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## Press Release

# A first half of the year marked by the Group's transformation and mobilization on the success of the merger with Artefact

# An improvement in activity and results expected in the second half of the year

### A new strategic plan for a new story

**NetBooster (FR0000079683 – ALNBT – PEA-PME eligible)**, the leading independent international agency in performance-driven digital marketing, today released its results for the first half of 2017. These results were approved by the Board of Directors on October 13,2017.

A transformation necessary to serve an ambition: to accompany the transformation of digital marketing and advertising

With the arrival of François de La Villardière as Chairman of the Board of Directors in October 2016 and Chief Executive Officer in February 2017, NetBooster has embarked on a profound transformation.

As the increasing reallocation of advertisers' budgets to digital campaigns continues, traditional marketing and advertising models are being shaken up. On the advertisers side, successful brands will be those that are able to transform their media investments into commercial performance and customer insights. As far as agencies are concerned, the players in place must quickly integrate data and artificial intelligence expertise into their offerings and reorganize their teams around strategic consulting.

Taking into account recent market developments and the latest acquisitions of consulting firms, the merger with **Artefact**, effective since July, will allow NetBooster to write a new chapter in its development and to focus on another universe combining consulting, technological expertise and digital agency know-how.

To support this offer and the Group's new ambitions, a **strategic plan will be presented on Thursday 9 November.** 

The transformation brought about by the new management was also due to the reorganization of the Group's international operations in order to bring the new strategy and accelerate organic growth.

In the first half of the year, swift decisions were taken in this direction:

· Reduction of resources and expenses allocated to Group management;

- Integration of the NetBooster and 4Ps Marketing teams after the acquisition completed in September 2016, giving birth to the first performance marketing agency in the UK;
- Reinforcement of the teams in Germany in order to multiply the potential of conquest with key accounts;
- Extensive restructuring in Switzerland and Northern Europe.

This reorganization and investments have been significant and necessary, and the first benefits of these decisions are expected to start in the second half of the year.

Results for the first half of 2017 are presented in the following table:

In millions of euros	First half 2016 (1)	First half 2017 <sup>(1)</sup>
Sales turnover	64,7	75,3
Gross margin	18,8	21,0
Personnel expenses	(12,9)	(15,8)
External charges and other	(4,1)	(5,4)
operating income and		
expenses		
EBITDA	2,3	(0,0) (2)
Depreciation and	(0,3)	(0,3)
amortization		
Other non-recurring	(0,3)	(0,5)
operating income and		
expenses		
Operating profit	1,8	(1,0)
Net financial income	(0,4)	(0,5)
Current result before tax	1,4	(1,5)
Net income (Group share)	0,6	(1,5)

<sup>(1)</sup> Unaudited figures

#### 11.9% increase in gross margin

For the first half of 2017, NetBooster's net sales increased by 16.4% to €75.3 million. Gross margin was €21m, up 11.9%. This growth was mainly driven by the integration of 4Ps Marketing in the United Kingdom.

On a like-for-like basis, gross margin rose slightly (+1%). This development is part of a context marked by the strong mobilization of management to implement the merger with **Artefact**. It must also be assessed in the light of the operational and commercial reorganization undertaken in recent months.

These factors, which temporarily weighed on the organic growth dynamic, also had an impact on the results for the period.

#### **EBITDA** which reflects the ongoing transformation

The **EBITDA** for the first half of the year was €0, with mixed performances depending on the regions considered. In France, including the holding company, EBITDA was €373k compared

<sup>(2)</sup> Impact of the bonus share allocation plan (€79k)

to €818k in the first half of 2016. This decline was mainly due to the end of the Media campaigns (purchase of online space and retargeting) with a customer who was subject to tax.

The DACH zone (Germany, Austria and the Netherlands) recorded EBITDA of €23k compared to a positive result of more than €1.5m in the first half of 2016. In addition to the investments made in Germany, which have not yet borne fruit, the region's performance was affected by a sharp decline in Switzerland during the first half (EBITDA negative €0.3m). Faced with this situation, swift measures of revitalization have been undertaken which should bear fruit in the next six months and should gradually take their measure.

In Northern Europe, EBITDA was also negative at €576k. The restructuring carried out over the last few months should lead to a recovery in activity and results from the second half of the year.

