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Braun, Electrolux, HP and Sony move towards a pan-European WEEE recycling scheme

European Recycling Platform progresses to the next stage

The European Recycling Platform (ERP) set up by Braun, Electrolux, HP and Sony has today announced the next step in its development. The four companies involved are undertaking business planning to operate a pan-European compliance scheme for the recycling of electrical and electronic equipment. The move follows research and evaluation, which has indicated to the companies that they can realise significant savings, which, eventually, will benefit their consumers.

During the research phase, a team of recycling experts from the four companies has been in contact with some of Europe's leading recycling firms, as well as undertaking numerous market surveys and extensive benchmarking of the recycling schemes that already exist in the EU today.

Hans Korfmacher of Braun and chairman of the European Recycling Platform explains, „By pooling volumes and procuring recycling services on a European level, we have realised that we have the opportunity to reduce our annual recycling costs by millions of Euros. Naturally, we want to explore this approach further.“

Moreover, consumers will benefit, as will the environment, as the cost savings can be reinvested in improved product design for recycling.

The ERP is currently in discussion with a number of other producers of electrical and electronic goods about joining the compliance scheme for recycling. The ERP also continues to cooperate with other companies on the implementation of the WEEE Directive into national law.

Background to the ERP and the WEEE Directive

The European Recycling Platform was set up in December 2002 by Braun, Electrolux, HP and Sony in response to the introduction of the European Union's Waste Electronic and Electrical Equipment (WEEE) Directive. The ERP's mission is to ensure cost effective implementation of the directive, for the benefit of the participating companies and their customers, through innovative waste management strategies and to encourage national implementation of the directive according to a set of core principles, fundamental to the protection of consumers and business, as well as the environment. More information is available at www.erp-recycling.org.

The WEEE Directive is a new legal framework within which producers are obliged to contribute or to organise the disposal, recycling or recovery of the goods they market after September 2005. Producers are also obliged to handle the recycling of a proportion, based on their market share year by year, of the waste from products sold before September 2005.

About Braun

Germany-based Braun GmbH, a subsidiary of The Gillette Company, manufactures a wide variety of products that marry innovation, quality and aesthetic design, ranging from electrical shavers to personal diagnostic appliances and from oral care products and beauty products to household appliances. Braun products enjoy worldwide distribution and many of them enjoy worldwide market leadership. More information is available at <http://www.braun.com>.

About Electrolux

The Electrolux Group is the world's largest producer of powered appliances for kitchen, cleaning and outdoor use, such as refrigerators, washing machines, cookers, vacuum cleaners, chainsaws, lawn mowers and garden tractors. Every year, customers in more than 150 countries buy more than 55 million Electrolux Group products for both consumer and professional use sold under famous brands such as AEG, Electrolux, Zanussi, Frigidaire, Eureka and Husqvarna. In 2002, Electrolux had sales of SEK 133.2 billion and 87,000 employees. More information is available at <http://www.electrolux.com>.

About HP

HP is a technology solutions provider to consumers, businesses and institutions globally. The company's offerings span IT infrastructure, personal computing and access devices, global services and imaging and printing. For the fiscal year ending on Oct. 31, 2003, HP revenue totaled \$73.1 billion. More information about HP is available at www.hp.com.

About Sony Europe

Sony manufactures audio, video, communications and information technology products for the global consumer and professional markets. With its music, pictures, game and online businesses, Sony is uniquely positioned to become a leading personal broadband entertainment company in the 21st century. In Europe, Sony recorded consolidated annual sales of EUR 13.88 billion (yen 1,666 billion) for the fiscal year ended March 31, 2003, based on an average market exchange rate for the same period of yen 120 to the EUR. Sony Europe, headquartered at the Sony Center am Potsdamer Platz in Berlin, is responsible for the company's European electronics business and registered consolidated sales of EUR 8.62 billion for the fiscal year ended March 31, 2003. For more information, please visit <http://www.sony-europe.com>.

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