

Bonn, February 21, 2012

## Press Release

### Sharp Electronics (Europe) GmbH receives „Top Brand PV“ seal of quality.

Solar modules from Sharp Electronics (Europe) GmbH are in great demand among German customers. Sharp Electronics (Europe) GmbH receives top marks in independent surveys and is awarded the quality seal “Top Brand PV”.

**Bonn.** Sharp solar panels are not only in popular demand by the end user but are also a highly recommended brand by installers. The area of brand awareness in solar brands is now being addressed in the form of independent surveys by opinion researcher, EuPD Bonn. In addition to brand awareness other areas are also being explored such as distribution depth i.e. when a particular brand is sold more frequently than its competitors by installers surveyed. Sharp Electronics (Europe) GmbH has peaked in this regard and has been awarded the “Top Brand PV” seal of quality. Thus becoming one of the leading brands in the PV market.

With its “Top Brand PV” EuPD Research 2010 has developed a unique methodology for independent assessment of the brand management of module and inverter manufacturers. The award of the seal is based on a multi-level analysis. Brand perception among customers is a basis for evaluating qualified statements among customers and intermediaries. This gives manufacturers an unfiltered assessment of their own brand and also a possible optimization of opportunities in brand management. Wholesalers, installers and end customers refer to the “Top Brand PV” seal as independent guidance in the selection of quality brands. Sharp Electronics (Europe) GmbH has now been awarded this premium seal in Germany.

The award is based solely on leading PV manufacturers, who have passed an appropriate quality model. Sharp Electronics (Europe) GmbH is now among an exclusive group of top brands that are authorized to carry the seal “TOP BRAND PV”. “This award shows that our brand is firmly anchored in the minds of our customers here in Germany. We are particularly pleased that our partners - the installers and distributors, recommend our products in consultations. This demonstrates the confidence we enjoy from the intermediaries”, said Peter Thiele, Executive Vice President Sharp Energy Solutions Europe.

#### **TOP BRAND PV: Background to Brand Management and How the Seal is awarded**

Brand management is a term used to describe the systematic development of a brand within a target group and its differentiation from the competition. When this is done well, brand management can allow a brand to become functional, relevant and emotionally “charged”, and thus to become a true corporate value. Based on years of research experience, EuPD Research has developed a model in which over 30 individual factors are analyzed in order to quantify and evaluate brand management.

With the seal "TOP BRAND PV", the leading market research and consultation firm EuPD Research has expanded their expertise in the field of certification into the PV sector. Alongside the leading award in the field of sustainable management – the Corporate Health Award – EuPD Research now offers manufacturers in the PV branch new benefits. For years, EuPD Research has been providing companies and market-listed corporations with certificates in the fields of brand management, sustainable management and production standards. Together with business partners and test institutes, such as the TÜV Süd Life Service, EuPD Research is currently leading the market in the certification of corporate sustainability. With the seal "TOP BRAND PV", manufacturers can distinguish themselves from the competition, appear united in the eyes of end-customers and strengthen their own brand.

**Awards Help Orientation: Intermediaries and Buyers Trust Seal of Approval**

In a competitive market, seals of approval such as the "TOP BRAND PV" seal do not just offer benefits for manufacturers – intermediaries such as installers can also differentiate themselves once they have proven that they are offering high quality brands. This generates extra marketing benefits without additional costs. For end customers, the quality seal offers a point of orientation in a highly differentiated market. The seal is both easy to understand and recognizable for the customer.

More information about the "TOP BRAND PV" seal of approval is available under:  
[www.eupd-research.com/intsolar/pv\\_seal](http://www.eupd-research.com/intsolar/pv_seal).

---

**EuPD Research – Head Office**

Adenauerallee 134  
D-53113 Bonn  
Fon +49 (0)228 97143-74  
Fax +49 (0)228 97143-11  
[press@eupd-research.com](mailto:press@eupd-research.com)  
[www.eupd-research.com](http://www.eupd-research.com)

**EuPD Research – Berlin Office**

Kneesebeckstraße 53  
D-10623 Berlin  
Fon +49 (0)30 880600-71  
Fax +49 (0)30 894084 44  
[info@eupd-research.com](mailto:info@eupd-research.com)  
[www.eupd-research.com](http://www.eupd-research.com)

---