

MEDIA RELEASE

Basler Zeitung Medien sold to private investors

- The Hagemann family and PubliGroupe are selling their shares in "National Zeitung und Basler Nachrichten AG" to Dr. Tito Tettamanti and Basel-based media lawyer Martin Wagner.
- The *Basler Zeitung (BaZ)* remains an autonomous and independent Basel newspaper.
- Martin Wagner is becoming the new Chairman of the Board of Directors and Publisher of the *BaZ*; Matthias Hagemann remains on the Board.
- BZM is made up of 14 independent companies and 2 major interests.

Basel, 8 February 2010 – Dr. Tito Tettamanti and Basel-based media lawyer Martin Wagner are acquiring all of the shares in "National Zeitung und Basler Nachrichten AG" that belonged to the Hagemann family and PubliGroupe. "National Zeitung und Basler Nachrichten AG" operates on the market as "Basler Zeitung Medien" (BZM).

Tettamanti will be the majority shareholder, with 75% of the shares. Martin Wagner will hold 25%. The parties have agreed not to disclose the purchase price.

"From the very start it was our intention to maintain the *Basler Zeitung's* status as an independent newspaper for Basel," explains BaZ's new Publisher, Martin Wagner. "We wanted to take another stand against the concentration of media in our country."

Matthias Hagemann, outgoing Chairman of the Board of Directors of BZM and spokesman for the family, said the following: "After discussing the matter at length within the family, we decided last autumn to start looking for someone to buy our company."

"We did everything possible to ensure that the business was sold to a buyer who is willing and able to maintain the *Basler Zeitung's* status as a strong daily paper for the Basel region." There was interest from various parties in Switzerland and abroad.

The Hagemann family held a 63% equity stake in BZM, having acquired majority control over the printing and publishing company 59 years ago.

"As stated some time ago, PubliGroupe has been working with the majority shareholder to find a solution, which now takes the form we are announcing today," said Hans-Peter Rohner, Chairman of the Board of Directors and CEO of PubliGroupe, which owned 37% of the shares. "This move is in line with our policy of selling publishing interests that no longer fit with our strategy."

The vendors were advised by Oscar Battegay, a lawyer at Kanzlei Staiger, Schwald & Partner.

The new Board of Directors currently has four members: Matthias Hagemann, Basel media entrepreneur Bernhard Burgener, Basel notary Pascal Berger, and Martin Wagner, who as Chairman of the Board will be the new Publisher of the *Basler Zeitung*.

There will also be a change in Basler Zeitung Medien's executive management. Beat Meyer, the group's CEO, will leave BZM to be replaced by the current CFO, Jürgen Hunscheidt. At the same time the former Publishing Director Roland Steffen, is becoming group-wide COO (Chief Operating Officer). Both managers have been key players within the business for many years and, like the Publisher Martin Wagner, are closely identified with the company. Matthias Geering remains Editor-in-Chief of the *Basler Zeitung*. "This provides a great platform for a successful future for Basler Zeitung Medien," said Martin Wagner.

Basler Zeitung Medien is made up of 14 independent companies, including the printing company Birkhäuser, based in Reinach (Canton Basel Land). The company's flagship is the *Basler Zeitung*, which with a print run of about 88,000 is the most important daily newspaper in Northwest Switzerland. The group currently employs about 1,200 people, and in the 2008/2009 financial year it achieved a turnover of around CHF 263 million. Its operating earnings (EBITA) came to CHF 6 million.

Note to media

A **press conference will be held** at 11 a.m. at the head office of Basler Zeitung Medien.

Address: Hochbergerstrasse 15, Basel

Press offices

Hagemann family / Martin Wagner

Manfred Messmer

Tel. 061 639 12 46

Mobile: 079 226 21 05

manfred.messmer@messmerpartner.com www.bzm.ch

PubliGroupe Ltd

Jean-Denis Briod

Tel. direct: +41 21 317 73 00

jdbriod@publigroupe.com, www.publigroupe.com