



Axalto Selected by Carte Bleue for First Gift Card Launch in France

This Christmas, smart cards have gift vouchers all wrapped up

Amsterdam, the Netherlands – December 15, 2005 – Axalto (Euronext NL0000400653 AXL), the world's leader in microprocessor cards, today announced it has been selected by Carte Bleue for the launch of the Gift Card, the first prepaid EMV (Europay MasterCard Visa) payment card for the consumer market. As part of this program, Axalto is also the only provider of the related personalization services. The Gift Card is available in France as of today from LCL (Le Crédit Lyonnais), the first bank taking part in the pilot launch. Axalto will supply LCL with large volumes of the Gift Card in time for this year's Christmas season.

The Gift Card is an innovative, trendy and original concept for replacing the traditional gift voucher, which is limited to specific retail stores. Since the new card is valid at all retailers, it offers recipients much greater freedom to choose the gifts they want. For banks, the Gift Card represents a powerful way of broadening their image to reach new target groups and to get consumers used to prepaid cards.

People who wish to give the card as a present simply need to go to their bank branch to place their order for the Gift Card. They choose the credit amount and the bank offers them a large choice of cards, with printing and packaging illustrating various gift giving occasions. The gift-wrapped and personalized cards are then sent with a greeting message to recipients on the date requested by the giver. The cards are valid for one year.

"For the commercial launch of a such a consumer-oriented product, we had to call on a trustworthy partner with solid experience in the field of card personalization," said Frédéric Toumelin, director of marketing and development at Carte Bleue. "For this newly born product of the Carte Bleue Visa range that will revolutionize gift giving in France, Axalto was able to propose a tailor-made personalization service and to comply with the extremely tight launch schedule that we had fixed in order to be able to meet the Christmas season deadline."

"This success acknowledges Axalto's expertise in services dedicated to issuing banks," added Bertrand Knopf, banking and loyalty director at Axalto. "We are proud to be associated with this unprecedented project in France, which will enable banks to enhance and differentiate both the content and the positioning of their offerings."

About Axalto

Axalto (Euronext: NL0000400653 AXL) is the world's leading provider of microprocessor cards (Gartner 2005, Frost & Sullivan 2004) — the key to digital networks — and a major supplier of point-of-sale terminals. Its 4500 employees come from over 65 nationalities and serve customers in more than 100 countries, with worldwide sales exceeding 3 billion smart cards to date. The company has 25 years' experience in smart card innovation and leads its industry in security technology and open systems.

Axalto continuously creates new generations of products for use in a variety of applications in the telecommunications, finance, retail, transport, entertainment, healthcare, personal identification, information technology and public sector markets. Microprocessor cards provide convenience, security and privacy to public and private services operators, their customers and end users.

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