



COLUMNA
CAPITAL

DATAMARS



Columna completes a transformational investment in Datamars, a leading global provider of identification systems for livestock, pets and industrial textiles

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Columna Capital (“Columna”) has completed a USD 83 million transaction to take full control of Datamars SA (“Datamars” or the “Company”) and fund the acquisition of ZeeTags, the global number 3 player in Livestock Identification (“LID”).

Headquartered in Lugano, Switzerland, Datamars is a market leading supplier of identification systems for animals (livestock, pets and other species) and industrial textiles. For over 25 years the Company has pioneered the development of both RFID technology and plastic visual tags for the identification of animals and textiles with its products sold in more than 60 countries. Datamars operates four major production facilities worldwide (Thailand, Italy, Slovakia and the USA) and currently has 600 employees.

Columna made its initial investment in Datamars in 2011 acquiring a significant minority interest through the secondary buy-out of two financial sponsors and the founder. In 2012, funds advised by Columna provided a majority of the equity required for the acquisition of Temple Tag, the number 2 player in the US LID market based in Temple (TX). The Temple Tag acquisition established Datamars as the global number 2 player in LID. Since 2011, Columna has supported management in completing two further strategic add-on acquisitions in LID: Demaplast (Italy) and Quicktag (UK).

The combination of ZeeTags and Datamars creates one of the strongest franchises in the sector. It combines the best products with state of the art manufacturing while operating with a truly global footprint and scale and the best teams to support a growing international client base. With combined sales of close to USD 100 million, the Company’s growth will continue to be driven by strong demand for its best-in-class identification products and the on-going professionalization of the industry and is further supported by a favourable legislative and regulatory environment.

Simultaneously with the ZeeTags acquisition, funds advised by Columna completed the secondary buy-out of all remaining Datamars’ shareholders, which included Iris Capital, Vinci Capital and Brampton.

Mike Gardner, President of ZeeTags, said:

“We were striving to further increase our capacity to deliver high quality products in the shortest possible time to our clients and have found an ideal partner with highly complementary skills and markets. We are extremely excited to be able to serve more clients faster, with even better and more products in more markets around the world”.

Klaus Ackerstaff, CEO of Datamars, said:

“We are looking forward to growing the business and serving our expanding client base with an extraordinary team of people around the world, with access to the best product portfolio and unmatched distributed manufacturing and fulfilment in all major markets. This new Company is changing the industry and clients can look forward to an even better product and service portfolio around the world”.

Rory Devlin, Managing Partner at Columna Capital, said:

“We are excited by the opportunity of bringing together two of the leading brands in the animal identification industry. There is an excellent fit between ZeeTags and Datamars that will allow us to scale the business by creating a group approaching USD 100 million in revenues. We believe that simplifying the shareholder base will create clear and strong governance for Datamars going forward, resolving previous differences in shareholder interests. Datamars is set to continue its strong growth and we will continue to support Datamars’ exceptional management team and provide further capital for growth opportunities in the coming years”.

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About Datamars

Datamars is a global leader for high-performance RFID and visual solutions for the companion animal, livestock and textile identification markets. Our expertise, track record of technological innovation and profound understanding of customers’ needs over 25 years have earned Datamars a reputation for unsurpassed quality and performance. Datamars employs more than 600 people with offices in Europe, Asia, and the Americas. Datamars is a private company, headquartered in Lugano, Switzerland.

About ZeeTags

ZeeTags Ltd headquartered in Auckland, New Zealand, is a company dedicated to the development and production of innovative and high quality livestock identification tags and applicator devices, designed to meet market requirements and country specific official programmes. The company has been in existence for over 20 years and now has manufacturing operations in three continents with distribution of its products in over 50 countries.

About Columna Capital

Columna Capital is a private equity firm focusing on investments in mid-market companies with growth potential. Columna is an entrepreneurial and operationally active investor, working closely with management teams to drive organic growth and execute on consolidation opportunities. Founded in 2009 and with offices in London and Lugano (Switzerland), Columna specializes in secondary direct equity investments with identified growth opportunities throughout Europe, either in the form of single asset investments or the acquisition of end of life funds.

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