



PRESS RELEASE

PRAGUE, 24 April 2009

Albert announces next steps in strategy for profitable growth in the Czech Republic

- ***Focus on a single, strong Albert brand with new visual identity***
- ***Reorganization and downsizing of large hypermarkets to continue; 56 Hypernova stores to be rebranded to Albert hypermarket brand by mid-2009***
- ***Remodelling of Albert stores to continue; 21 underperforming stores to be closed in June and July***

Albert, a food retail chain of Ahold, today announced its next steps in the strategy to create sustainable, profitable growth. Albert will continue to reposition, rebrand and remodel its stores in 2009 to further improve its offering to customers and to improve its sustainable long-term profitability.

"We are creating a sustainable future for our company in this highly competitive market by delighting our customers, by investing in price and value, and by cutting costs," says Johan Boeijenga, CEO Albert / Hypernova.

Rebranding of current banners with focus on one, strong Albert brand

The current retail brands Albert and Hypernova will be united under a single brand with a new visual identity, Albert. The company will develop a strong Albert brand in the Czech market, a brand that will significantly differentiate it from the competition, namely by providing a unique assortment with emphasis on fresh food, a pleasing store environment and high-quality service. The rebranding will also include the transformation of 56 Hypernovas into Albert hypermarkets. After the successful trials of two pilot Albert hypermarkets in Prague – Nové Butovice and Beroun, the first four newly-branded Albert hypermarkets were opened on 22 April in Frýdek Místek, Nový Jičín, Třinec, and Karviná. The rebranding of the remaining Hypernova stores is scheduled to be completed by mid-2009.

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Remodelling of the stores

Albert has so far remodelled more than 45 of its supermarkets. The company will continue remodeling its stores to remain attractive to customers and to be able to respond to shopping behaviors. Albert is also updating its in-store communication to ensure customers recognize Albert's price, value and promotional offerings.

Reorganization and downsizing of large hypermarkets.

Closing 21 underperforming stores.

Albert is focusing on the cost structure of its operations to further lower prices, improve value, and develop the foundation for a successful future in the Czech market. The company has improved its back office and reviewed its portfolio of stores in order to create future growth. Albert will continue repositioning the business, downsizing its largest hypermarkets, and will close 21 underperforming stores. Discontinued stores will be closed in two phases: 1 June and 1 July 2009. The company will do its utmost to offer employees from the discontinued or downsized stores positions in other stores but will need to terminate some contracts.

Employees who will have to leave the company will receive a severance package above the market average. Albert will have 280 stores remaining in its portfolio.

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