

# Jobs saved at collapsed Stroud manufacturer after business sold

A Gloucestershire company that collapsed into administration has been sold off in a deal that has saved more than 50 jobs.

Autonumis, a Stroud-based manufacturer of refrigerated drinks dispensers, bottle coolers and vending machines, was acquired by Peak Analysis & Automation (PAA).

Established in 1962, Autonumis is a light engineering company that employs 52 people and supplies its products to major brand owners, distributors and end users in the UK, Europe and across the world.

The business faced financial challenges during the pandemic, especially during the lockdown of the retail, leisure and hospitality sectors.

On Wednesday, March 16, Jonathan Dunn and Gareth Morris of advisory firm FRP were appointed as administrators. The pair immediately completed a sale of the business, securing all jobs and the future of the manufacturing site, which will see Autonumis join laboratory robotics specialist PAA.

PAA is part of a South African manufacturing group Directech, an engineering, procurement, construction and manufacturing business with companies operating in a range of sectors, including robotics, machine building, tooling, guided vehicles, telemetry, packaging and spray painting.

Directech through PAA also owns Peak Robotics, a US-based company specialising in collaborative laboratory robots and plate storage.

Graham Keen, general manager of Autonumis, said: "We're

thrilled to be joining Directech. The group's backing provides critical investment to support our operations and our growth ambitions.

"Our team has been incredible during some challenging times during the pandemic. The interest from Directech is testament to the skills, experience and drive of all our people and we're hugely excited about working together to take the business forward."

A spokesman for Directech said: "Autonumis brings an exciting range of new products to the Directech stable as well as an extended capability for vertical manufacturing and assembly and the development of new products into our current markets."

Mr Dunn, director at FRP and joint administrator, add: "There are many fundamentally sound businesses that have struggled to recover from the pandemic, particularly those supporting the retail, hospitality and leisure sectors.

"Autonumis took proactive steps to address its financial challenges and is now embarking on a new journey as part of a global manufacturing group."

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