

Press release

Argos Wityu, the management and the employees of Sword France are investing together to create an independent leader in IT-Digital and Software.

Paris (France), 29 September 2020 – Argos Wityu, independent European private-equity group, announces today it has finalised the acquisition of the French perimeter of the Sword Group, thus creating an independent leader in IT-Digital and Software.

Sword France assists blue-chip customers in their technological and digital transformation programs, being positioned at the crossroads of technological and end-markets related expertise. The service offering is supplemented by innovative in-house designed software products that bring added value to the core offer. Sword France employs c. 600 employees linked by a strong collective approach and generates revenues over €60m. The management team has a proven track record of double-digit growth over the past 10 years.

Led by Philippe Le Calvé, the Sword France team shares a common entrepreneurial spirit close to its customers and partners. Employees and Management have expressed their willingness to become involved at the shareholder level in the new entity. This commitment to this collective ambition is one of the fundamental values of Sword France, shared with Argos Wityu.

The objective is to reinforce the Group's positioning as one of the leading multi-specialists focusing on targeted technology segments. Argos Wityu also aims at supporting the management team in conducting an active buy & build strategy, both in France and internationally.

Philippe Le Calvé, CEO of Sword France, said: "We are convinced about our capacity to take up the challenge together and transform the Sword France into a standalone Group. This opportunity increases room for manoeuvre, liberates energies and triggers additional initiatives in many areas including external growth and innovation. It is also an opportunity to develop new partnerships and open new horizons. Our objective is to continue and accelerate the growth of our activities. This collective project, which involves all our employees and our experienced management team, will be built over the long term. We know that we can count on Argos Wityu to support our development."

Karel Kroupa, Partner at Argos Wityu: "We are excited to accompany Philippe Le Calvé and the management team at this entrepreneurial turning point. Sword France has a proven capacity to anticipate and capture new emerging trends. It has built long-standing relationships with its blue-chip customers and benefits from a strong reputation of technological expertise on niche market. This transaction encompasses all the strengths we seek in our transactions: a highly motivated and competent team, a clear market differentiation and a strong growth project."

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Argos Wityu team: Karel Kroupa, Simon Guichard, Pierre Dumas, Paola Alemanno

List of advisors

Buyer advisors

M&A: DC Advisory (François Prioux)

Legal: Hogan Lovells (Stéphane Hutten, Florian Brechon, Laura Medjoub, Fanny Perié, Guillaume Denis, Eric Paroche, Céline Verney)

Financial: Ernst & Young (Emmanuel Picard, Marion Lassus-Pigat, Karen Contreras, Nicolas Brun)

Strategic: Digital Value (Arnaud de Baynast, Abdellah Moutaçalli, Romain Bury, Xudong Zhang)

Tax: Hogan Lovells (Laurent Ragot, Maryll Pizzetta)

Insurance: Marsh (Margaux Rocher, Jean-Marie Dargaignartz, Charles Amblard)

Management advisors

Legal: Solferino Associés (Bernard-Olivier Becker, Marie-Estelle Colin)

Tax: Cazals Manzo Pichot Saint Quentin (Bertrand de Saint Quentin)

Sellers advisors

M&A: Bryan Garnier (Thibaut de Smedt, Olivier Garnier, Stanislas de Gmeline, Jonathan Foiret-Hurbin)

Financial: PWC (David Willems, Rodolphe Challand)

Legal: Quartèse Avocat (Marie Kapp-Brunet) et Korvinglaw (Marianne Korving)

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About Argos Wityu

<http://argos.wityu.fund>

Argos Wityu is an independent private-equity group with offices in Brussels, Frankfurt, Geneva, Luxembourg, Milan and Paris. Since its creation in 1989, the group has invested in more than 75 mid-sized companies (Enterprise Value ranging from €25M to €200M). Its majority ownership investments range between €10M and €100M. With €1Bn under management, the group develops a unique investment strategy focusing on business transformation and growth, instead of financial leverage, and on bringing solutions to complex business and shareholding situations. Its entrepreneurial approach is characterised by a close relationship with management teams and strong support to help them implement their strategic plans.