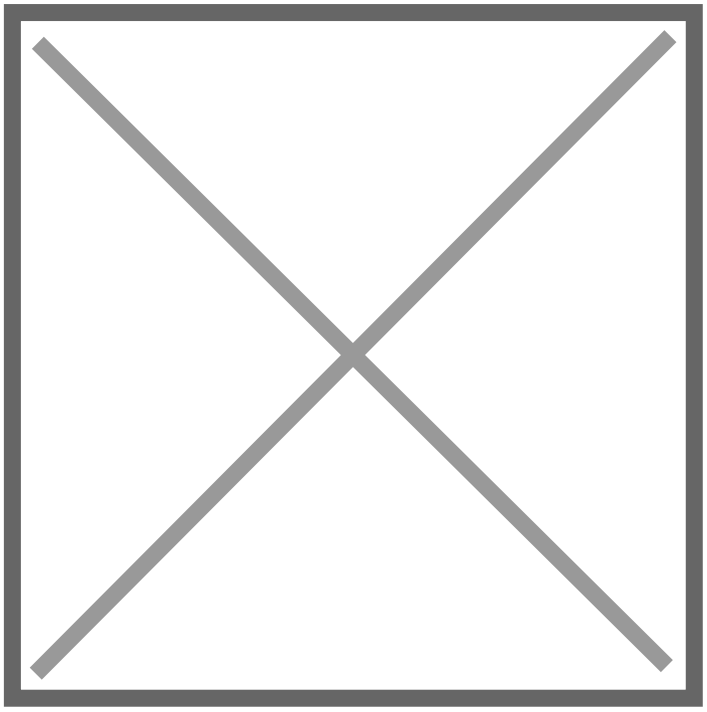
BioSpect
the business of Bi
24 years of leveraging the business of Bio
www.biospectrumindia.co

Human Genome Sciences announces agreement with

04 November 2004 | News



Under the agreement, Human Genome Sciences will receive an upfront fee and clinical development and commercial milestone payments worth $183 million. Further, Human Genome Sciences will also receive royalties on the annual net sales of any products developed and commercialized. Human Genome Sciences will be responsible for the manufacture of Albugon for Phase 1 and 2 clinical trials.

Albugon was created using Human Genome Sciences' proprietary albumin fusion technology, which involves fusing the gene that expresses human albumin to the gene that expresses a therapeutically active protein. Research has shown that the fusion of therapeutic proteins to human albumin decreases clearance and prolongs half-life. Albugon results from the genetic fusion of human albumin and GLP-1.

Abbott acquires Spine Next

Abbott has announced the acquisition of Spine Next, SA, France, a privately owned manufacturer of orthopedic spinal implant devices. "This acquisition enhances our spinal product line with an exciting non-fusion technology and expands the established global distribution network for our existing spinal products business," said Jeffrey Binder, president, Spinal Concepts, a division of Abbott Laboratories. According to Richard A Gonzalez, president and chief operating officer, medical products group, Abbott this move is consistent with the company's overall strategy of focusing on high-growth, technology-driven areas.

Under terms of the agreement, Abbott acquired all of the equity of Spine Next for approximately $60 million in cash plus additional milestone payments upon achievement of future targets. One-time charges are expected in the fourth quarter of 2004.

Among Spine Next's products is the Wallis system, a spinal implant for treating the root cause of degenerative disc disease without fusing the spine. Dynamic stabilization devices treat degenerative disc disease by providing additional support to the spine without fusion of the vertebrae. They have the potential to be less invasive than artificial discs, and provide surgeons an option for treating degenerative disc disease earlier in its progression.

Applied Biosystems, MDS transaction complete

Applied Biosystems, an Applera Corp. business, and MDS announced the completion of the transaction to expand the scope of their joint venture in life science mass spectrometry. Under the terms of the transaction MDS will pay $40 million for a 50 percent interest in intellectual property assets related to current Applied Biosystems MALDI Time-of-Flight (TOF) mass spectrometry systems and next-generation products under development, together with a 100 percent interest in certain MALDI

TOF product-related manufacturing and research and development assets. MDS and Applied Biosystems have each contributed the MALDI TOF through a 50:50 joint venture of Applied Biosystems and the MDS Sciex division. This joint venture was established in 1986.

Nanogen, Epoch Biosciences to merge

Nanogen Inc. and Epoch Biosciences have signed a definitive agreement to merge Epoch into Nanogen in an all-stock transaction. While, Nanogen is a developer of advanced in vitro diagnostic products, Epoch Biosciences offers proprietary products that accelerate genomic analysis. The reason for the merger is that Epoch has a variety of products that are complementary to Nanogen's. Epoch has developed advanced technologies in its MGB Eclipse Probe System. And Nanogen has been incorporating Epoch's technology into its own assays. Epoch has several product offerings for molecular research and diagnostic applications, including research reagents and services for real-time PCR (polymerase chain reaction). In July, Epoch launched 21 MGB Eclipse detection reagents, real-time Analyte Specific Reagents (ASRs) for the molecular diagnosis of infectious and genetic diseases and cancer. The real-time ASRs are complementary to the NanoChip Molecular Biology Workstation, which accomplishes more complex analysis of multiple markers.

