

Giant JV-Cooperation with German Quality – German Gauselmann Group forms Merkur Casino joint venture with Russian Villart Group

ESPELKAMP/MOSCOW. MERKUR CASINO, daughter of “Merkur International” which is the Europe-wide operating subsidiary of the privately held German Gauselmann Group, signed a joint venture contract with the Russian Villart Industry Group of Obuhovo/Moscow on 10 June 2005.



“Today’s announcement of our joint venture is a significant step in our continuous efforts to grow our local Merkur Casino presence with a very strong Russian partner”, said Rolf Falke, CEO of the Gauselmann’s Group MERKUR CASINO “With this joint venture”, stated Rolf Klug, member of the Gauselmann Board, and Roman Shirokov, owner of The Villart Industry Group, mutually, “we have laid the foundation for the successful and swift expansion into the Russian electronic casino segment. In joining forces, Villart and Gauselmann are creating a new very strong competitor with proven multi-facet experiences.”

New state-of-the-art electronic casino operations will be opened in strategic locations throughout Russia under the

MERKUR CASINO brand name as early as fall this year.

The new Russian partner of the Gauselmann Group, the Villart Industry Group, was first founded in 2002 by Roman Shirokov and quickly established itself as one of the leading Russian manufacturer and suppliers of state-of-the-art slot machines.

MERKUR CASINO, as the international sister of the German MERKUR-SPIELOTHEK operation, currently operates some 40 state-of-the-art arcades in European countries: in Belgium, the Netherlands, Rumania, Hungary and in the Czech Republic. "As part of your corporate deliverables, Russia is set to become incorporated as the sixth international MERKUR CASINO operation initiative," stated Rolf Falke.

MERKUR CASINO will be responsible for the operative management of the regional joint venture. While the Villart Group, who are well-established and recognized experts on the Russian casino stage, will bring in their know-how as full service provider in the local field, the Gauselmann subsidiary MERKUR CASINO will supply vital operative components. With these synergy effects, both partners have created the strongest prerequisites to ensure that the MERKUR CASINOS, which are aimed at the AWP and electronic casino segment, will be successfully established in Russia, similar to what the Gauselmann operations has already established in its existing "SPIELOTHEK" ® and "MERKUR CASINO" ® operations which are recognized as electronic casino's with German quality standards.

SPIELOTHEK and MERKUR CASINO are subsidiaries and entities of the worldwide operating Gauselmann Group – the European market leader for electronic entertainment. With the annual revenue of some € 670 millions in 2004, more than 5,700 employees are working worldwide for the Gauselmann Group. Almost 600 game developers, game designers, mathematicians, graphic designers, quality managers around the globe underline the innovative abilities and competence of the Gauselmann Group, which has

sold some 2 million gaming products into various markets since its foundation.

To find out more information about the Gauselmann and Villart group of companies, please visit the website at www.gauselmann.de or www.merkur-casino.de or www.villart.ru or www.villart-eu.com