

BUSINESS NOVEMBER 30, 2015

SLO-based Shopatron being sold to private equity firm

HIGHLIGHTS

Shopatron and Petaluma-based MarketLive Inc. to be acquired by Vista Equity Partners

Employees to be retained, companies say; Shopatron employs 160 locally

How firms will operate together not yet discussed, Shopatron founder says



< 3 of 3 >

Ed Stevens, founder and chief executive officer of Shopatron, whose sale was announced to a private equity firm. **David Middlecamp** - dmiddlecamp@thetribunenews.com

BY DANIELLE AMES
dames@thetribunenews.com

San Luis Obispo-based Shopatron, which offers online order management software, is being acquired by Vista Equity Partners, a private U.S.-based equity firm focused on investing in software and technology-enabled businesses.

At the same time, Vista Equity Partners also is acquiring MarketLive Inc., a Petaluma-based firm that provides digital commerce software and services for retailers, catalogers, direct marketers and manufacturers.

The two retail software companies will be combined to advance the way retailers and branded manufacturers connect with consumers, a news release said. They'll essentially become a one-stop sales and order system, according to Ken Burke, chief executive officer and founder of MarketLive, the Santa Rosa Press Democrat reported.

Terms of the deal were not disclosed. But Burke said he could see a combined MarketLive and Shopatron being at least a \$200 million to \$300 million business in the future, serving medium-sized and larger retailers, according to the Press Democrat.

Shopatron and MarketLive are considered global retail leaders, “giving their customers innovative, easy-to-use tools for overcoming modern retailing challenges,” Patrick Severson, principal at Vista Equity Partners, said in the news release.

“We look forward to collaborating with both companies to optimize their solutions and drive growth for sellers.”

160

Number of people employed by Shopatron in San Luis Obispo

Ed Stevens, chief executive officer of Shopatron, who launched the firm in 2001, said the move will allow them “to take these companies and aggressively pursue new product development and additional acquisitions to build the world’s leading cloud-based platform.”

Stevens declined to disclose who initiated the sale, though in a July 2014 Tribune story he said Shopatron is always actively looking for good partners.

When asked Monday, he said it hasn’t been discussed how the firms will operate together, nor has there been any talk about the possibility of moving Shopatron, which employs about 160 people in San Luis Obispo and 10 in England. All current employees will be retained, he said. In July 2014, he told The Tribune that the company plans to stay in San Luis Obispo.

Shopatron is focused on the busy holiday season, Stevens said, adding that integration and expansion plans will be explored next year.

Stevens said that he plans to stay with the company, continuing his current role as a senior leader.

1,000

Number of retailers and brands worldwide that use Shopatron

More than 1,000 retailers and brands worldwide use Shopatron, ranging from large retailers such as Cost Plus World Market to smaller businesses such as Hot Chillys, a SLO-based apparel manufacturer.

Stevens declined to disclose company revenue. In a 2014 profile of the company, The Tribune reported that Shopatron’s 2013 revenue was about \$18 million; it experienced 30 percent revenue growth from 2009 to 2013.

Stevens is a minority owner of the business, along with Kern Whelan Capital LLC, Rivenrock Capital LLC and a number of individuals.

Founded in 1995, MarketLive Inc. serves such businesses as Armani Exchange, Marc Jacobs and Warner Bros. It employs about 125 people, including 100 workers based in Petaluma, according to the Press Democrat.

Vista Equity Partners is an investment firm with offices in Austin, Chicago and San Francisco, with more than \$14 billion in cumulative capital commitments, according to the news release. It invests in software, data and technology-based organizations.

Both transactions are slated to close by year's end.

Danielle Ames: 805-781-7902

MORE BUSINESS

YOU MAY LIKE

Sponsored Links by Taboola

Increasingly Popular 2 Step Method Eliminates Credit Card Debt
LendingTree

Scarlett Johansson's Line 'Too Much' for Fox: CEO
Bloomberg

Jeff Bridges' Magnificent Home Is Beyond Stunning
Lonny

26 Things That Only Happen in Dubai
LifeDaily.com

Hayden Panettiere's 1st Appearance Since Postpartum Treatment

Nashville star Hayden Panettiere has made her first appearance since seeking treatment for postpartum depression last month shortly after giving...



COMMENTS

0 Comments

Sort by



Add a comment...

Facebook Comments Plugin

