

PRESS RELEASE
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BaltCap invests additional EUR 1 million in STENDERS

The leading Baltic private equity and venture capital investment management company BaltCap has agreed on an additional EUR 1.0 million investment with its portfolio company, one of the most successful Latvian cosmetics producers and franchise developers STENDERS.

STENDERS is a cosmetics producer with 200 franchise stores in 22 countries worldwide. With 110 stores in the main cities of China, STENDERS has one of the strongest cosmetics retail chains in China. In 2014, the company's global retail revenues reached EUR 27 million. The success story of the brand has been based on high quality products and special packaging, store experience and successful franchise concept.

At the beginning of 2015, world class cosmetics industry manager Julien Laporte became the CEO of STENDERS. Laporte has previously held the positions of Board Member of the world famous French brand L'Occitane, generating over EUR 1 billion in sales; General Manager of UK cosmetics brand Crabtree & Evelyn; and CEO of L'Oreal Turkey. By the strengthening of the management team with international cosmetics management expertise and attraction of additional investment, STENDERS has ambitious plans for 2015, including own store openings in the vibrant cities of Singapore and London, as well as significant expansion of product portfolio.

"We have already stressed our determination for rapid development in the international market and willingness to attract new investments. Successful cooperation with BaltCap has proven that STENDERS is a stable enterprise with high global potential. Until now the company operated as a rather small ship we steered on our own; however, along with larger investments we are approaching deeper international waters at a fast pace. This creates the necessity for a manager with extensive global experience and we are happy to have found such a person," says Janis Berzins, STENDERS Chairman of the Council.

"The investment in STENDERS is bound to making sure that the brand will flow in the same seas as the top competitors like L'Occitane, Kiehl's, Crabtree & Evelyn, since the brand deserves it fully. I have personally worked within the main competitive brands and I must say STENDERS doesn't have to envy its competitors. I would even say that STENDERS has a little something more! The international development will be anchored on the already very successful development in China and STENDERS will leverage this success in the rest of Asia from 2015, starting with Singapore, Korea and many others to follow. We are working very strongly with STENDERS team to adapt the product portfolio to reinforce Asian progress with specific product developments for this region that will be launched in the next months. Crossing these new borders is truly exciting. And as the ambition is to become a global brand, STENDERS is planning to open two stores in London, the number one touristic city in the world. 2015 will be a great turnaround year for the company's international development – but this is only the beginning," says the new CEO Julien Laporte.

"We are extremely happy to provide financing for further expansion of STENDERS which is one of the best examples of Latvian companies' capabilities to create brands and products that are truly competitive on a global scale. We are satisfied that we can provide further funding from our state and EU supported fund for the product portfolio expansion and working capital needs of a Latvian brand with global presence," said Astra Neimane, Investment Director at BaltCap.

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BaltCap is the leading independent private equity firm focusing on small and midmarket buyout and expansion capital investments in the Baltic States.

BaltCap has strong presence in all three Baltic countries with local offices and experienced team of 16 professionals.

Since 1995, BaltCap has been managing several private equity and venture capital funds with total capital of over EUR 260 million and has made more than 60 investments.

BaltCap is a member of European Private Equity & Venture Capital Association (www.evca.eu), Estonian Private Equity and Venture Capital Association (www.estvca.ee), Latvian Venture Capital Association (www.lvca.lv) and Lithuanian Venture Capital Association (www.vca.lt).

BaltCap is a signatory of the United Nations Principles for Responsible Investment (UNPRI) since 2008.

