

10 April 2008

NVM INVESTS £5.6 MILLION IN MBO OF SOFTWARE SOLUTIONS BUSINESS

NVM Private Equity Limited (NVM) has invested £5.6 million in the management buy-out of Axial Systems Limited. The deal was introduced to NVM by Duncan Lamb at Grant Thornton. Axial has emerged as the market leading supplier of networking solutions across a range of sectors including financial services, telecommunications and the public sector. Established nearly twenty years ago and based in Maidenhead with a sales office in Runcorn, Axial offers the latest available technologies to optimise their customer's network performance, analysis and security. Axial operates as a 'value added reseller' on behalf of leading brands (including McAfee and Juniper). The company's reputation for technical excellence combined with their customer focused approach has underpinned the company's rapid growth over the past 3 years.

The business is well positioned to take advantage of their strong market position in the high growth markets of network security and performance optimisation as customers look to invest in developing new network capabilities or secure and maximise the efficiencies of their existing network infrastructure.

NVM has backed the buy-out team, led by Ash Hussain and supported closely by Graham Linney (Finance Director). Paul Spencer, the founder of the business, will be staying with the company as a non-executive director. NVM has introduced Peter Lloyd as non-executive chairman. Peter has operated in this sector over the past 16 years leading the successful management buy-out of Ascent Technology Limited.

Richard Gibson, Peter Hodson and Mauro Biagioni led the transaction for NVM.

Richard Gibson from NVM Private Equity who led the deal commented: "We were attracted to Axial as we believe that they operate in a very attractive market where there are significant growth opportunities which their high level of expertise and experienced management can exploit. Their strong track record of growth, strong customer service record and strong management team demonstrated a good investment potential for us."

Ash Hussain, Managing Director of Axial Systems Limited added: "The MBO gives us the funding that will allow us to exploit growth opportunities in our markets

and take the business to the next level. A partner in NVM, who is committed to our future growth and share our vision, can only help us to achieve that.”

Duncan Lamb, Director of Grant Thornton who led the transaction for the vendors "We recognised that this was a fantastic opportunity for the management team to build the business within its established niche, with the support of a private equity house, that will allow the markets in which Axial operate to be fully exploited. We wish the management team and NVM every success with their investment."

The legal adviser to NVM was Eversheds LLP. Financial due diligence was undertaken by Deloitte and commercial due diligence was completed by Armstrong Transaction Services. Management were advised by Osborne Clarke. Banking was led by Jonathan Stradling at HSBC Thames Valley Corporate Banking Centre. The vendors were advised by the Corporate Finance team at Grant Thornton UK LLP and by law firm, Osborne Clarke.

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Pictured:

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NOTES TO EDITORS

NVM Private Equity Limited (NVM)

NVM is one of the UK's leading independent private equity businesses focussed on making equity investments of between £2 million and £10 million in unquoted UK companies. NVM manages over £190 million of funds and is differentiated by having executives living and working in regional business communities throughout the UK.