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WINTERGERST advises on the sale of the Wehrle Group to Sontex SA in Switzerland

Within the course of an extensive investor search process, WINTERGERST Sociétät für Unternehmer-Beratung was able to arrange a sale of the traditional Wehrle Group to Swiss-based Sontex SA.

The Wehrle Group, a family-owned company with a long tradition based in Furtwagen, has found a new owner: Swiss-based Sontex SA. The company was founded in 1842 and counts among the pioneers in the development and production of water meters and technical components. With its subsidiaries, Modularis, Andrae and Bernhardts, the Wehrle Group offers an extensive portfolio of innovative solutions for a wide range of applications. The group has built up an excellent reputation for quality, precision and reliability across all generations. The sale to Sontex SA not only secures the succession of the business but also facilitates its forward-looking development under the management of an internationally experienced partner.

WINTERGERST Sociétät für Unternehmer-Beratung provided a full suite of advisory services to the Wehrle Group during this complex sales process. The objective of the transaction was to resolve the succession issues for the family-owned company and at the same time set a strategy for the development of the group going forward. A dual transaction approach was pursued to realize these goals: in addition to an international M&A process for the entire group, an independent M&A process was initiated for the

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Austrian subsidiary, Bernhardtts. This flexible approach allowed different groups of interested investors to be addressed in a targeted manner, creating a competitive environment for the bidding stage.

The focus of the process lay not only on optimizing the value to be obtained in a sale but also in finding a partner that could support the Wehrle Group during its transformation process and strengthen its strategy. The challenging structure of the transaction required close coordination between all stakeholders, which WINTERGERST ensured with professional and targeted stakeholder management. This culminated in a solution that did justice to all stakeholder interests and has created a foundation for the sustainable development of the company.

From its home base in Switzerland, Sontex SA managed to prevail over a number of strategic and financial investors in the course of an international competitive bidding process. Sontex is a leading provider of metering and system solutions for energy and water consumption. The company is known for its technological innovations and energy-efficient products that are used in automated buildings and infrastructure worldwide. With its expertise and international market presence, Sontex is the ideal partner to build on the strengths of the Wehrle Group and secure its market position for the long term.

“The successful sale of the Wehrle Group to Sontex SA shows how important a tailored and strategically-aligned sales process is. Conducting a dual-track M&A process and fully coordinating stakeholder management is the ideal type case for our wide range of services,” says Volker Wintergerst, the founder and director of WINTERGERST Societät für Unternehmer-Beratung.

“Putting the Wehrle Group into good hands was a matter that was close to our hearts as a family. WINTERGERST advised us throughout this challenging process with great professionalism and strategic vision, and was a reliable partner for the entire duration. We are happy to have found a strong partner for the long-term development of our company,” says Georg Herth, managing shareholder of E. Wehrle GmbH.

About WINTERGERST Societät für Unternehmer-Beratung

WINTERGERST Societät für Unternehmer-Beratung GmbH & Co. KG, Stuttgart, is a firm of consultants that is specialized in serving middle market family-owned companies. The consulting focus lies on accompanying corporate transactions, restructuring businesses and strategic realignments. WINTERGERST possesses exemplary industry experience and implementation skills, regularly assigning individuals with many years of management experience in the respective industry to its engagements. Its active membership in the ICFG international network gives WINTERGERST a global footprint and specific Asian competence. www.wintergerst.com