



Press Release

Berner Group continues to focus on core business and sells BÄR Group

- **Acquired by the French company RAJA**
- **Jobs and business location safeguarded**

Cologne/Duisburg, July 13, 2017. The Berner Group continues to focus on its core business and has sold its business equipment company BÄR Group to the French family enterprise RAJA. In so doing, the Berner Group has positioned itself even more strongly as a B2B trading partner for all materials in the areas of maintenance, repair, and production for commercial customers in the building, mobility, and industry sectors. The RAJA Group continues its expansion course and will take over the Duisburg location and some 130 BÄR employees in five countries in the summer. Information on the purchase price was not made public by either party.

The companies UDOBÄR, ORBIS, and firmenbedarf-discount are part of the BÄR Group, which employs a staff of 130 in five countries and achieved sales of approximately more than 45 million euros last year. The BÄR Group of Companies offers its customers items in the product segments corporate furnishings, warehouse supplies, transport systems, office furnishings, and safety equipment.

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In contrast, the remaining companies of the Berner Group sell products which range from professional tools through fire protection solutions to high-tech specialty chemicals. In addition to the divergence of its products, BÄR also focuses on other customer segments and sales channels than the remaining companies of the Berner Group.

The RAJA Group is a leading European distributor and a preferred partner to companies for the procurement of their packaging materials and equipment. With the acquisition of the BÄR Group, RAJA, which was founded in 1954, would enter the market as an internationally active mail order company and full-range retailer for warehouse, office, and plant equipment in the DACH region. RAJA therefore has a great interest in taking over a company like BÄR, which has successfully established itself in this special market with a functioning infrastructure and specialists in multichannel sales.

The Management Board of the BÄR Group expressly supports the transition, because the core business of BÄR and RAJA takes place in similar customer segments and requires the same IT platforms that are already running successfully at RAJA. BÄR's management therefore expects further growth momentum.

"RAJA is our preferred strategic partner, and intends to develop the company at the existing location with the existing staff. The concept convinced us," said Jürgen Schulte-Laggenbeck, CFO of Berner Group.

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The Berner Group

The Berner Group is a family-run commercial enterprise with approximately 8,500 employees in 25 countries. We are the central B2B trading partner for all materials in the maintenance, repair, and production segments for our customers in the building, mobility, and industry sectors. We create an integrated omni-channel purchasing experience for our customers. In the steel and C materials as well as chemicals segments we are also an innovative manufacturer.