"By adding Epoch's high-quality products, we expect to increase our productivity, expand our customer reach and significantly grow revenue," said Howard Birndorf, chairman and chief executive officer, Nanogen." Under the terms of the merger, Nanogen will offer $2 per a share of Epoch. The companies have agreed that the exchange ratio will not be less than 0.4673 nor exceed 0.6329 of one Nanogen share. There are approximately 29 million Epoch shares and share equivalents outstanding. The directors of both companies and certain other stockholders of Epoch have signed an agreement to vote in favor of the transaction, which is expected to be tax-free to Epoch stockholders. The merger is expected to close by the end of 2004.

ViroLogic, ACLARA BioSciences revise merger terms

ViroLogic and ACLARA BioSciences have modified the terms of the Contingent Value Rights (CVR) in the definitive merger agreement previously executed by the companies. Though the CVR terms have been revised, the exchange ratio remains unchanged with each outstanding share of ACLARA common stock to be exchanged for 1.7 shares of ViroLogic common stock and 1.7 CVR. The companies have postponed their respective annual meetings previously scheduled for October 27, 2004. The meetings are expected to be rescheduled to occur later in the fourth quarter of 2004.

"The revised CVR terms have several advantages for both the ViroLogic and ACLARA stockholders," stated William D Young, CEO and chairman, ViroLogic. The revised CVR provides for a potential payment in cash and/or stock of up to $0.88 per CVR, equivalent to $1.50 per ACLARA share (formerly $0.50 per CVR and $0.85 per ACLARA share, respectively), depending on the ViroLogic stock price 18 months (formerly 12 months) following completion of the merger. Under the revised agreement, the maximum payment under the CVR would be $0.88 per CVR, if ViroLogic's stock price trades at or below an average price of $2.02 per share (formerly $2.40) during the 15 trading days immediately preceding the eighteen-month anniversary of the closing of the merger, declining to $0.00 per CVR if ViroLogic's stock averages $2.90 per share or higher (unchanged from prior terms) during such time. If any payments are to be made on the CVR, the first $0.50 per CVR will be paid in cash. Any payments due beyond the first $0.50 per CVR can be made in cash, ViroLogic common stock or a combination of cash and stock, at the option of ViroLogic. The CVR is expected to be listed on either the Nasdaq Stock Market or the OTC Bulletin Board.

Founded in 1995, ACLARA is a biotechnology company, which works in the area of personalized medicine through its protein-based assay technology-the eTag System.

Cellegy to acquire Biosyn

Cellegy Pharmaceuticals has signed an agreement to acquire Biosyn Inc., a privately-held biopharmaceutical company in Huntingdon Valley, Pennsylvania. Cellegy Pharmaceuticals is a specialty biopharmaceutical company that develops prescription drugs for the treatment of gastrointestinal disorders, women's health care conditions, and sexual dysfunction.

Under terms of the agreement, Cellegy will exchange of 2.5 million Cellegy common shares for 100 percent of Biosyn's issued and outstanding capital stock. Cellegy will further invest $3.25 million into the business to satisfy certain balance sheet liabilities and will pay up to an additional $15 million upon launch of Biosyn's lead product, Savvy, a contraceptive gel for use by women to protect against the possible contraction of HIV-AIDS. The gel is part of a class of microbicides. Biosyn has two other anti-HIV product candidates in the pipeline.

Magellan Biosciences, formed from ESA and Dynex

Magellan Biosciences Inc. has acquired Dynex Technologies, a global supplier of microplate instrumentation and automation products for the biomedical research, drug discovery and clinical diagnostic markets. Magellan acquired the Dynex business from Capital Genomix Inc., a biotechnology company in Gaithersburg, MD. Financial terms were not disclosed. Including previously acquired ESA Inc., located in Chelmsford, MA, Magellan expects to generate consolidated revenues in excess of $30 million in 2004.

Magellan Biosciences, which is majority owned by Ampersand Ventures, was established to build a leading life science tools company through a combination of internal growth and acquisitions. Dynex will operate as a subsidiary of Magellan, as will previously acquired ESA. Boston Community Venture Fund is also an investor in Magellan.

"Microplates are the standard format for experimentation in life science research and clinical diagnostics, and Dynex has a strong presence in these markets with its line of microplate readers, washers and automated high throughput systems," explained Herbert Hooper, a general partner at Ampersand Ventures and chairman of Magellan's Board.

GeneOhm Sciences, Infectio Diagnostic to merge

GeneOhm Sciences (GSI) and Infectio Diagnostic (IDI) have announced their plans to merge and form a molecular diagnostic company. "The merger of GSI and IDI brings together a cost-effective platform for multiplexing, a broad portfolio of molecular targets and the capability to develop molecular diagnostic products for infectious diseases. Together, GSI and IDI will create a rich pipeline of products serving the unmet needs in key areas of medical diagnostics," said Dr Peter Klemm, CEO, GeneOhm Sciences. Dr. Klemm will continue as CEO in the combined company.

The combined company will maintain its facilities in Quebec and in San Diego, creating competence centers that leverage the unique expertise of each organization.

Argenta, Etiologics merge

Argenta Discovery Ltd., a leader in integrated drug discovery services, and Etiologics Ltd, a respiratory drug development company, announced to merge. The merged firm will be known as Argenta Discovery and would provide comprehensive drug discovery contract research capabilities. Existing investors MVM Ltd, 3i, ABN AMRO Capital, Genavent and TTP Ventures have invested an additional Â£5.9 million ($10.5 million) in the new entity. Christopher Ashton, formerly CEO of Etiologics, would be the CEO of the new firm.

"This strategic merger based on a sustainable business model unites two companies with complementary strengths and interests to create a leading provider of drug discovery services with particular expertise in respiratory drug research," said Dr. Ashton.