

# NEXTGEN GROUP PLC

## **Disposal completes realignment to focus on protein biomarker services**

**3 March 2009.** Ann Arbor, Michigan - NextGen Group PLC (AIM: NGG, 'the Group', 'NextGen' ), the provider of biomarker testing services, has sold its non core electrophoresis business to Sigma Aldrich Corporation, St. Louis, Missouri (NASDAQ: SIAL) for \$0.56m in cash, of which \$0.179m was assets, and an 8% royalty on global sales for three years payable in cash.

NextGen has sold the rights, design and expertise for the electrophoresis technology and retains the right to use this technology in its fee-for-service biomarker business and for its own in-house research.

In 2007 the electrophoresis business unit recognised a total revenue of £171,931 (\$257,896 at 1.5 USD:GBP) with a gross margin of 64%.

This disposal follows the divestiture of the non core 'gene to protein' automation and software business announced on 5 December 2008 and completes the strategic realignment of NextGen.

NextGen's strategic plan, announced in April 2008, was to divest or wind down its software and instrumentation UK-based businesses and to focus all resources including the profit realised from these transactions on growing the biomarker services business.

**ENDS**

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### **Notes to Editors**

**NextGen Group PLC** [www.nextgensciences.com](http://www.nextgensciences.com)

NextGen Group PLC is a provider of biomarker services for pharmaceutical and biotech companies globally. Using advanced techniques, such as Multiple Reaction Monitoring (MRM) mass spectrometry analysis, the Company is developing a portfolio of robust assays for testing clinical samples for drug safety and efficacy, and the development of personalized treatment for patients.

NextGen's range of services, which include biomarker testing, discovery and assay development, are employed by its customers as a key part of the biomarker-based drug and diagnostic development process.

## **Further details about the technology**

### **Biomarkers**

A biomarker is a substance (e.g. a protein) used as an indicator of a biologic state. A biomarker can be measured from a clinical sample, such as blood or urine, and evaluated as an indicator of normal biologic processes, pathogenic processes, or pharmacologic responses to a therapeutic intervention.

The pharmaceutical industry's interest in biomarkers is increasing as they can be used not only for diagnosis but also for understanding the mechanism of the disease and development of therapeutics. Biomarkers have been shown to play a key role in drug discovery and development, particularly in therapeutic areas including cancer, cardiovascular diseases and disorders of the central nervous system. It is believed that biomarkers will lead the move towards personalized medicine.

### **Electrophoresis**

Gel electrophoresis is a technique used for the separation of deoxyribonucleic acid, ribonucleic acid, or protein molecules using an electric current applied to a gel matrix. It is usually performed for analytical purposes, but may be used as a preparative technique prior to use of other methods such as mass spectrometry, RFLP, PCR, cloning, DNA sequencing, or Southern blotting for further characterization.

"Electrophoresis" refers to the electromotive force (EMF) that is used to move the molecules through the gel matrix. By placing the molecules in wells or on top of the gel and applying an electric current, the molecules will move through the matrix at different rates, usually determined by their mass to charge ratio, giving an advanced separation of the molecules.

The a2Deoptimizer technology was particularly used in a protein separation technique known as 2-dimensional electrophoresis. In this technique the proteins are first separated by their charge characteristics and secondly, using gels cast using the a2Deoptimizer, by their mass. 2-dimensional electrophoresis has remained a mainstay of protein analysis and proteomics since the 1980s.