



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**NEW VENTURE PARTNERS AND UNILEVER VENTURES INVEST IN  
UNILEVER SPINOUT COMPANY, MILIFE**

***Personalised Weight loss and Physical Activity Technology Developed at Unilever Corporate Research Addresses Needs of One Billion Overweight Individuals Globally***

**London, 15 January, 2009** – New Venture Partners LLC, the global venture capital firm dedicated to corporate technology spinouts, and Unilever Ventures, the early stage venture arm of Unilever, today announced a joint investment in MiLife, a company focused on providing technology solutions for personalised weight management. MiLife will use the proceeds from the investment to assist with market expansion into the UK and entry into the US. In conjunction with the funding, Anton Arts of New Venture Partners joined the MiLife Board of Directors.

MiLife is a spinout from Unilever Corporate Research (UCR). UCR's initial goal was to explore long-term weight loss and behaviour-change coaching systems through automating techniques used by leading behavioural psychologists. As a result of its research, it developed an automated, highly personalised weight loss and physical activity management system that incorporates, for the first time, an essential behaviour-change component through adaptive systems known as the Idapt™ engine; this is the heart of the MiLife system.

According to the World Health Organization (WHO), 1.6 billion adults globally are overweight and at least 400 million adults are obese. WHO further projects that by 2015, approximately 2.3 billion adults will be overweight and more than 700 million will be obese. Annually, \$50 billion is spent on weight loss related products and services in the US alone. In addition, the anticipated costs for companies and governments caused by related medical conditions such as diabetes, hypertension and cardiovascular disease are staggering.

“The MiLife system has proved highly effective in trials,” said Ciaran McCourt, CEO, MiLife. “Recent results show very high user engagement and high levels of physical activity attributable to the unique combination of devices and coaching. Furthermore, 84% of the users lost weight in the first three months, with around a quarter losing a clinically significant 5% of their body weight. In users that were overweight before using the program (BMI 25+) this resulted in an average weight loss of 8.2lb / 3.7 kg. This ranks extremely well against trials undertaken on other commercial diets and matches the effectiveness of one-to-one behavioural therapy at much lower costs.”

(more)

The MiLife system leverages an innovative technology platform to automatically accumulate, measure and track personal data via biometric devices.

- The user wears an unobtrusive wireless MiBand wrist band that continuously measures physical activity and gathers weight recordings. All data is automatically and continuously reported back to MiLife.com where it is analysed.
- The MiLife system then reports back to the user with personalised adaptive coaching to encourage necessary behaviour changes to achieve desired weight loss. Additional tools such as habit breakers, reminders, community interaction, and meal planning all contribute to the highly engaging and successful system.

“The MiLife system’s behaviour-change component is the ‘missing link’ in today’s commercial diets and electronic weight loss gadgets. For that reason, it has attracted the attention of major corporate players interested in exploiting effective solutions for healthy weight loss, to improve consumer’s life style and prevent the onset of weight-related medical conditions,” said Anton Arts, Partner at New Venture Partners. “We were impressed by the management team’s unique skill set and proven track record in pursuing the wide range of global business opportunities in this field. MiLife enjoys unique benefits from the unparalleled depth of Unilever Corporate Research in the field of nutrition and vitality that underpin the product.”

The MiLife management team has a history of success in developing consumer-led technology businesses, including weight management and behaviour change systems. The team is led by Ciaran McCourt, who was previously CEO of eDiets (NASDAQ:DIET) and founder and CEO of eDiets Europe. MiLife’s long-term vision is to expand capabilities beyond weight management to address sleep and stress management, as well as lifestyle diseases such as diabetes and coronary heart disease. Since its launch in the UK market, MiLife has enjoyed exceptional consumer interest for its solution to lose weight in a healthy way, including media coverage by the BBC and others.

“Our goal is for MiLife to become the online coaching company of choice for preventative health and wellness,” said John Coombs, Managing Director at Unilever Ventures and Chairman of the Board of MiLife. “We’re energized by the support provided by New Venture Partners and look forward to developing and growing the company together.”

MiLife products are available for purchase at [www.milife.com](http://www.milife.com) or through its partner, Tesco Diets at [www.tescodiets.com](http://www.tescodiets.com).

### **About MiLife**

MiLife Coaching Limited (“MiLife”) is a technology-based behaviour change spin-out from Unilever that has proven to help people achieve and maintain weight loss and increased physical activity leading to a positive impact on health. The MiLife technology is delivered through biometric devices (wrist band and scales), an online software platform as well as hi-touch support. It uses a unique adaptive behavioural change system, which incorporates feedback from activity monitoring and weight data capture to deliver personalised and flexible nutrition, fitness and coaching plans. MiLife’s strategy is to become the most effective biometric online coaching company for health and wellness.

[www.milife.com](http://www.milife.com).

### **About New Venture Partners**

New Venture Partners LLC, the global venture capital firm dedicated to corporate technology spinouts, has over \$700 million under management. New Venture Partners provides a bridge between technology corporations and traditional venture capital. Through its unique, hands-on approach, the firm offers a systematic process for commercializing innovations and provides an alternative path to market for corporate technologies. The New Venture Partners team has completed over 50 spinouts from the R&D labs and business units of global technology corporations including Lucent/Bell Labs, British Telecom, Philips Electronics, Agere, Boeing, Freescale Semiconductor, Intel, Telstra, and others, and has become the benchmark for corporate spinout venturing.

[www.nvpllc.com](http://www.nvpllc.com)

### **About Unilever Ventures**

Formed in 2002 and backed by Unilever Plc, Unilever Ventures is a venture capital firm providing funding and management skills to start-up and early stage businesses with high growth ambitions. Having initially focused on start-up investment, Unilever Ventures now also considers later stage investment, including expansion-led capital and management buyouts with an enterprise value of up to €50m. Drawn from within Unilever and the private equity sector, Unilever Ventures' London-based team has invested in over 20 businesses, mainly in the UK. Unilever Ventures invests in businesses where it is able to add value by leveraging Unilever position in the market through its brands, IP, infrastructure and market knowledge. Its primary objective is to support technology driven businesses that deliver a compelling customer proposition in growth markets, be this consumer products, B2B or service based businesses.

[www.unileverventures.com](http://www.unileverventures.com)

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