

Media Statement

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Holdings - Altech UEC And Ellies Team Up To Streamline Digital Migration
Ellies Holdings Limited
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MEDIA STATEMENT: ALTECH UEC AND ELLIES HOLDINGS
ALTECH UEC AND ELLIES TEAM UP TO STREAMLINE DIGITAL MIGRATION

22 July 2009: JSE listed Allied Technologies Limited (Altech), through its subsidiary, Altech UEC (Pty) Limited (Altech UEC) has partnered with AltX listed Ellies Holdings Limited (Ellies), to provide a full service offering for digital migration in southern Africa. "South Africa is leading the African digital migration effort, with many countries looking to us to provide a strategy that can be implemented in their own country's migration plans in the future. Altech UEC and Ellies will lead the South African Government's initiative to bridge the digital divide. The digital migration programme will benefit the broader ICT sector, and create many jobs in our industry. Altech UEC and Ellies are leaders in their respective industries, we have a tried and tested relationship and our business models allow us to present a full service offering, nationally, across the entire spectrum of the value chain," said Altech CEO, Craig Venter. Broadcasting digital migration (BDM) encapsulated in the slogan 'Go Digital', is the process of converting television broadcasting signals from analogue to digital technology. Currently, analogue broadcasting is the means of delivery of terrestrial television in South Africa. Go Digital will see an estimated 9 million television households in South Africa needing Digital Terrestrial Television (DTT) set top boxes (STBs), to convert the digital terrestrial signal so that it can be displayed on analogue television sets.

"Altech UEC and Ellies have formed a unique partnership that will entitle Ellies to be the sole distributor of the DTT STBs manufactured by Altech UEC. The partnership comprises manufacture, distribution and installation of the STBs, including after sales services. The alliance will simplify and greatly improve South Africa's Go Digital programme," said Ellies CEO, Wayne Samson. The distribution agreement is an extension of the companies' 13 year relationship which began with the development of a successful deployment model for pay television solutions in South Africa and throughout the African continent. This experience translates into a wealth of knowledge for Altech UEC and Ellies in developing product offerings tailored to the South African market. Operational efficiencies and proven systems will result in lower prices to the consumer.

Altech UEC and Ellies will expand their partnership to include training centres to aid unemployed and disadvantaged individuals, through the 'Altech UEC Ellies Installer and Repair Academy'. These installer schools, set up around the country at Ellies branches, aim to train unemployed people in the installation of aerial and satellite systems, first level STB fault diagnostics and repair skills, and business and life skills. "Our aim is to create an installer base in rural areas to improve the Go Digital process while also helping the installers to build self-owned, sustainable businesses that will themselves create employment," said Samson. Once established in their specific areas, the installers will receive continued support through the Ellies voucher system. STBs can be sold with a voucher entitling the purchaser to installation of the product by an Ellies approved installer. Additional benefit for the rural community will be to have local repair expertise in closer proximity to their homes.

With an estimated 95% market share in the design, manufacture, support and software development of STBs in South Africa, Altech UEC is a leading developer of digital technology for the international pay-television industry. It manufactures 16 different STB models, including satellite, terrestrial, cable and hybrid STBs in its STB dedicated plant in KZN, South Africa. It distributes its products throughout the world and has offices in Australia and India and manufacturing facilities in the Far East. All of Altech UEC's intellectual property is however purely South African.

"Altech UEC's R&D capabilities will result in a DTT STB with advanced software, designed to allow the introduction of value added services such as internet browsing capability and access to email and e-Government services. The STBs will be manufactured in South Africa, ensuring availability of sufficient numbers to meet demand," said Altech UEC Business Development Director, Anton Lan.

Lan continued, "UEC and Ellies has for decades been synonymous with satellite and television. Our companies' brands and products are proven and trusted within the South African households. This partnership strengthens our offerings whilst providing value and confidence to consumers and retailers."

Ellies is currently the largest manufacturer, wholesaler and distributor of electronic products related to television reception, including satellite and terrestrial aerial ranges, in southern Africa. Ellies has trading divisions in all major centres throughout South Africa, as well as in Windhoek, Gaborone and Maputo. Ellies' ElSat business pioneered the pre-paid installation voucher system, a process from point of sale to home installation, when satellite first emerged in South Africa in 1995. These services are facilitated by Ellies' countrywide call centres.

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