



PRESS RELEASE

Adecco SA reports 38% operating income growth in the first quarter of 2001

Highlights:

- Revenue growth of 31% in CHF, 35% in local currency
- Operating income growth of 38% in CHF, 42% in local currency
- Income before amortization growth of 30%
- Operating margin improvement of 20 basis points from 3.9% to 4.1%
- Double-digit growth in France, Belgium, Spain, Italy and Japan
- Focus on profit and operating margin improvement in a lower growth environment
- North America's profits up considerably despite slowing market conditions
- Gains in market share amid bearish economic conditions
- Strong results in outplacement and career management sector

CHESEREX, SWITZERLAND, April 25, 2001 – Adecco SA, the global leader in personnel services, today reported its results for the first quarter ended April 1, 2001. Group **revenues** increased by 31% to CHF 6.7 billion in the first quarter of 2001. In local currency, revenues increased by 35%. **Operating income** grew faster than revenues at the rate of 38% to CHF 276 million, illustrating the company's strategy geared towards the improvement of profits and margins in an environment characterized by lower growth. In local currency, operating income grew 42%. **Income before amortization of goodwill** increased by 30% to CHF 161 million. Exceptional **one-time charges** of CHF 15 million for write-downs of Internet company participations and CHF 8 million for the cumulative effect of accounting changes were recorded in the first quarter of 2001.

In local currency, revenues grew organically approximately 8% as management had anticipated in the beginning of the year. Focus on profitability improvement led to approximately 29% organic growth in operating income. While currency fluctuations contributed positively last year, they had a negative impact of approximately 4% on the consolidated results in the first quarter of 2001.

“Our performance in the first quarter was again very pleasing” comments **John Bowmer**, Adecco's CEO. *“We were able to increase our market share in a slower growing world market while at the same time increasing operating margins by 20 basis points by proactive cost management and improved product mix. We are confident that this improvement in our competitive position will pay off when markets rebound.”*

Performance Drivers, Regional and Business Line Performance

North America posted strong revenue growth of 42% in CHF and 40% in local currency in the first quarter of 2001 compared to last year's first quarter. North America's organic revenue growth was negatively impacted by the deterioration of market conditions in the USA, but the region posted a substantial increase in operating profit, both total and organic, due to achieved cost synergies and product mix enhancements. Revenues in Europe grew 27% in CHF and 34% in local currency. In France and UK growth in CHF was in the low twenties, and nearly 30% in local currency. Europe posted strong profits both in CHF and local currency. The Rest of world recorded triple-digit revenue growth, both in local currency and CHF, with sharp increase in profits. Revenue performance drivers were France, Belgium, Spain, Italy and Japan. Major contributors to the profit growth were USA, Germany, Switzerland, UK, Spain and Italy.

Specialty brands posted combined revenue growth of 21% in CHF and 23% at constant rate, and operating income increase of 31% in CHF and in local currency.

*"We are now seeing synergies from the Olsten merger, as US profits are up considerably despite slowing market conditions", highlighted **John Bowmer**. "Increased profitability was also seen in Europe, led primarily by outstanding performances in Italy, Spain, Germany, and Switzerland. I am equally delighted with the performance at Lee Hecht Harrison, our Outplacement and Career Management brand, where first quarter profits are up over 60% against the same period in 2000."*

Internet Update

The company's e-commerce initiatives continue to progress and started to bear results. After only a few months in operation, the Italian portal www.Adecco.it assembled a database of over 300,000 registered and certified candidates, more than any other Internet site in Italy. Recent estimates show that approximately 8% to 9% of revenues in Italy are generated from online activities. This web-based system has also been rolled out in Spain. The French web portal is on schedule to go live in September this year.

*"We are very pleased with the success of our own Internet developments", says **Felix Weber**, Adecco's CFO. "E-commerce is an important component of our strategy. The Internet is a key to a fast and cost effective expansion. It allows us to serve our Clients better, to approach candidates more effectively and to accelerate the business expansion. On top of this, the Internet gives us the opportunity to build new businesses, capitalizing on our strong market positions in the world."*

Outlook

Commenting on near-term expectations, **John Bowmer** said, *"We have entered a period of slower market growth. Conditions have deteriorated since last year, but Adecco is well positioned to thrive in such an environment. Our market leadership, cost efficiencies, technology, balanced portfolio and above all outstanding people will ensure a solid platform for sustainable growth."*

US GAAP Results

For the three months ended April 1, 2001 Adecco reported under **US Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP)** revenues of CHF 6.7 billion and a net loss of CHF 182 million after charging goodwill amortization of CHF 320 million, and one-time charges of CHF 15 million for Internet investment write-down and CHF 8 million, net of tax for the cumulative effect of accounting change in resulting from adoption of the Financial Accounting Standards Board Statement No. 133, as amended, "Accounting for Derivative Instruments and Hedging Activity".

