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## Press Release

For immediate release

### **Matrix backs MBO of Blaze Neon Limited**

**15 May 2006:** Matrix Private Equity Partners has financed a £5 million secondary management buyout of Blaze Neon Limited (“Blaze”) alongside management and senior debt from Lloyds TSB.

Blaze is a leading player in the design, manufacture and installation of shop front and internal signage for major multiple retailers. It specialises in the fast turnaround re-branding of multiple units in the UK. It has a significant market share with its customer base comprising high street multiple and out of town retailers including Tesco, Royal Bank of Scotland, Abbey, Co-op, Argos and DFS.

Blaze has an underlying level of business from servicing its existing customer base that is supplemented by large projects, usually involving a major rebranding exercise across a retailer’s entire estate.

The MBO team is led by Clive Knight, Managing Director, Chris Abbott, Sales Director and Joanna Boraston, Finance Director.

Blaze, founded in 1981, was the subject of a management buy out in 2000 backed by Dunedin and RBS. The business, which is based in Broadstairs, Kent and in Birmingham is profitable and has turnover of c. £12 million. It employs a total of 200 people.

#### **Jonathan Gregory, Director at Matrix, said:**

“We were attracted to Blaze because of its leading position in a market that has real barriers to entry. Furthermore, the existing team has considerable experience and is driven to build on the company’s strong position.”

#### **Clive Knight, Managing Director of Blaze, said:**

“We are delighted to have Matrix on board. This will both strengthen and enhance Blaze’s position in the market place providing an ideal opportunity to invest in the company’s future and expand on our already healthy customer base”.



## **Advisors**

### Advisors to Management:

*Financial*

*Baker Tilly – Richard Haycocks, Paul Billet (London)*

*Legal*

*Shoosmiths – Lynn Knight*

### Advisors to Matrix:

*Legal*

*Marriott Harrison – Duncan Innes (London)*

### Due Diligence:

*Accounting*

*BDO – James Roberts, David Payne (Bromley)*

*Commercial*

*Lisa Whelan - PBD Consulting (London)*

### Advisors to Vendors:

*Legal*

*Pinsent Masons – Jonathan Reardon, Richard Williams (London)*

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