

ASTRA GAMES APPOINTS 'INTERNATIONAL' MANAGING DIRECTOR

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ASTRA GAMES, part of the Novomatic Group of Companies, has acted decisively to bring an additional international flavour to its Bridgend, South Wales, facility with the appointment (effective immediately) of South African national ZANE MERSICH as Managing Director.

Mersich (35) was born in Pretoria, South Africa, and although a relative newcomer to the gaming industry, joining fellow Novomatic Group subsidiary company Austrian Gaming Industries GmbH in October 2007, he is already critically regarded as one of the huge Austrian conglomerate's rising stars.

Graduating in Marketing and Business Economic from the University of Pretoria and following up with a post-graduate honours degree in Strategic Business Management from the University of South Africa, Mersich has 12 years of Board level international company management experience on which to draw as he takes up his new role.

Announcing the appointment of Zane Mersich, Austrian Gaming Industries Managing Director Jens Halle said: "Great people prove themselves under challenge. The UK industry is encountering difficult trading conditions at present but I fully expect that Astra Games, under the leadership of Zane Mersich and together with Astra founder and legendary games designer Ron Watts and our recently promoted Financial Director Neil Paramore, will take the lead in revitalising this important market sector through Astra's traditional values of innovative products and an exceptional team. Zane will have new challenges to face but he needs look no further than our slogan 'Novomatic Leads, Others Follow' to meet those challenges as he builds on Astra's success story."

Mersich commented: "This is a big challenge and I fully understand that the appointment of a foreign national as the Managing Director of such a high level UK-based company as Astra Games may come as a surprise to some people in our industry. It is, however, a challenge that I willingly undertake and, from the genuine warmth of welcome that I have received at Astra Games I already know that I will be working with a great team that take pride in their company's deserved reputation for leading edge product innovation."

Mersich has already relocated from Novomatic's headquarters in Gumpoldskirchen, Austria to South Wales and is eagerly anticipating combining his regular leisure activities of golf and action sports with getting to know and appreciate both the dynamic beauty of South Wales and also its rich cultural heritage. Ready for the challenge? 'Ready, willing and able' appropriately sums up Astra Games new Managing Director, Zane Mersich and his re-energised team.

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