

Business

Acquisitions

GE completes acquisition of Amersham

General Electric Company (GE; <http://www.ge.com>) has announced that it has acquired all the outstanding shares of Amersham (<http://www.amersham.com>), completing its acquisition of a world leader in diagnostic imaging agents and life sciences. Together with GE Medical Systems – a global leader in medical imaging, healthcare services and IT – the combined US\$14 billion business, now known as GE Healthcare (<http://www.gehealthcare.com>), is expected to generate US\$16 billion in revenues in 2005.

With the completion of the transaction, Sir William Castell, formerly Chief Executive of Amersham, assumes the role of President and CEO of GE Healthcare. Joseph Hogan, Senior Vice President of GE, will continue to lead GE's US\$11 billion medical imaging, services and IT businesses, now named GE Healthcare Technologies. Peter Loescher, former Chief Operating Officer of Amersham, will be named a GE officer and will manage the newly created US\$3 billion GE Healthcare Bio-Sciences business, which will consist of the former Amersham operating units. Hogan and Loescher will report directly to Castell.

'These technology and service driven businesses can change the face of healthcare,' said Jeffrey R. Immelt, Chairman of the Board and CEO of GE. 'We're delighted to bring Bill Castell and his team to GE to help make this vision a reality and we look forward to his leadership in integrating these exciting growth platforms.'

In marking the closing of the acquisition, Castell said: 'With the completion of the GE acquisition of Amersham, today we form an exciting new company, GE Healthcare. Combining GE's heritage and skills in engineering, physics and IT with those of Amersham's in biology and chemistry will enable us to accelerate our vision and shape a new era of medicine.'

Collaborations

Aventis and Amphora Discovery enter global discovery collaboration

Aventis (<http://www.aventis.com>) and Amphora Discovery (<http://www.amphoracorp.com>) have entered into a two-year research agreement focused on chemical biology and lead generation across Aventis global research sites. Under the scope of the agreement, Amphora will employ its proprietary drug discovery capabilities to identify small-molecule kinase inhibitors for multiple potential therapeutic targets. In addition, the agreement calls for various other areas of collaboration including high-content profiling, ion-channel research and technology enhancement.

Amphora will be providing its proprietary high-precision activity data on focused libraries for use in discovery efforts by one of the Aventis chemical biology teams. Both companies expect to benefit from improved focused libraries for increased probabilities of success in kinase lead generation. The ion-channel research program will focus on one Aventis CNS therapeutic target.

'Aventis has evaluated several new drug discovery approaches, and we believe Amphora's technology platform meets the demanding standards of our chemical biology program. It is a good fit for Aventis information-driven discovery efforts,' said Kurt Stoeckli, Global Head of lead discovery technologies at Aventis. 'We are enthusiastic about how Amphora's capability in drug discovery may help improve our ability to quickly find high-quality lead compounds for high-priority drug targets.'

Marty Haslanger, President and CEO of Amphora, noted that: 'Amphora has spent the past two years building a drug discovery engine that achieves unprecedented speed and data quality, and we are excited to have it validated in such a broad and integrated collaboration with a leader like Aventis.'

By applying an end-to-end high precision process and screening across biological systems and pathways, Amphora is able to develop potent,

selective drug leads coupled with important complementary data designed to optimize lead-optimization efforts.

The Genetics Company and Morphochem

The Genetics Company (<http://www.the-genetics.com>), which focuses on research, development and commercialization of products for the diagnosis, monitoring and therapy of patients suffering from neurodegenerative diseases and cancer, has entered into a research collaboration with Morphochem AG (<http://www.morphochem.com>), a leader in the evolutionary discovery of small-molecule drugs.

Morphochem will apply its protein expression, purification, crystallization and structure determination capabilities, all part of Morphochem's MOREsystem®, to generate biostructural information for further optimization of inhibitor compounds against β -Secretase, which have been identified by The Genetics Company as potential new therapeutic agents for Alzheimer's disease.

Lutz Weber, Chief Scientific Officer of Morphochem commented: 'We are delighted that The Genetics Company has chosen Morphochem for this collaboration. It provides further validation to Morphochem's technology platform and underlines the importance of our biostructural tools for developing novel lead compounds against important disease-related targets.'

Benno Schindelholz, Director of Discovery Technologies and Manager of The Genetics Company's β -Secretase program, said: 'This collaboration with Morphochem will be a major step for the further development of The Genetics Company small molecule β -Secretase inhibitors into new therapeutic agents for Alzheimer's Disease treatment.'

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