

Press release, 18 December 2007.

Accent Equity acquires Mont Blanc – leading manufacturer of load carriers for cars

Accent Equity 2008 is acquiring the Swedish load carrier manufacturer Mont Blanc in partnership with the company's management. Mont Blanc is one of the world's leading manufacturers of different types of load carriers such as roof racks, roof boxes, bicycle holders etc. for both the consumer market and the automotive industry. Accent is acquiring Mont Blanc from the American automotive accessories company JAC Products. Mont Blanc, with head office in Dalsjöfors, has production in Sweden and the UK. Turnover for the current year is in excess of SEK 300 million.

The acquisition of Mont Blanc is the first investment made by the Swedish mid-market private equity fund Accent Equity 2008, with a total of SEK 3.6 billion available for investments in small and medium-sized companies in the Nordic region. Since the start in the mid-1990s, Accent's five funds have invested in some 50-odd companies and divested about 40 of them with good results for the funds' investors.

After 60 years in the business, Mont Blanc is one of the world's leading manufacturers of world-class load carrier systems. The company has achieved national and international success with a strong brand that stands for quality and customer-adapted solutions.

"Mont Blanc is a company that very well meets Accent's investment criteria," says Jan Ohlsson, CEO at Accent Equity Partners who act as advisors to Accent Equity 2008. "Mont Blanc has a highly motivated management and well-positioned products featuring good design, safety and quality. We also see great potential in the form of both improved internal efficiency and growth potential on existing and new markets."

Mont Blanc's most important markets today are the Nordic countries, Germany and the UK, but the company's products are also sold via distributors in large parts of the world. For the past ten years, Mont Blanc has been a part of the American automotive accessories company JAC Products, but the company's management now looks forward to further growth on its own.

"We are happy to be participating in the acquisition together with Accent and believe that there is great potential for developing Mont Blanc organically – both geographically and in terms of products," says Per Ekholm, CEO of Mont Blanc. "With access to Accent's capital and competence we also plan to grow via acquisitions."

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Accent Equity Partners is a leading lower mid-market private equity company specializing in corporate buyouts in the Nordic region. Since the mid-nineties, the Accent team has advised six funds and carried out some 50 buyouts and 40 exits. Accent Equity Partners is an advisor to funds with a committed capital of about SEK 10 billion, of which SEK 3.6 billion is currently available for new investments. Accent invests in well-established Nordic companies with a clear potential for value creation via strong growth, operational improvements and strategic development. Further information: www.accentequity.se

Mont Blanc, founded in 1947, is one of the world's leading manufacturers of different types of load carriers for both the consumer market and the automotive industry. The company's products include roof racks, roof boxes, bicycle holders, roof rack platforms, canoe and boat holders, ski holders, dog guards and other types of accessories and special products. The head office is situated in Dalsjöfors, with production units there and in Leighton Buzzard in the UK. The company's principal markets are the Nordic countries, Germany and the UK, but Mont Blanc's products are also sold via distributors in large parts of the world. Turnover this year is projected to total more than SEK 300 million. Mont Blanc has about 200 employees. Further information: www.montblanc.se