



For immediate release: 14<sup>th</sup> September 2011

Contact: Debbie Daly, 01865 383068, [Debbie\\_daly@unipart.co.uk](mailto:Debbie_daly@unipart.co.uk)

## H2 EQUITY PARTNERS TO ACQUIRE CONTROLLING STAKE IN UNIPART AUTOMOTIVE

H2 Equity Partners, an independent private equity firm, is to acquire a controlling stake in Unipart Automotive, the UK's largest independent supplier of car parts, workshop consumables and garage equipment, currently owned by Unipart Group.

In the agreement, which is expected to be concluded shortly, H2 Equity Partners will take majority ownership in the UK operation. Unipart Group will own 49.9%. Patrick Kalverboer, managing partner at H2, will become Executive Chairman of the new company.

Unipart Automotive has around 175 branches with sales of over £180m. It is expected that some 2,100 employees nationally will transfer to the new company, which will continue to trade under the Unipart Automotive brand.

H2 has a controlling interest in Sator Holding B.V. -- the market leading importer and distributor of parts for the automotive aftermarket in the Benelux, and Northern France. The acquisition of Unipart Automotive, allows H2 to promote "best practise" cooperation between Sator Holding and Unipart Automotive for topics such as product management, IT systems and sourcing capabilities. To promote synergies between Sator and Unipart Automotive, H2 Equity Partners has created a new buying group called AP United, which will combine the purchasing volumes and ranges of both companies and improve efficiencies for both its suppliers as well as its members. AP United will be chaired by Mr. Roggeveen, the former CEO of Sator Holding. Over the next few months it is planned that UA will significantly expand the current range of parts and accessories available to Unipart's customers to around 160,000 products making it the most comprehensive automotive replacement parts offering available in the UK.

Unipart Group has already invested very significantly over several years to equip its aftermarket operations with new systems for logistics, I.T. and branch management, as well as improving availability and range. A multi-million pound, joint forward investment programme is planned. It could see the company grow to rank as one of the top five automotive aftermarket companies in Europe

Commenting on the announcement, Patrick Kalverboer said:

"We are pleased to announce that we expect to acquire a controlling interest in Unipart Automotive and we are delighted that we will continue to be working with

Unipart Group to build Unipart Automotive into one of the leading automotive aftermarket companies in Europe.

“We believe there are significant sales, marketing, sourcing and innovative I.T. opportunities that we can realise by combining the best capabilities of Unipart Automotive with our other market-leading distribution businesses in Europe. Especially the creation of the new buying group AP United chaired by Mr. Roggeveen – the previous CEO of Sator Holding should help the members and their suppliers to improve efficiency in the value chain. In addition we are particularly attracted to the fact that Unipart Automotive is the largest network in the UK with the strongest, most highly trusted ‘all makes’ brand.

“We recognise that the challenges in the current economic conditions will require some adjustments in the cost base, but we are committed to continue investing alongside Unipart to grow the business for the future.”

According to Unipart Group Chief Executive John Neill, the Group was strongly attracted to H2 and Sator because of their strategic commitment to the sector and the strong opportunities for synergy.

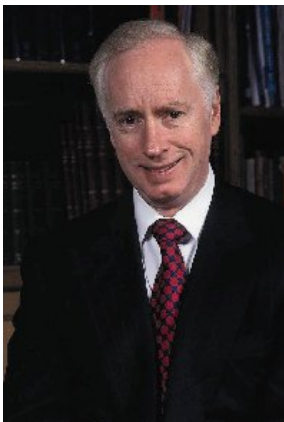
“We’re delighted that Patrick will be Executive Chairman of the company as he brings the right combination of strategic capability, industry insight and experience together with the financial resources and acumen to grow the business, “ said John Neill.

“We expect this deal to give our customers access to the widest range of products in Europe by combining ranges from Sator’s distribution centre in The Netherlands with our industry-leading availability on the widest range of O.E. quality products under the Unipart brand.”

Unipart Group will continue to develop its core businesses, which provide consulting, logistics and manufacturing services across a wide range of sectors including automotive, rail, leisure, I.T., telecoms, retail, and the public sector.

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***For higher resolution versions of the photos below please contact Debbie Daly as above***



**John M Neill, Unipart  
Group Chief Executive**



**Patrick Kalverboer, Managing**



**Unipart Automotive vans**



**Unipart Automotive delivers**

## **Editors' Notes:**

### **About H2:**

**H2 Equity Partners** (H2) is an independent private equity firm founded in 1991, with offices in Amsterdam, Munich and London. H2 focuses on turnaround-and-growth investments in mid-sized companies in the Benelux, Germany and the UK that can benefit from its in-house operating skills and expertise. H2 Equity Partners has built an attractive track record over 20 years and has approximately € 500 million under management.

### **About The Unipart Group:**

**The Unipart Group** employs more than 10,000 personnel worldwide and has an annual turnover of more than £1billion. It is a leading full service logistics provider and consultant in operational excellence.

Operating across a range of market sectors, including automotive, leisure, marine, manufacturing, mobile telecoms, rail, retail and technology, Unipart offers a breadth of services from third party logistics to expert consultancy.

All Unipart sites operate according to the Group's proprietary version of Lean known as The Unipart Way. This is a philosophy of working underpinned by tools and techniques that inspires efficiency, flexibility and outstanding customer service in any process.

Unipart also offers expert consultancy in implementing Lean principles and in supply chain management across a variety of industry sectors. The Group's clients include Sainsbury's, ASOS.com, Homebase, Vodafone, 3, BSKyB, Jaguar Land Rover, and HMRC.

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***This announcement contains forward-looking statements that involve risks and uncertainties including, among others, the ability to realise the synergies and other perceived advantages resulting from this acquisition. Actual results may differ materially from the results predicted and any reported or announced information should not be considered as an indication of future performance.***