analysis device that relies on a uniquely versatile biochip. For the first time, **geniom** integrates biochip-based DNA synthesis and analysis in a single benchtop device located in the customer’s laboratory. The **geniom** enables the user to easily design dedicated DNA chips or load respective data into the fully automated system that uses this information for solid-phase synthesis of complex oligonucleotide arrays ready for analysis within hours.

The **Rittershaus law firm** was founded in 1969 by Prof. Gerald Rittershaus in Mannheim. Right from the start, their activities focussed on business law, particularly the comprehensive advising of companies and investors. Continuous growth made the firm one of the largest in the Rhine-Neckar area.

The technology investor **TechnoStart** from Ludwigsburg concentrates on financing of seed and early stage companies that develop marketable technology platforms. The TechnoStart portfolio primarily includes companies that are based on work performed in research institutes. TechnoStart favors a multitechnology approach – besides life sciences they increasingly engage in interdisciplinary projects in applied physics and new materials.

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