

**Matrix Capital Markets Group Announces
the Successful Sale of Aeriform Corporation**



RICHMOND, VA – September 11, 2006 – Matrix Capital Markets Group, Inc. announced today that it has successfully completed the sale of Aeriform Corporation, an industrial gas and welding supply distributor based in Houston, TX to Airgas, Inc., the largest US distributor of industrial, medical and specialty gases and related hardgoods.

Aeriform currently has 29 locations throughout Texas, Louisiana, Oklahoma and Kansas, with a total of 240 employees and annual sales of approximately \$65 million. About 58% of its revenue comes from gas & rent, with the balance from traditional welding hardgoods. Matrix served as the exclusive financial advisor to Aeriform on the transaction.

"We are excited about joining Airgas through this transaction, which will offer great opportunities for our customers and our employees," said Michael Stoddard, President and CEO of Aeriform. He added, "Airgas is not only acquiring an outstanding group of customers, but an exceptionally talented team of associates, who have worked very hard over the years to build the company it is today."

Airgas will integrate most of Aeriform's operations into three of its regional companies: Airgas Southwest will integrate 14 sites in Texas, including locations near Houston, Victoria, El Paso, and Lubbock. Airgas Gulf States will integrate seven sites in southern Louisiana and east Texas. Airgas Mid South will integrate two sites in Kansas, and four sites in Oklahoma, and two locations in Shreveport, Louisiana.

"We look forward to welcoming Aeriform associates, and to offering our new customers a broader product range to meet their gases, welding and safety product needs," said Mike Molinini, Executive Vice President and Chief Operating Officer for Airgas.

"It was a pleasure working with Mike Stoddard and the outstanding senior management team at Aeriform," said Bill Weirich, Managing Director and Principal of Matrix, "This transaction is an excellent example of how a combination of industry expertise and a disciplined M&A process can deliver results that meet or exceed client expectations." Mike Stoddard added, "Bill's in depth understanding of our industry and the professional process conducted by Matrix were important factors in a successful transaction for all parties."

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About Matrix Capital Markets Group

Matrix Capital Markets Group is a leading middle market investment bank headquartered in Richmond, Virginia. Since 1988, Matrix has focused on providing merger & acquisition and financial advisory services for corporate and privately-held companies, including sales and divestitures, Staged Liquidity Transactions[®], management buyouts, and debt & equity placements. For additional information, please visit www.matrixcapitalmarkets.com

NEWS RELEASE

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