

## **/ Wellington Partners invests in Wireless LAN technology from Siemens AG /**

*Munich, April 22, 2002.* Wellington Partners is investing € 1.5 million to fund the spin-off of Munich-based Garderos GmbH from the Siemens organization. The company develops and markets a technology that enables Wireless LAN networks, which provide wireless access to the Internet, to be operated at highly frequented locations ("hotspots"). Siemens AG will continue to hold an equity investment in the new company. Moreover, the Siemens ICN Group has signed a marketing agreement with Garderos that covers more than 100 countries.

With its "i250 Access Gateway" software, the Garderos team is responding to the rapidly growing demand on the part of operators and owners of hotspots like airports, railroad stations, hotels, tradeshows or shopping centers for integrated solutions that will enable them to operate wireless broadband local area networks. According to a study conducted by market research institute Frost & Sullivan, during the course of the coming five years the number of hotspots offering these kinds of solutions will soar from 400 to 37,000 in Europe alone. Users will consist first and foremost of business travelers who value the availability of the Internet, and thus the ability to access their corporate servers, and are willing to pay for this convenience. One of the trials that Garderos is presently conducting with this model is with the Marriott hotel chain in Munich.

Garderos offers hotspot operators and owners an unrivaled integrated software solution that covers all relevant aspects, from access control right through to billing. This is why Frank Böhnke from Wellington Partners anticipates fast-paced growth: "In the coming two years, we're going to be seeing an explosion in the market for Wireless LAN solutions, and thanks to its technology edge Garderos should be able to win at least one quarter of this market, and thus advance to become the market leader."

Garderos will be further strengthening its technology edge with new software that will enable telecommunication providers to operate multiple hotspot networks from one single location. Telecommunication companies already number among Garderos' partners, and the first contracts will soon be signed with Wireless Internet Service Providers (WISP). "This speed now offers us the opportunity of establishing our software as the standard in the hotspot market," explains Garderos founder Hans Christensen.

The software from Garderos is based upon the international 802.11b standard, which governs wireless high-speed data transfer. Major hardware vendors like Compaq, Fujitsu Siemens and Toshiba are already integrating this standard in their products. Most new laptops, for example, now come equipped with 802.11b antennas, which enable data to be transferred at a speed of 11MB/sec. By comparison: The UMTS standard offers a speed of only around 180 - 385 KB/sec. This standardization is playing a major role in paving the way for Garderos to enter the international market.

Garderos founder Christensen views the partnership with Siemens as offering a crucial competitive advantage: "This enables us to unite the advantages of a small company, like flexibility and short decision-making channels, with those of a global player. Thanks to Siemens, we'll be able to speed up our rollout significantly and offer worldwide customer service right from the very first day." And the CEO sees a wide range of applications for his software: "From a technology standpoint, any train or airplane can be upgraded into a hotspot, enabling business travelers to spend their travel time profitably by working just as if they were sitting at their office desk."

## **About Wellington Partners**

Wellington Partners invests venture capital in young start-ups throughout Europe in the fields of information and communication technology and life science. The Munich-based company manages venture capital funds with a total volume of €260 million. €100 million of this funding is available for new investments. Formed in 1991, the company is presently invested in over 30 companies, and in the past has already accompanied such successful enterprises as chip broker ACG or biotechnology company Actelion in going public.

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