

A Day-in-the-Life of Altron

JSE listed Allied Electronics Corporation Limited (Altron), through its principal subsidiaries, Allied Technologies Limited (Altech), Bytes Technology Group (Pty) Ltd (Bytes) and Power Technologies (Pty) Ltd (Powertech), is invested in telecommunications, information technology and power electronics. The Altron group employs more than 12 000 employees globally.

Following a review of Altron's business strategy to focus the group in areas where it has the resources, competence and skills to leverage a competitive advantage, namely within the information technology and telecommunications verticals, certain non-core material assets have been disposed of, or identified for disposal. These fall primarily within the multimedia and power electronics verticals.

1. Telecommunications

Altron provides communications services ranging from voice, data and video to digital radio communication networks and Internet services.

1.1 Digital radio communication

Altech Alcom Radio, Altech Alcom Matomo and Altech Fleetcall offer digital two-way radios and integrated information and communications products and services to a broad range of industries and environments.

1.2 Connectivity and turnkey communication systems

Altech Radio Holdings, Altech Enterprise Solutions and Bytes Systems Integration provide access solutions and design and supply turnkey communication systems, including wide area networks, analogue two-way radio systems, broadband wireless and fibre networks and telecommunication products and solutions.

1.3 Vehicle tracking, fleet management and telematics

Altech Netstar is a market leading provider of specialist vehicle tracking and recovery systems, fleet management services and usage-based telematics to prevent misuse of company fleet vehicles to reduce costs per kilometer, monitor driver behaviour and increase security and safety of drivers. Digital fleet solutions provide instant real time monitoring of small and large fleets, offered as a solution operated by customers or as a service to customers. Value-added products include lifestyle, roadside and emergency response services.

1.4 Traffic management

Altech Netstar provides intelligent, real-time traffic flow information and journey times to motor vehicle manufacturers and the motoring public of South Africa in a variety of applications such as in-vehicle navigation systems, portable navigation devices and mobile phones.

1.5 Managed services

Bytes Systems Integration offers management and control of business critical applications such as email and groupware, firewalling, virus and spam detection and data backup and archiving. As a specialist outsource service provider Bytes Systems Integrations designs, implements, services and manages customised ICT services and solutions, providing a full range of IT infrastructural services, such as service desk, end user computing, server support, data security, network support, data centre storage solutions, as well as contact centres, biometrics and identity life-cycle management, workforce management and cloud-based solutions.

2. Multimedia and electronics

Altron's multimedia and electronics division designs and produces various products such as set-top boxes and distributes electronic components, products and solutions.

2.1 Multimedia devices

Altech Multimedia* manufactures and distributes products to the digital broadcast and broadband industries within South and Southern Africa. These products include digital set-top boxes and ultra-high definition LED televisions.

** Altron is limiting its exposure to the multimedia sector by classifying operations within this sector as assets held for sale. Consequently, Altron is seeking buyers or partners that are best suited to support the needs and growth ambitions of these businesses and develop them to their full potential)*

2.2 Integrated solutions

Altech Multimedia specialises in the provision of integrated solutions comprising specialised hardware services supported by innovative software solutions and global logistical support services. Comprehensive after sales support and device repair services both for in-house products as well as third party products globally also forms part of its product range.

2.3 Electronic component distribution

Arrow Altech Distribution is a distributor of industrial electronic components for, amongst others: batteries and solar, lighting and optics, software and compilers, and semiconductors and aerospace products.

3. Information technology

Altron's information technology division provides services including specialised software solutions and secure transactional solutions for the financial, retail and healthcare industries. In addition, it also provides complete outsource solutions for IT and communication infrastructure necessary to enable business processes.

3.1 People consulting

Bytes People Solutions is a provider of talent management services including assessment centres, content development, ICT learning solutions, online technologies and soft skills development. In addition, Bytes People Solutions also provides outsourced services for contact centres and extended capability in business processes.

3.2 Outsource solutions

Bytes Managed Solutions and Bytes Systems Integration provide outsource solutions for IT infrastructure, communication technology architecture and the management of communications technology. Key services include IT architecture, infrastructure management and security, communications technology management, service management, business process outsourcing and application development and maintenance.

3.3 Managed solutions

Bytes Managed Solutions supports and maintains enterprise-wide information products and services, which include servers, desktops and laptops, point of sales (POS) and ATM dynamic solutions, warranty and incident management, availability management and project management. Bytes Managed Solutions is the exclusive distributor of NCR products in South Africa and has strategic partnerships with Dell, HP, Lenovo, Burroughs, Unity, Postec, Unisys, Alcatel-Lucent and Cisco.

