

IMPERIAL strengthens footprint in Africa

Dated: 13/05/2013 12:00:00 AM

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13 May 2013

One of Africa's largest companies has bought a stake in a leading Nigerian logistics provider in a bid to increase its representation in the country

Imperial Holdings Limited has acquired 49 percent of MDS, a leading logistics provider in Nigeria, for a cash consideration of US\$26 million.

The transaction gives the diversified industrial services and retail group Imperial entry into the logistics sector of the fast growing Nigerian FMCG, telecommunications and pharmaceutical industries.

MDS, a wholly owned subsidiary of UAC of Nigeria Plc, a company listed on the Nigerian Stock Exchange, offers warehousing and distribution solutions through a network of 50 distribution centres by linking companies with their customers in more than 600 cities and villages across Nigeria.

Marius Swanepoel, Imperial Logistics' Chief Executive Officer (CEO), said: "Our newest acquisition strengthens Imperial Logistics' footprint in our continent and is consistent with our strategy of focusing on these consumer opportunities and following our customer base on the continent.

"MDS has a quality customer base with a strong new business pipeline. Through the transaction, Imperial has also secured a specialist management team which strengthens and complements the group's existing skills set in the logistics business."

Peter Matlare, CEO of Tiger Brands, which owns 49 percent of UAC Foods Limited, said: "Imperial is a trusted logistics partner to Tiger Brands in South Africa. It is wonderful that they are entering Nigeria in this way. It means that we can rely on their logistics support for our ever-growing business there."

Commenting on the rationale for the transaction, UACN's Group Managing Director/ CEO, Larry Ettah, said: "We look forward to working together with Imperial Logistics as our strategic partner to engage the underserved and fast growing logistics market in Nigeria.

"We believe this transaction creates an outstanding opportunity to drive growth in MDS. The combination of MDS's vital local experience and the value adding international logistics expertise of Imperial Logistics will lead to efficiencies and raise benchmarks in Nigeria for the benefit of all stakeholders."

This announcement follows Imperial's acquisition in January 2013 of Imperial Health Sciences formerly RTT Health Sciences, one of Africa's leading pharmaceutical and healthcare supply chain service providers.

Imperial Health Sciences specialises in multi-channel solutions for delivering essential medicines and consumer health products in South Africa, and to Namibia, Botswana, Mozambique, Zimbabwe, Zambia, Kenya, Tanzania, Malawi, Uganda, Ethiopia, Rwanda, Ghana, Cote d'Ivoire and Nigeria.

Swanepoel explained: “The acquisitions of MDS and RTT Health Sciences offer exceptional growth prospects as they strengthen our current exposure to these high growth economies.”

Imperial employ some 50,000 people worldwide having been founded as a motor dealership in Johannesburg in 1948. Today it has activities spanning logistics, car rental, tourism, financial services, vehicle distribution, automotive parts and industrial products distribution.

Source: [African Business Review](#)