



## **AIB & alphyra announce strategic alliance**

### **21st September 2004**

AIB Bank and alphyra Ireland have today announced a strategic alliance for providing electronic payment services to retail outlets in Ireland. These retail outlets include supermarkets, convenience stores, department stores, corner shops, book stores, gift shops, jewellers, restaurants, hotels and petrol stations.

Under the alliance, AIB will process credit card (Visa & MasterCard) and debit card (Laser) transactions originating from alphyra point of sale (POS). alphyra will provide value added services on AIB's network of POS terminals.

AIB is the leading provider of card acquiring services in Ireland, supplying a full range of card payment acceptance facilities for credit and debit card transactions. The Bank is at the forefront of the development of card acquiring services in Ireland, being the first to introduce many new payment solutions such as multi-currency processing. AIB has helped its customers to develop and grow their business by providing them with the capability to accept ever more sophisticated payment methods for goods and services.

alphyra is the leading provider of value added services in Ireland, including prepaid mobile phone top-up, international calling cards, utility bill payment, electronic gift card and electronic lottery. Last year alphyra launched an electronic gift card solution which enables retail outlets and other organisations to replace costly paper-based schemes. alphyra believes the Irish market for gift card is set to grow dramatically with real commercial benefits for gift stores, restaurants, bookstores, music shops and other retailers.

This partnership will enable AIB and alphyra to offer their customers a comprehensive range of facilities, including credit and debit card services with Chip and PIN security as well as mobile top-up and electronic gift card. Retailers will benefit from increased revenues, providing an expanded range of services to their customers using their existing POS terminal.

Michael Marren, Head of AIB Merchant Services said, "AIB are delighted to announce a partnership with a progressive and innovative company such as alphyra who have a strong track record in delivering value added services through Point of Sale terminals.

"AIB continues to invest in the Merchant Services business and this agreement aligns with our strategy of providing the best products and choice to our customers. It also enables us to maximise further our investment in our new POS terminals."

John Nagle, CEO alphyra, said, "We are delighted to work with a partner that shares our ambition and commitment to the Irish market. This partnership enables alphyra to offer credit and debit card facilities to our customers, while existing AIB customers will now have access to the alphyra range of value added services.

"Retailers who already do business with alphyra can avail of these services using their existing terminal. Our terminals are being upgraded with new software and a new plug-in pin pad to handle 'Chip and PIN' security. This means that merchants will not need to re-train their staff on a new terminal," he added.

**Ends**

### **About AIB**

AIB Group is Ireland's leading banking and financial services organisation, operating principally in Ireland, Britain, Poland and the USA. It employs almost 24,000 people worldwide in more than 800 offices. In the Republic of Ireland, AIB employs 10,000 staff operating out of over 280 outlets, providing retail and commercial banking services. AIB Merchant Services, established for 25 years, is

the leading provider of card acquiring services in Ireland, providing a full range of card payment acceptance facilities (including data capture, real time authorisation, processing and settlement of debit and credit card transactions).

**About alphyra**

alphyra Group is Europe's leading independent payment network serving customers in twelve countries. Established in 1989, it has grown to encompass a network of 80,000 merchants. Its primary business activities are the provision of mobile top-up services, electronic funds transfer and a variety of other innovative electronic transaction services. It is a private company owned by Benchmark Capital and the senior management team. Last month alphyra announced the acquisition of Itsmobile, the Irish-based m-commerce software development firm which provided Dublin's wireless parking meter system.

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