KION Group pushes ahead in North America

- Company aims to significantly increase market share
- South Carolina production facility and dealer network provide a strong starting point
- First visible milestone: change of company name from Linde North America to KION North America

Summerville/Wiesbaden, 14 November 2014 – The KION Group is pushing ahead in the fast-growing North American market and reached a first milestone on Friday: Linde North America will operate under the name ‘KION North America’ in future. Headquartered in Wiesbaden, Germany, the KION Group is one of the world’s two largest suppliers of forklift trucks, warehouse technology and associated services. Its strategic objective for the US market is clear: to double market share over the next few years from the current 2 per cent to between 4 and 5 per cent.

The company has a solid basis on which to build. The KION Group operates a production plant in Summerville, South Carolina, with an annual capacity of more than 10,000 trucks, and has a nationwide sales and service network with around 100 dealers. Under the joint umbrella of KION North America, the brand companies Linde, and in future STILL, are to serve the specific requirements of the US, Canadian and Mexican markets with a comprehensive, customised and complementary product portfolio.

“The continued development and growth of our organisation in North America is extremely important for the KION Group. It is one of the key elements of our Strategy 2020, which we are pursuing with the aim of significantly extending our global reach,” says Gordon Riske, Chief Executive Officer of the KION Group. “We want to move away from being a niche provider and become a significant market player in North America under the KION name.”

A series of important steps have already been taken. An experienced management team is working in Summerville to lay the foundations for market success. Around a dozen new products are being specially developed for the North American market. Various sales and aftersales projects are already up and running. The company’s medium-term objectives include establishing a fleet management and finance system and possibly introducing an additional brand.
The North American market, consisting of the USA (the world’s second-largest single market), Canada and Mexico, was one of the fastest growing markets in the world in 2013, showing an 11 per cent increase in unit sales. The first nine months of this year saw a rise of just under 6 per cent, while the KION Group’s unit sales climbed by more than 10 per cent.

The origins of KION North America go back to the 19th century. In 1898, the Baker Motor Company, which produced electric cars, was founded in Cleveland, Ohio. In 1967, Baker acquired the industrial truck manufacturer Moto-Truc. In 1977, Baker Material Handling became part of Linde AG, and eight years later, Linde-Baker opened the forklift truck plant in Summerville. The Linde Material Handling North America Corporation was formed in 2005. In 2006, Linde AG’s global material handling business was spun off as an independent company to form the KION Group.

The Company

The KION Group AG – comprising the six brands of Linde, STILL, Fenwick, OM STILL, Baoli and Voltas – is the largest manufacturer of industrial trucks in western and eastern Europe, the global number two in the industry and the leading non-domestic supplier in China. The Linde and STILL brands serve the premium segment worldwide. Fenwick is the largest supplier of material handling products in France, while OM STILL is a market leader in Italy. The Baoli brand focuses on the economy segment, and Voltas is a leading provider of industrial trucks in India. The KION Group is present in more than 100 countries and, in 2013, employed over 22,000 people and generated revenue of €4.5 billion. KION GROUP AG has been listed on Deutsche Börse’s Frankfurt Stock Exchange since June 2013 and was admitted to the MDAX, the German stock index for medium-sized companies, in September 2014.

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