

# News Release

Opticom International Research



## ***Revised brand strategies shuffle top of European office paper brands around***

**Stockholm, Sweden, 14<sup>th</sup> January 2010** – Opticom International Research now presents the results of the 9<sup>th</sup> edition of the “Brand Equity Tracking Survey - Office Paper”. This industry standard benchmark survey for office paper brands has been conducted among more than 4 000 professional end-users across 7 countries in Europe.

The top European office paper brands according to the Opticom Brand Equity Index are:

<b>Rank 2009 (2007)</b>	<b>Brand</b>	<b>Brand owner</b>
1 (1)	Xerox	Xerox
2 (3)	HP	HP
3 (5)	Navigator	grupo Portucel Soporcel
4 (2)	Impega	Lyreco
5 (NEW!/2*)	Lyreco	Lyreco
6 (4)	Viking	Office Depot (Viking Direct)
7 (14)	Canon	Canon
8 (6)	Clairefontaine	Clairefontaine
9 (12)	Océ	Océ
10 (8)	Antalis	Antalis
11 (10)	Data Copy	M-real
12 (NEW!/7*)	Office Depot	Office Depot
13 (BACK!)	Evolve	M-real
14 (9)	Motif	PaperlinX
15 (11)	Discovery	grupo Portucel Soporcel
16 (NEW!)	Plano	Papyrus
17 (18)	Double A Paper	Advance Agro
18 (NEW!/20*)	Ricoh	Ricoh
19 (NEW!)	Rainbow	Papyrus
20 (15)	Future	UPM

*\* New but rebranded; comparative ranking for predecessor (Impega, Niceday and Nashuatec respectively)*

In total 20 brands have qualified for the BEI this year and a number of new brands have entered the total BEI. Three of these are rebranded brands: Lyreco replacing Impega; Office Depot replacing Niceday and Ricoh replacing Nashuatec.

*"Also Staples is going through a similar rebranding process but does not show up in the ranking this year as it has not reached the same level of brand transition as its bigger competitors" says Marijn van der Sluijs, Project Manager responsible for the survey, "Once the dust settles on this rebranding of both the corporate as well as product brand, Staples should manage to take a position from which it can challenge Lyreco and Office Depot, however, especially if the decline noticed for Viking and Viking Direct in the 2009 survey is to continue."*

Besides these rebranded brands, Papyrus has succeeded in successfully launching its Plano and Rainbow brands in additional markets which now allows these brands to qualify for the total ranking as well.

*"As an advocate of branding I am happy to notice that Navigator's continued positive development and the entry of Plano and Rainbow prove that investing efforts in building brands does pay off," Mikael Selling, Corporate Advisor and Partner at Opticom states, "For these brands, a strong relation with their customers through branding will position them well when the economy picks up again and will protect their market share from deterioration in face of any future economic decline."*

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As the study indicates an increasing importance of environmental aspects, the fact that Evolve returns to the ranking might not be a surprise. For the future, the question is whether more brands will manage to position themselves on the basis of environmental friendliness and whether office paper brand owners will manage to grasp the key characteristics of what end-users consider to be environmentally-friendly.

### **About Opticom's Brand Equity Index and the Office Paper Tracking Survey**

**Opticom's BEI model is a complete approach to strategic branding. It assesses the impact of individual office paper brands, benchmarks the leading brands against each other and evaluates the success of individual brand strategies over time through four indexed key drivers of brand equity: spontaneous awareness, top-of-mind, qualities & associations and loyalty.**

In order to improve the brand equity of their brands, brand owners should analyse the individual results for the different sub-indexes – both in comparison to last year as well as in relation to other brands – and determine where improvements can and need to be made. Is the channel strategy appropriate? Do the brands get enough support in their marketing efforts? Do the office paper buyers understand that the things our brands are good at are important? Is the perception of the brand's performance fair? Why have other brands with a similar positioning as ours been able to achieve more than our brand?

You can learn more by ordering the "Brand Equity Tracking Survey – Office Paper 2009". The survey is based on more than 4 000 interviews with professional end-users of office paper (micro, small, medium, large and macro offices) in 7 European countries (Germany, France, the United Kingdom, Italy, Spain, the Netherlands and Belgium). The survey has an overall purpose to identify and annually track: Brand Awareness, Buying Determinants, Brand Performance, Brand Loyalty and Brand Equity measured through Opticom's Brand Equity Index (BEI).

### **For more information, or ordering of the study, please contact Marijn van der Sluijs at:**

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**Opticom International Research** is a leading global market research and consulting firm *with the mission to help our customers make better business decisions*. Since 1987, we have been dedicated to serving clients within the pulp, paper & board industry with customised research services focusing on commercial and marketing related issues.

Opticom offers experience and in-depth knowledge across a wide range of commercial and market related issues relevant to our customers:

- > Branding
- > Customer and market segmentation
- > Customer satisfaction
- > Concept testing
- > Campaign evaluation
- > Pricing and positioning
- > Channel/distribution strategy

In combining our large global in-house research capabilities, state-of-the-art information technology and our pulp & paper competence we have proven to be a unique partner for a number of leading forest products companies all over the world that value not only speed and quality but also cost effectiveness in surveys and analyses.