B2BISCOM AND COMPAGNIA DELLE OPERE JOIN FORCES IN BUSINESS-TO-BUSINESS ELECTRONIC COMMERCE

Support from Berlusconi government for CdO's recommendations on the New Economy

Rimini, 21 August 2001 - B2Biscom, the e.Biscom group company that specialises in business-to-business electronic commerce, and Compagnia delle Opere (CdO), the association of Italian small and medium businesses, today signed an agreement under which B2Biscom is to provide its e-commerce services to the association's 17,000 member companies.

Specifically, via the www.cdo.it portal, CdO members will be able to enjoy special conditions on the B2Biscom horizontal marketplace, a virtual B2B service offering more than 25,000 merchandise items, including stationery, information technology, office furniture and phone equipment. The marketplace was launched in October 2000 and currently has more than 400 registered users.

The Berlusconi government has declared its support for the CdO's recommendations with regard to the New Economy. The Minister responsible for the implementation of the government programme, Giuseppe Pisanu, said: "We shall introduce tax allowances for investments in activities on the Internet and e-commerce, with a special focus on small and medium businesses as also laid out in the financial and economic plan."

"CdO is continuing its network development strategy," commented Compagnia delle Opere General Manager Sandro Bicocchi. "Having set up the portal as a sort of meeting place for our members, we have also decided to introduce opportunities for e-commerce, for the specific purpose of spreading the network culture among SMBs."

"Our partnership with CdO is important because it offers the association's members a flexible, advanced and complete e-commerce platform," said B2Biscom Chief Executive Giuseppe Caruso. "We are also pleased that a project intended to make small and medium businesses aware of opportunities available on the Internet has received the institutional attention it deserves."

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