According to Chief Financial Officer, Felix Weber, *"This net result reflects the accounting principles of US GAAP and Adecco's chosen goodwill amortization schedule of five years. Adecco considers operating income and income before amortization of goodwill and restructuring charges to be the most relevant benchmarks of the company's financial performance, as they measure our operational performance and our ability to fund growth and to distribute dividends."*

Statements made in this press release, other than those concerning historical information, should be considered forward-looking and subject to risks and uncertainties. The Company's actual results may differ materially from the results anticipated in these forward-looking statements as a result of certain factors as set forth in the Company's reports on Form 20-F made pursuant to the Securities Exchange Act of 1934. For instance, the Company's results of operations may differ materially from those anticipated in the forward-looking statements due to, among other things: management's ability to effectively integrate Olsten Corporation into the Company's existing operations; the Company's ability to continue to mitigate the effects of legislation in France upon gross margins; increased price competition, the general level of economic health and activity in the markets and countries in which the Company operates; the impact of changes in foreign currency exchange rates; changes in interest rates; and the continued availability of qualified personnel. In addition, the market price of the Company's stock may be volatile from time to time as a result of, among other things: the Company's operating results, the operating results of other staffing service providers, and changes in the performance of global stock markets in general.

About Adecco

Adecco SA is the global leader in personnel services. With the addition of Olsten, the Adecco network connects up to **700,000 associates** with business clients each day through its network of over **30,000 employees** and over **5,000 offices** in **58 countries** around the world. Registered in Switzerland, and managed by a multinational team with expertise in markets spanning the globe, Adecco delivers an unparalleled range of flexible staffing and career resources to corporate clients and qualified associates.

Adecco provides clients with staffing services and solutions covering all major industries as well as specific professions. The worldwide **Adecco** Brand network focuses on global industries in transition, including automotive, banking, electronics, logistics, and telecommunications. **Adecco** is also positioned as a worldwide leader in each of the major professional staffing segments with several world-class business lines: *aoc* (Accountants on Call) and *Jonathan Wren* for Finance, Banking and Accounting; *Ajilon* and *Computer People* for high-end Information Technology, *TAD* and *Roevin* for Engineering and Technical. These **Adecco** businesses provide their clients with a broad range of staffing solutions, from temporary work to permanent placement, to consulting and managed services. **Adecco** also offers a range of HR solutions with *Econova/Lee Hecht Harrison*, delivering outplacement and career management services. **Adecco** clients retain this unique range of services through local, national and multinational contracts.

**Adecco SA is listed on The Swiss Exchange [ADECCO N (ADEN 700'939)], NYSE [ADO],
Euronext Premier Marché [12819].**

Further information can be found at the Investors page at www.adecco.com

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Financial Highlights (Unaudited)

CHF millions	Three Months Ended		%
	April 1, 2001	April 2, 2000	
Net service revenues	6,728	5,150	31%
Operating Income	276	200	38%
Income before amortization of goodwill	161	124	30%
One-time items (1)	(23)		
Amortization of goodwill	(320)	(192)	67%
Net income (loss)	(182)	(68)	
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Income per share before amortization of goodwill - Basic	8.68	6.96	25%
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Income per share before amortization of goodwill - Fully diluted	8.46	6.74	26%

Net Service Revenues by Geographic Segment (Unaudited)

CHF Millions	Three Months Ended		% Change (in Swiss Francs)
	1 April, 2001	April 2, 2000	
Europe	4,004	3,158	27%
North America	1,975	1,386	42%
Asia Pacific	560	514	9%
Rest of the World	189	92	105%
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Total Adecco	6,728	5,150	31%
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Specialty Brands	904	746	21%

Income before amortization of goodwill and restructuring charges is not meant to portray net income or cash flow in accordance with U.S. generally accepted accounting principles. Goodwill amortization is a non-cash charge to operating income; however, income before amortization of goodwill does not represent cash available to shareholders. This may not be comparable to similarly entitled items reported by other companies. Adecco amortizes goodwill over its estimated life of five years.

Additional information available upon request.