3.4 Workforce management

Bytes Systems Integration's workforce management division offers products and services that include time and attendance solutions, access control, vehicle barriers, management of overtime, leave and absenteeism, biometric authentication and turnstiles as well as various credential verification products. Its labour management solutions include CCTV and intelligent building management products and services.

3.5 Identity management

Bytes Systems Integration's identity management solutions division specialises in the provision of full identity lifecycle management solutions through an array of hardware devices and software solutions, ensuring the accurate collection of identity information, the verification of the collected information, the provision of an identity and the devices and solutions required to read and re-verify these credentials throughout their lifecycle.

3.6 Document solutions

Bytes Document Solutions provides a range of hardware and consumables to manage outsource print services such as installation and training, paper and toner supplies, maintenance and services of equipment and service contracts. As the authorised Xerox distributor in sub-Saharan Africa it provides leading-edge technology, services, software and supplies for production and office environments of any size.

3.7 Converged solutions

Bytes Systems Integration delivers technical solutions to optimise business value in cloud services and support and contact centre optimisation, and provides next-generation enterprise systems. Additional services include Microsoft infrastructure and application development and deployment services and Microsoft volume licensing programmes.

3.8 Network management solutions

Bytes Systems Integration provides office integration of all of an organisation's technologies into one solution, namely: network refresh services, remote access services, network hardware maintenance and network management services.

3.9 Transaction solutions

Bytes Secure Transaction Solutions provides a selection of managed electronic payment solutions including mobile or online platforms, and e-wallet and medical transaction switching. Operations that support these services include Altech Card Solutions, Altech NuPay, Med-e-Mass, MedeServe, MediSwitch and DelterIT.

3.10 Specialised solutions

Bytes Universal Systems and Altech Card Solutions supply, design, develop and implement specialised services, software and solutions directed at solving business critical customer problems. Industries that have benefited from these solutions include national government, local municipalities, the telecommunications industry and a range of other market sectors. In addition, these businesses assist clients by creating, building and operating innovative services that support open digital ecosystems, revenue realisation and cost optimisation.

Altron Power*

Altron Power, comprising of Powertech, is one of South Africa's leading suppliers of electrical and electronic equipment. Its operating divisions comprises a variety of individual operations which specialise in the manufacturing and delivery of world-class products, services and energy solutions to address diverse needs for electrical and power equipment in local and international markets.

** Altron is limiting its exposure to the manufacturing sector by classifying operations within this sector, specifically within the Powertech group, as discontinued operations and assets held for sale. Consequently, Altron is seeking buyers or partners that are best suited to support the needs and growth ambitions of these businesses and develop them to their full potential.*

1. Cables

Aberdare Cables*, Africa's leading manufacturer of power, telecommunication and control cables and cable accessories, manufactures high, medium and low voltage electrical cables for application in electricity transmission and distribution utilities, and in locomotives, mines, ports, airports, telecommunication, renewable energy and the building and construction environments.

** In 2016, Altron disposed of its controlling equity stake in its shareholding in Aberdare Cables to Hengtong Optic – Electric Co Limited (Hengtong).*

1.1 Power cables

Aberdare Cables manufactures a range of low voltage general purpose wires and cables, medium voltage XLPE and PILC cables, and overhead conductors and elastomeric cables.

1.2 Telecommunication cables

Aberdare Cables, through its operations in Portugal and Spain, manufactures a range of telecommunication wires and cables including telecommunication metallic cables, optical fibre cables and signaling and control cables.

2. Transformers

Powertech Transformers designs and manufactures transformers and transformer-related products for the local and international markets that are commonly used in generation, transmission and distribution networks. Its product range also includes insulation, rail and switchgear products.

2.1 Power and distribution transformers

Powertech Transformers designs, manufactures, installs and commissions power and distribution transformers of all sizes for the transport, utilities, mining, industrial, building and construction industries.

2.2 Generator step-up transformers

Powertech Transformers' product range includes generator step-up transformers and shunt reactors installed in power stations and locomotives and traction transformers used in transport applications, specifically rail.

2.3 Furnace transformers

Powertech Transformers produces furnace transformers that are used in various industrial and mining applications.

2.4 Miniature substations

Powertech Transformers manufactures miniature substations that are used in rural and urban electrification projects as well as in renewable solar farms.

2.5 Services and maintenance

Powertech Transformers' services and maintenance expertise include the installation, commissioning, maintenance and condition assessment of transformers for the entire range of products from pole transformers and miniature-substation transformers, to large power transformers.

2.6 Electrical and thermal insulation

Powertech Calidus manufactures and supplies electrical and thermal insulation, conductor material and related mechanical products and services used in energy generation, thermal sectors and general industry as well as various types of transformer accessories.