Group-wide personnel expenses amounted to more than €15.8 million, up 22.5% compared to the first half of 2016. This increase includes recruitment, particularly in Germany, in order to boost organic growth.

External expenses amounted to €5.4 million, up almost 34% compared to the first half of 2016.

The increase over the period is related to:

- The impact of the acquisition of the subsidiary 4Ps Marketing
- Relocation of agencies in the United Kingdom and the Netherlands
- Expansion of the German premises as part of the subsidiary's resizing
- Increased use of outside consultants to support the Group's international growth

Finally, operating expenses amounted to more than €540k compared to €266k in the first half of 2016, including restructuring costs incurred over the period.

In total, after taking into account depreciation, amortisation and provisions, operating income was negative at €1m. Net income (Group share) posted a loss of nearly €1.5 million.

#### NetBooster's financial situation is under control

With nearly €24 million in shareholders' equity, over €8.5 million in cash and non-current bank loans of €14.4 million, NetBooster is based on a controlled financial situation.

Artefact: towards the creation of the first international consulting agency in digital strategy based on Data and Artificial Intelligence

In addition to the development of business and results, the first half was marked by the announcement of the merger with **Artefact**, paving the way for the creation of the first international digital strategy consulting agency based on Artificial Intelligence and Data.

In 2016, **Artefact** achieved a turnover of €5 million, up 200%. The €10m mark should be reached by 2017.

This strategic transaction was approved by the General Meeting of Shareholders on July 27,2017. **Artefact** will be integrated into the accounts as of August 1,2017.



**Artefact** will bring new expertise to the Group with a positioning on all of the advertisers' media investments. This new offering combining consulting, data and activation will be unique on the market and will constitute a decisive competitive advantage. The integration of consulting and data skills will also be a strong growth driver for the existing customer portfolio.

With an international network in the process of revitalization and the major opportunities offered by this merger, NetBooster is well positioned to take a new step forward in its development.

In the success of this project, the arrival of **Artefact's** leaders - Guillaume de Roquemaurel, Vincent Luciani and Philippe Rolet- will be a major asset.

#### An improvement in activity and profitability expected in the second half of the year

The second half will be more dynamic with an increasingly favourable seasonality of activity and the first benefits expected from the restructuring measures undertaken in recent months.

This improvement in activity should be accompanied by a turnaround in results and enable the Group to post a significantly profitable 2017 financial year.

#### New strategic plan

In the coming months, priority will also be given to the successful combination with **Artefact**. The objective of deploying the joint offer in early 2018 is confirmed.

On November 9,2017, a strategic plan will be presented to the market. This meeting will be an opportunity to clarify the synergies linked to the implementation of this merger and to present the strategy and objectives that will be supported by the new management.

François de La Villardière, CEO of NetBooster comments:"2017 is a pivotal year. The efforts made to reorganize the Group should enable us to multiply our potential for commercial conquest and take full advantage of the opportunities offered by the transformation of our market. With Artefact, we will carry out an in-depth transformation of our Group by integrating decisive technological advances in Artificial Intelligence and Data into our offer. Today, we are one of the only players able to offer a fully integrated range of services enabling us to drive all of our clients' investments in digital media. We are thus in the process of writing a new story that I am convinced will enable us to change our scale and generate sustained and profitable growth."

NetBooster has made its half-yearly financial report as at 30 June 20 available to the public and filed with the AMF.

This document is available on the company's website <a href="http://www.netbooster.fr/investisseurs/">http://www.netbooster.fr/investisseurs/</a>

#### Warning

This press release contains forward-looking statements, including statements regarding NetBooster's intentions and objectives with respect to its plan of action, the conditions of the market in which the company operates, its financial position and its risk management. These statements are made based on current expectations and assumptions of NetBooster executives. As a result, these statements are subject to risks and uncertainties. Several



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#### About NetBooster Group | www.netbooster.com

NetBooster is a leading independent European agency in digital performance marketing that makes its comprehensive expertise of digital marketing available to its clients to achieve the best possible performance for their investments. The agency invests in technology and covers the entire chain of online marketing through its European network: search engine optimisation and marketing, data and analytics (DnA), GroundControl Technology, display, affiliation, online media, creation, eCRM and social networks, with a recognised expertise in tomorrow's digital marketing (Social Media, Video, Ad Exchange, etc.). Shares in NetBooster are traded on the NYSE Alternext Paris.

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