

Schenkon/Switzerland, 10 December 2020

## **a&f systems ag – Philippe Lindegger takes on the company's management**

Dear Customers, Partners and Friends,

36 years is a long time. That is how long I had the honour of co-managing the operations of a&f as its managing director. These times were sometimes turbulent, occasionally challenging, but always exciting. I would not want to have missed a single day. Not even the bad and difficult days, because they gave me the opportunity to grow and taught me essential skills for future tasks, of which there were many in the past 40 years.

We started as a simple Apple dealer and very early on got involved in publishing, a business we still operate in today. This was, and still is, the right decision in my opinion. Because communication will always be around, no matter in which form and through which channel.

In the first 15 years, a&f went down a single path – bigger, better, heightened profile. However, at the start of the 2000s, our company, like so many others, had a rude awakening to the economic reality. The ever-growing change toward an increasingly digitised era with all that this brings, such as the bursting of the “dotcom” bubble, also left its mark on a&f. I am extremely proud to stand here today and be able to say that we tackled all of these challenges with great success. I contributed my bit, but this success would never have been possible without you, dear business partners. And also not without the great number of employees with whom I had the privilege to work over the years.

As part of the management buyout at the beginning of 2017, we planned for me to continue the management of a&f until the end of 2020. This period has passed quicker than I thought and now it is time for me to take a back seat.

I would like to take this opportunity to sincerely thank you, dear customers and suppliers of a&f. Even though I always like to say that “we do not maintain a customer/supplier relationship but a true partnership”. It is wonderful to see how many publishers we have had the honour of supporting for decades, in more than 15 European countries by now.

Of course, I will not be retiring entirely from a&f. I will remain the Chairman of the Board of Directors of a&f until mid-2024. However, I will be retiring entirely from daily operations. I will continue to act in strategic areas, such as system evaluations, foreign strategy and part of customer relations. I look forward to these tasks and am also a little relieved to hand over the daily business to someone new after 36 years.

### **New management as from 2021**

These new guys do a great job. Together with Thomas Portmann, our long-standing CEO, Philippe Lindegger, Stefan Schärer and Serge Dillier have clearly proven that they are capable of keeping a&f on its success path over the past four years. And they also coped with the rapidly changing times. With this in mind, I am taking my leave cheerfully, as I know that I am handing over the management of a&f to a promising future and that as new managing director, Philippe Lindegger will continue to manage and continuously expand the company in his own way but always as intended right from the beginning.

Philippe Lindegger (36) – graduate IT business engineer – has been with a&f systems since 2011. In the early years, he provided our business customers with technical support as an Apple System Engineer. Over time, he took on the management of the entire Apple Solutions department and dedicated all of his time to customer support. He became a partner in 2017 and joined the company's management where he was responsible for all of Systems Engineering, including our data centre. At the beginning of 2019, Philippe Lindegger was elected as future CEO by the board of directors and management of a&f. Since then, he has been supporting me closely in all matters relating to the company's management. At the beginning of 2020, I then started to hand over an increasing number of entire areas to him. Philippe Lindegger already took on the internal responsibility for a&f's operations over the past three months and I withdrew to a supporting role only.

*"I am taking on a big legacy and will continue managing a&f systems in the spirit of Urs Felber, with the help of a great team and support. Over the years, strong relationships have been forged, highs and lows have been mastered, we have grown together and thus have been able to achieve important milestones. I believe that mutual transparency is absolutely crucial for a successful cooperation. I look forward to assisting you in every way possible, to future challenges and to many great experiences with you, dear customers and partners."* – Philippe Lindegger

We wish you, dear customers, partners, suppliers and friends, relaxing holidays and a successful new year and, most importantly of all, good health. We look forward to a continued positive cooperation with you in the new year.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Urs Felber', written in a cursive style.

Kind regards, Urs Felber



**Urs Felber**  
Chairman of the Board



**Philippe Lindegger**  
CEO & Co-Owner,  
Head of System Engineering