



## **PRESS RELEASE**

### **Cremonini Group: strategic partnership with MSN Italia, Microsoft's portal for electronic sales on the Internet**

**Commencing from June 2000, Cremonini will sell online ice creams, frozen products and pre-cooked meals with the "Quinta Stagione" brand.**

The Cremonini Group has concluded an agreement for a strategic partnership with Microsoft's consumer portal, MSN.Italia. The collaboration between the two businesses ranges from the Internet to the virtual world of the Web, commencing in June 2000. Cremonini will sell online ice creams, frozen products and pre-cooked meals with the "Quinta Stagione" brand and has chosen Microsoft's MNS portal as the privileged vehicle to launch its electronic marketing on the Internet. Italian consumers will be able to buy over 200 frozen products, delivered to their homes within 48 hours of order, on site [www.quintastagione.it](http://www.quintastagione.it) that will be developed using Microsoft's software and technology for the Internet.

The online shop will use *Microsoft Passport*, a new authentication service that simplifies the purchasing procedure for consumers and is already in use by a vast world network of online shopping. This choice was dictated by the wish to offer a further element of security and guarantee to online buyers of Quinta Stagione products.

Cremonini has used the Quinta Stagione brand in the sector of door-to-door distribution of frozen products since 1986. The sales network currently totals over 200,000 customers in north and central Italy, with 420 salesmen and employees and 320 refrigerated vehicles

In addition the agreement between MSN Italia and the Cremonini Group provides for the carrying out of joint market research on the use of the computer and Internet by Italian families. For this purpose, commencing as soon as April, over 70,000 families will receive a questionnaire prepared by Microsoft with the objective of determining, in an analytical manner and on a wide sample, the effective interest in, and use of, the Internet.

"MSN's objective is to supply Web users with a series of useful, advantageous and winning solutions to simplify everyday life", stated Stefano Maruzzi, director of MSN Italia. "The collaboration with Quinta Stagione represents an opportunity for the millions of visitors who visit our site each month to use the Web also for shopping".

"By means of this strategic agreement, the Cremonini Group is decisively entering the Italian electronic sales business", declared Giuseppe Mangano, Chief Executive Officer of Cremonini S.p.A. "Millions of Italian consumers will have the possibility to buy, quickly and conveniently, ice creams, frozen products and pre-cooked meals online. The choice of MSN Italia as a partner and of Microsoft as supplier of technology seemed a winner to us".

The design and setting up of the e-commerce site [www.quintastagione.it](http://www.quintastagione.it), one of the first initiatives of this type in the frozen goods sector, is being undertaken by NetVision of Milan, a company that specializes in implementing strategic solutions for e-business.

**Islandia S.p.A.**, the Cremonini Group company operating with the “Quinta Stagione” brand in the home distribution of ice creams and frozen products, is the third largest Italian operator in this sector and achieved revenues of Lire 38 billion (Euro 19.6 million) in 1998.

**Cremonini**, which has over 3,000 employees and achieved consolidated revenues of Lire 2,019 billion (Euro 1.04 billion) in 1998, is one of the largest food groups in Europe, focusing on three integrated business areas: production (beef and cured meats), distribution (to the catering sector and door-to-door) and catering and restaurant activities (on-board trains, in railway stations and shopping centres).

Total consolidated revenues for the first 6 months of 1999 grew by 7.6% with respect to 1998, increasing to Lire 1,048 billion (Euro 541 million), while consolidated pre-tax profit was equal to Lire 32.6 billion (Euro 16.8 million), an increase of 47%.

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The Press Office