



Paris, 06 January 2021

Press release

ABMI Group announces the acquisition of Rtone, a French pioneer in the Internet of Things, in a deal that creates the first French IoT player to cover every phase of smart object development

Led by chairman Vincent Coënt with the support of a close-knit team, ABMI Group has acquired **Rtone**, its first acquisition since the LBO in late 2018.

Omnes Capital and co-investors MACSF and Momentum Invest assisted this transaction, which will enable ABMI to round out its offering and strengthen its position in IoT, a fast-growing market with high added value.

More than 40% of the third-generation funds (Omnes Expansion 3 and LCL Expansion 3) has now been deployed, out of the €125 million raised in early 2020 from institutional investors, family offices and private individuals. The team actively partners with ambitious business leaders and their staff to help them accomplish their operational transformation goals, both through organic and external growth. In addition to producing an investment multiple of nearly 2.5x, the team's track record reflects an active external growth policy, averaging one external acquisition per portfolio company, and a large proportion of primary deals.

An IoT specialist in connected object design for innovative start-ups, mid-tier companies and large groups

Founded in 2005, Rtone is a Lyon-based engineering consultancy that designs, develops and integrates customised connected products responding to the IoT/digital needs of its customers. With expertise in both hardware and software and a network of production partners (including ABMI for mechanical aspects), Rtone is an impressive partner that can control and coordinate the entire value chain from product design to production.

The IoT market is experiencing substantial double-digit growth driven by (i) constant technological innovation across all industries, stimulating the application of IoT in industrial settings and the use of specialist service providers and (ii) regulatory changes, particularly in energy and real estate, that encourage the use of environmentally friendly tech systems such as smart grids and smart cities.

In line with the strategy of creating a buy-and-build platform, agreed at the time of the buyout in late 2018, the aim of the acquisition is to allow ABMI to step up its strategy of transforming its service offering and shifting up to a premium segment, while also creating significant business and financial synergies.

Adrien Desportes, CEO, Rtone: *"Since 2007, Rtone has already had two lifetimes. When we began, we designed our own connected products, mainly for industrial purposes, and marketed them in more than 10 countries. In 2014, our business model pivoted towards being an engineering firm specialising in connected objects. We sold our products business in 2019 to focus on engineering services. In six years, we have built up an exceptional full-stack IoT team and have completed over 100 incredible projects alongside start-ups, SMEs and large companies. We have helped save lives, lit cities in a smarter way, helped sick children and toured the world with the Formula E Grand Prix. Now it's time for our 30-person SME to grow up and become the number 1 in our industry, in France and then in Europe. Just because we want to be, because there's always a little ego involved, but also because we believe that designing smart, connected products is incredibly difficult and requires the best talent. We want to be able to work with more companies and come up with even crazier projects for the next few years.*

When Vincent first suggested teaming up in June 2020, we saw that the plan had the potential to speed things up. The current Rtone team has few skills in mechanics, so that's our first day 1 synergy. We - my partner Alexandre Moos and I - were persuaded by the board, the national presence and by ABMI's customer base. We are looking



forward to growing significantly over the next three years to reach a team of over 100 people. This is the third lifetime of Rtone.”

Vincent Coënt, Chairman and CEO, ABMI: *“ABMI is built from know-how accumulated over almost forty years. Our customers in the areas we specialise in are especially loyal, and this is down to a culture that focuses on a commitment to service and a passion for technology. Each of ABMI’s specialist fields deserves to be developed further. We want to make ourselves better known, so that more manufacturers can benefit from our methods, and we want targeted alliances with teams that have the same passion and digital focus. After two years of transformation, this first acquisition has everything we were seeking for our “product engineering” business: very substantial business synergies and a vision for expanding the “smart objects” specialism in line with our ambitions. We hope that this team, put together and led by Adrien Desportes, has plenty more surprises in store for us in the future!”*

Frédéric Mimoun, Senior Director, Omnes: *“After two years of working with Vincent Coënt and his now fully developed team, ABMI Group’s expansion and transformation have continued in line with our roadmap. This first acquisition, carried out without a tender process, will strengthen ABMI’s expertise and know-how in IoT and enhance its transformation, both strategically – it is a premium business with high added value and a strong brand – and financially, as it will boost earnings and give rise to many synergies.”*

Participants:

Vendor Founder/Manager: Alexandre Moos

ABMI: Vincent Coënt, Adrien Desportes (Rtone CEO and new ABMI shareholder)

Omnes (LCL Expansion 3, LCL PME Expansion 3 and Omnes Expansion 3):
Frédéric Mimoun, Senior Director
Victor Versmee, Associate

Co-investors:

MACSF: Olivier Benoist

Momentum Invest: Alain Cochenet, Pierre Le Tanneur

Buyer Advisory

LL Berg (Legal): Olivier Abergel, Julien Carrascosa

Orsan (Legal): David Sebban

Vivien et Associés (Labour Issues): Marie-Emilie Rousseau-Brunel

Next! Financial Advisors (Finance): Hervé Krissi, Edouard Deberse

Vendor Advisory

KPMG (M&A): Stéphane Villard, Nicolas Vergnaud



About Omnes

Omnes is a major player in private equity and infrastructure. With €4 billion in assets under management, Omnes provides companies with the capital they need to fund their growth, in three key areas: Venture Capital, Growth & Buyout Capital and Infrastructure. Omnes is wholly owned by its employees. Omnes is committed to ESG issues and has set up the Omnes Foundation to fund initiatives in favour of children and young people. It is a signatory to the United Nations Principles for Responsible Investment (PRI). www.omnescapital.com

About ABMI

ABMI is a consultant engineering and industrial innovation firm founded almost 35 years ago. It serves major firms seeking to outsource their R&D, by providing technical consultants and engineers in three areas of expertise: product engineering (product design, prototyping and pre-production testing), process engineering (production process improvement) and industrial installation (notably the construction of industrial sites). ABMI offers its services to a variety of industries, including aerospace and defence, energy, capital goods and transport. ABMI has 700 employees and annual sales of more than €50 million.

Press contacts

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