

Media release

Cross acquires Schwab Verkehrstechnik AG

Cross, a Swiss private equity company specialising in medium-sized enterprises, has acquired a majority interest in the family business Schwab Verkehrstechnik AG, a rolling stock technology company that is the European No. 2 in railway buffers and a respected technology leader in couplers. This move settles the issue of succession and creates a solid foundation for Schwab Verkehrstechnik AG to capitalise on excellent growth opportunities in Europe.

Zurich, 21 January 2009 – Swiss private equity company Cross has acquired a majority interest in Schwab Verkehrstechnik AG (formerly Georg Fischer Verkehrstechnik AG) from Schwab Holding AG. The exclusive transaction settles the succession issue for Schwab Verkehrstechnik AG, a family business based in Schaffhausen, Switzerland, by selling the majority of shares to Cross. Schwab Holding AG will maintain close ties with the company as a minority shareholder with representation on the board of directors. The new chairman of the board of directors is Dr Michael Beck, a middle market entrepreneur in Canton Thurgau, Switzerland.

Schwab Verkehrstechnik AG specialises in the development, assembly and pan-European marketing of buffers and couplers for goods and passenger rolling stock. As goods and passenger transport across Europe increasingly shifts from road to rail, the company anticipates sustained rates of growth going forward.

With a significant share of the buffers market, Schwab Verkehrstechnik AG is number two in Europe. Its customers include rail operators such as Swiss Federal Railways (SBB), Deutsche Bahn AG and ÖBB (Osterreichische Bundesbahnen), and rolling stock manufacturers and leasers including AAE.

As a specialist niche player and technology leader in the couplers business, Schwab offers a range of solutions that are deployed as standard in both Switzerland and other European countries. Schwab's automatic couplers are used, for example, in Swiss regional trains (including SBB traction vehicles), "Turbo" regional trains, and the Cobra tram in Zurich.

Peter, Kofmel, member of the Schwab Holding AG board of directors, comments as follows:

"Cross are very well known to us, and we asked them to take over as successor to assure the long-term development of Schwab Verkehrstechnik as an independent company in a dynamic environment."

Markus Reich, managing partner of Cross Equity Partners AG: “This takeover is an opportunity for Cross to invest in an interesting Swiss company with excellent growth prospects in the European rolling stock business.”

The investors backing Cross include long-term, strategically oriented entrepreneurs, family offices, pension funds and institutional investors in Switzerland and abroad who see Cross as an opportunity to achieve sustained growth in their investment by offering expanding, profitable middle market companies new strategic options. Cross focuses on interests in industries such as engineering, machinery, industrial products and services.

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About Cross

Swiss private equity company Cross sees itself as a partner to the middle market in Switzerland and German-speaking Europe, settling succession for family businesses and spinoff companies by offering flexible equity solutions.

Cross engages in majority takeovers in the form of management buyouts and minority transactions (growth capital or private placements), and pursues long-term industrial strategies with the aim of generating sustained profitable growth.

Cross invests in industry-leading, profitable companies with an entrepreneurial management in high-growth traditional industries such as engineering, machinery and industrial products and services.

The Cross Fund is advised exclusively by Cross Equity Partners AG, Zurich.

The Cross team, lead by Dr Michael Petersen and Markus Reich, has several decades of experience in industry and private equity, and to date has successfully invested in 25 companies in German-speaking Europe.