3. Batteries

Powertech Batteries* manufactures and supplies a wide range of automotive batteries as well as Reserve and Motive power battery solutions through its joint venture company, Enersys Powertech, whilst ensuring suitable robustness for the rugged demands of the African market. Industries covered include automotive, telecommunications, mining, utilities, rail, reserve or back-up power and many other alternative energy and industrial market segments. Renowned brands supplied locally and internationally include Willard Batteries, SABAT Batteries, Enersys Batteries and Dynamic Batteries.

** On 1 November 2016 Altron advised shareholders that Powertech had entered into a binding agreement to dispose of the Powertech Batteries Group to Trinitas. The proposed transaction will become effective following the fulfilment of the last of the conditions precedent as detailed in the offer and approval of the proposed transaction by all relevant regulatory bodies.*

3.1 Automotive batteries

Powertech Batteries is home to two of the best-known battery brands in the automotive aftermarket sector: Willard and SABAT Batteries. The company's comprehensive battery range extends to a wide variety of market sectors including passenger and heavy duty vehicles, agriculture, leisure and marine. In addition, Powertech Batteries offers industry-leading features and benefits such as extensive warranties and comprehensive service and support.

3.2 Industrial batteries

Enersys Powertech, the joint venture company between Powertech and Enersys, manufactures and supplies inverters and rectifiers that are designed and integrated into the telecommunication industry using up-to-date technology and the highest quality components to ensure that communications are always reliably maintained. In addition, the company also manufactures and supplies inverters, solar powered energy and hybrid power solutions to a variety of industries.

4. Electrical accessories

Crabtree is the leading supplier and manufacturer of innovative branded products for the developers, maintainers and users of low voltage electrical accessories in Southern Africa.

4.1 Switches and sockets

Crabtree's products include a wide range of sockets and switches, primarily found in domestic, commercial and industrial buildings.

4.2 Circuit breakers

Crabtree supplies a fit-for-purpose range of circuit breakers and distribution boards used primarily in domestic, commercial and industrial buildings.

4.3 Conduit and electrical fittings

Crabtree produces and distributes a wide range of conduit, trunking and PVC fittings, complemented by a varied range of domestic products such as adaptors, multi-plugs and extension cords.

5. System Integrators

Powertech System Integrators is a supplier of system technology integration solutions to commercial and industrial power users, utility companies and industries such as building and construction, transport and rail, renewable energy and mining. It is a solutions based business whose core competence is system technology integration to improve customers' operating efficiencies.

5.1 Engineering information systems

Powertech System Integrators' engineering and information systems division leverages asset and operations information in streamlining and supporting business processes for asset intensive customers by deploying integrated network planning and management solutions, asset and maintenance management solutions, as well as mobile field workforce management solutions.

5.2 Industrial plant projects

Powertech Systems Integrators' industrial plant projects division operates in the industrial sector, providing professional multi-disciplinary engineering, project and construction management services for fluid gas systems, environmental emissions control, distributed power generation and energy optimisation.

5.3 Energy management

Powertech Systems Integrators' energy management division assists large power user clients to manage and reduce their energy consumption by visualising consumption to adapt business processes for sustained savings. In addition, the business assists municipalities and power utilities to effectively measure and bill electricity usage by their customers.

5.4 Power infrastructure management

Powertech Systems Integrators' power infrastructure management division serves the power, water and industrial industries with its integrated protection and control solutions for large electrical infrastructure to improve network reliability and resilience. Its power infrastructure management solutions also support Smart Grid applications and employ world-class products from GE Digital Energy.

5.5 Product sales

Powertech System Integrators' product sales division provides world-class products that serve the needs of utilities and large power users with regard to low, medium and high voltage electricity asset protection, revenue management and system reliability.

6. Turnkey substation projects

Powertech QuadPro designs, supplies, installs and commissions turnkey substations and is also an engineering, procurement and construction (EPC) company. Its capabilities include substation design, equipment and civil layouts, civil work, substation buildings, equipment support structures, earthing or grounding designs and protection and control.

7. Transport and rail solutions

Powertech supplies automotive and transport solutions that holistically manage asset performance and automate common processes, including standardising and sharing data, thereby improving overall performance and assisting in reducing costs.

8. Renewable energy solutions

Powertech has identified renewable energy as an important growth and business opportunity and offers project management skills, system integrated solutions and a variety of electrical products, namely power and distribution transformers as well as substations, high voltage and medium voltage switchgear and accessories, and solar powered energy solutions as well as reserved power solutions.

9. Switchgear

Powertech Switchgear distributes, installs and commissions a variety of medium voltage and high voltage switchgear and switchgear components, including indoor and outdoor air and gas insulated breakers.

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