

# Credit Agricole and Equens Negotiate Partnership in Card and Payment Processing

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PARIS and UTRECHT, The Netherlands, November 25 /PRNewswire/ -- Based on a common vision of strategic developments in the European card and payment processing sector, Cr dit Agricole S.A. and Equens SE have signed an exclusive agreement to explore the possibility of aligning their payment platforms to become a major payment services provider in Europe.

With a combined volume of over 15 billion transactions, Equens and CEDICAM, the payment processing and systems subsidiary of Cr dit Agricole S.A. and the 'Caisses R gionales', would be the leader in the European market.

The realisation of this major payment service provider is based on three key ideas:

Combining volumes and developing synergies to lower unit processing costs

Fostering growth dynamics from a unique position as a European leader offering technical and commercial expertise and broad regional coverage

Sharing expertise that benefits the entire product chain

The objective is to conclude the negotiations in 2010. The signature of a final agreement will be subject to consultation with the relevant employee representation groups and to the approval of the relevant regulatory authorities.

Jean-Yves Hoher, Deputy CEO of Credit Agricole S.A., says: "We are facing major challenges within the rapidly changing European landscape. By discussing a partnership with Equens to become the pan-European card and payment processor, we will be able to combine expertise, technology, in-depth knowledge and the processing of several billion transactions to serve our network. This is fully in line with Cr dit Agricole's strategy to build industrial partnerships with banks."

Michael Steinbach, Chairman of Equens' Board of Directors says: "The intended cooperation with CEDICAM is a major next step forward in our strategy to become the premier pan-European processor. It will enable us to further increase our scale, geographical presence and product offering for the benefit of our current and future clients and shareholders, like ABN AMRO, DZ BANK, ICBPI, ING and Rabobank."

Note to editors:

About Cr dit Agricole

Cr dit Agricole is France's number one banking organisation, serving 28% of the country's households, and operating across the entire spectrum of banking and finance. It serves 58 million individual customers across the world and has built a network of 11,850 branches in more than 20 countries. Cr dit Agricole is the largest retail bank in Europe in terms of income from retail banking. It is the leader in France, ranks third in

Europe, and ninth worldwide in terms of Tier 1 capital (The Banker 2009). The group operates in 70 countries and has more than 160,000 employees worldwide.

#### About CEDICAM

CEDICAM is the payment processing and systems subsidiary of Cr dit Agricole S.A. and the 'Caisses R gionales'. It operates primarily in the domains of electronic banking, payment and card processing, and security of payments. Within the Cr dit Agricole group, CEDICAM combines expertise to further develop processing activities on a European scale.

For additional information on Cr dit Agricole and CEDICAM, please visit <http://www.credit-agricole.com>

#### About Equens

Equens SE is the first pan-European, full-service payment processor. As one of the largest payment processors in Europe, it leads the market for future-proof payment and card solutions. Thanks to an extensive and competitive range of services, the company seamlessly meets the requirements and wishes of the European payments market. Equens supports the development of a single, uniform European payments market (SEPA), and is dedicated to the standardisation and harmonisation of European and global payments. With clients and partnerships in multiple European countries, it offers pan-European market coverage from offices in four countries - the Netherlands, Germany, Italy and Finland. And with an annual processing volume of 8.9 billion payments and 3.2 billion POS and ATM transactions, Equens SE has a European market share of more than 12.5%. The shares in Equens SE are held by DZ BANK, ING, ABN AMRO Bank, Rabobank, ICBPI and Fortis (NL)

For additional information on Equens, please visit <http://www.equens.com>

SOURCE Credit Agricole S.A. and Equens

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