



NEWS RELEASE

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Verso Paper, A Leader In Coated Papers

CMP Holdings LLC completes acquisition of IP's coated papers business

MEMPHIS, Tenn., August 1, 2006— Verso Paper Holdings LLC's subsidiary, CMP Holdings LLC, has completed the previously announced acquisition of International Paper's coated and supercalendered papers business for approximately \$1.4 billion, subject to certain post-closing adjustments. The coated and supercalendered business includes four paper mills, located in Jay, Maine; Bucksport, Maine; Quinnesec, Michigan; and Sartell, Minnesota. Verso Paper Holdings LLC is an affiliate of Apollo Management L.P.

Verso Paper is a leading supplier to the North American magazine publishing and catalog markets. The company annually produces approximately 1.7 million tons of coated groundwood, coated freesheet and supercalendered papers and had \$1.6 billion in sales in 2005. Its brands include Advocate[®], Influence[®], Liberty[®], Savvy[®], Trilogy[®] and Velocity[®]. Headquartered in Memphis, Tenn., Verso Paper employs approximately 3,000 people.

"I believe great opportunity lies ahead for Verso Paper," said LH Puckett, company president and chief executive officer, "Our brand is built around energetic people working together to provide great products and services to our core customers. Verso Paper will build upon this considerable strength with an even sharper focus."

In addition to Puckett, Verso Paper's senior management team includes Michael Weinhold, senior vice president, sales and marketing; Lyle Fellows, senior vice president, manufacturing; and Robert Mundy, senior vice president and chief financial officer. Each member of the senior management team has more than 20 years of experience in the paper industry and held a leadership role in International Paper's coated and sc papers business.

Verso is a word that comes from the print and publishing industry -- which is the new company's singular focus. Verso actually means *the other side of a sheet of paper*. As we enter 'the other side' of the transition to a stand-alone company we build on a well-established foundation." Puckett said. "Our experienced employees, great assets and commitment to delivering value-added solutions to our customers will make Verso the premier coated papers business in North America."