

H&T GROUP PLC

("H&T" or the "Group")

12 January, 2009

PRE-CLOSE TRADING STATEMENT AND CHANGE OF DIRECTOR

H&T Group plc, the UK's leading pawnbroking business by size of pledge book, which trades under the H&T Pawnbrokers brand, is pleased to issue today a trading statement ahead of entering its close period prior to the announcement of its preliminary results for the year ended 31 December 2008. H&T expects to report its preliminary results for the year to 31 December 2008 on 20 March 2009.

HIGHLIGHTS

- Profit before taxation and before exceptional items expected to be at a level higher than current consensus market expectations
- Like-for-like retail sales over December up three per cent year-on-year
- 16 new high street stores, representing an annual record expansion for the Group

Following the robust trading performance reported in the first half of the year, all business segments continued to show strong growth compared with the second half of 2007. The Group is pleased to announce a three per cent retail turnover growth for the month of December on a like-for-like basis (ie compared to December 2007 turnover generated from stores opened before 2007). Retail turnover in the second half of the year grew significantly, although this growth was less pronounced in December due to difficult high street conditions. Scrap activity has continued to benefit from the current price level of gold and higher volumes driven primarily from the introduction of gold purchasing activities.

Consequently the board expects to report profit before taxation and before exceptional items for the year ended 31 December 2008 at a level higher than the current consensus market expectations.

H&T's store expansion continued in the second half of 2008, with the Group opening ten new stores and acquiring a further two stores, taking the total number of stores up from 89 at 31 December 2007 to 105 at 31 December 2008. This represents a record increase in number of stores for the Group in a single year.

The Group also announces that its finance director, Laurent Genthialon, has decided to return to continental Europe and will resign at the end of March 2009. His successor, Alex Maby, will join H&T at the beginning of February, allowing for a two-month handover period.

Alex, a chartered accountant who trained with PricewaterhouseCoopers, was previously working at Macquarie's private equity division where he served a number of roles for various companies including chief financial officer and board director. Prior to this, he worked for Mapely Plc as head of financial engineering and ING Barings as an equities analyst.

Peter McNamara, chairman of H&T, commented: "We are sad to see Laurent leaving H&T and delighted to see Alex Maby joining us. Laurent has made a valuable contribution to the Group during the last four years, in which we have doubled the number of stores, successfully floated the Group on AIM and exceeded market expectations. His departure follows another record year for H&T in terms of new store openings, revenue growth and profit."

ENDS

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