

## **BI Expands Its Global Presence With the Acquisition of The MINT Organization**

**Milton Keynes, UK, 20 October 2006** – BI, the Communication and Motivation Company, today announced its purchase of The MINT Organization, an incentive travel and performance improvement company based in Australia, Asia Pacific and the Middle East. The acquisition will be phased over the next five years, and MINT will become a subsidiary of a newly-formed holding company (BI Worldwide Group).

The company to be known as MINT, a member of BI Worldwide Group comprises three business streams - MINT Motivation, MINT Events and MINT Trips. Its head office is in Melbourne, with offices in Sydney, Shanghai, Singapore and Dubai, and it operates in the sectors of automotive, financial, FMCG, Telco & IT.

MINT's founder and CEO, Nigel Gaunt, will continue to run the business and will report to BI managing director Richard Bandell. BI Worldwide Group's chairman, David Hackett, will be part-seconded to the new business, working out of both Dubai and the UK, and will play a vital role in the integration of MINT into the BI family. He will also continue with his non-executive chairman role of BI in the UK.

Damian Walls, a client account director who has had over five years' responsibility at BI for developing and operating international performance improvement programmes for a variety of blue-chip companies, will also be seconded to MINT, being based initially in Australia.

Richard Bandell, BI managing director, comments: "This acquisition is a statement of BI's intent to become *the* global Communication and Motivation Company. It is part of our continuing development to listen to and consequently serve the needs of our clients, many of whom are now looking for global programmes. MINT is a high-calibre company with a strong presence in the world's fastest-developing markets and it is extremely exciting for us to be able to build on our strong growth in recent years in the UK market."

MINT's high compatibility with BI was a deciding factor in BI's purchase of the organisation. It not only has a stronghold in the territories in which it operates, it is also expanding within these very fast-growing markets; it is financially strong, has a high level of expertise in incentive travel and performance improvement, and has an impressive client base of large, multinational blue-chip companies that include General Motors, Volvo and AIA.

"BI and MINT are a natural fit for each other," says Nigel Gaunt, MINT chief executive officer. "BI's investment in performance improvement platforms and depth of experience is a perfect match for MINT's relationships with key customers in some very important markets. The

partnership will provide BI and its clients with extended opportunities across Asia Pacific and the Middle East, and will give MINT the strength of being associated with one of the most respected names in the incentive business. I have always known of and respected BI and believe it is the best possible parent to take the business to new heights.”

## **ENDS**

### **About MINT**

The MINT Organization was founded in January 2000 by Nigel Gaunt, initially with offices in Melbourne and Sydney, Australia. It has since grown to include offices in the rapidly growing markets of China, Singapore and Dubai. The company employs 30 people across all five of its offices, and it achieved a turnover for financial year 2005-2006 of US \$17.5 million.

The business comprises three synergetic business channels - MINT Motivation, MINT Events and MINT Trips. Its client base includes large multinational blue-chip companies across the automotive, banking & insurance, FMCG, Telco & IT sectors, such as BMW, General Motors, Volvo, National Australia Bank, AIA, Simplot, and Phillip Morris.

The MINT Organization was acquired in October 2006 by BI Worldwide Limited to become a member of the BI Worldwide Group Ltd.

### **About BI**

BI produces measurable business improvement by positively influencing the behaviour of people through communication and motivation. Its solutions help companies acquire retain and grow business with their customers by keeping employees and channels motivated and focused on delivering exceptional results. This is achieved through BI's core services: events and performance improvement programmes. These are supported by BI's dedicated in-house creative and technology solutions teams.

BI works with a wide range of blue-chip clients, including: Peugeot, Halifax Bank of Scotland (HBoS), Vodafone, Aston Martin, Roche, Shell, the AA, BMW and HP. Part of the \$400 million, US-based firm Schoeneckers Inc, BI employs more than 1000 associates throughout Europe and North America. From its European base in Milton Keynes, BI's creative and results-driven approach has earned the company a reputation for delivering outstanding service to its clients.

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