



## Lawson Products Announces First Phase of Acquisition

February 20, 2001

DES PLAINES, Ill., Feb. 20 /PRNewswire/ -- Lawson Products, Inc. (Nasdaq: LAWS) announced Monday, February 19th that it has begun the initial phase of its previously announced acquisition of the North American Industrial Products and Kent Automotive Divisions of Premier Farnell plc (NYSE: PFP). Effective immediately, the approximately 400 person sales force of Premier's Industrial Products and Kent Automotive Divisions will represent Lawson in the industrial and automotive marketplaces. These agents will also continue to represent the Premier companies during the transition period prior to final settlement under the agreement which is expected to be completed on March 30, 2001. Robert J. Washlow, Chairman and Chief Executive Officer of Lawson stated, "We are delighted to welcome the Premier sales force into the Lawson Family of Businesses and look forward to providing them with new products, support, services and systems to achieve even greater success in the MRO and OEM marketplaces."

Lawson Products is an international seller and distributor of systems, services and products to the industrial, commercial and institutional maintenance, repair and replacement marketplace. Lawson Products also manufactures, sells and distributes production and specialized component parts to the original equipment marketplace including the automotive, appliance, aerospace, construction and transportation industries.

Premier Farnell plc is a global high service, business-to-business distributor of electronic and industrial components.

This press release contains historical information and forward-looking statements and opinions. Statements looking forward in time are included in this press release pursuant to the "safe harbor" provision of the Private Securities Litigation Reform Act of 1995. These statements are based on management's current expectations or beliefs and are subject to a number of factors and uncertainties that could cause actual results to differ materially from those described in the forward-looking statements. The factors that could cause actual results to differ materially from those described in the forward-looking statements include increased competition, seasonality, an economic downturn, the ability to integrate successfully the acquired business units, and the consummation of the final phase of the transaction described herein.

SOURCE Lawson Products, Inc.

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