# ad pepper media International N.V.

The Netherlands / Internet Services Frankfurt Bloomberg: APM GR ISIN: NL0000238145

Preliminary Q4/24 figures

RATING	BUY
PRICE TARGET	€ 2.90
Return Potential	48.0%
Risk Rating	Medium

## STRONG INCREASE IN PROFITABILITY

ad pepper media (APM) has reported preliminary Q4 figures. EBITDA topped both our forecast (+10%) and the prior year figure (+120%). The EBITDA margin more than doubled from 6.3% in Q4/23 to 13.9%. The main reason for this very good result is the strength of the Webgains segment, which contributed €1.1m to the group EBITDA of €0.8m. APM generated EBITDA of €2.0m in 2024 versus €0.0m in 2023.Based on the preliminary 2024 figures, we have revised our forecasts for 2025E and the following years (lower growth, higher profitability). Despite weak growth forecasts for APM's main UK and Germany markets, we expect APM to grow 5% y/y in 2025E as well as further EBITDA margin expansion from 9.3% in 2024 to 10.3%. Besides recovering sales and earnings, another share price driver could be the takeover of a majority stake in solute, which operates the price comparison portal "billiger.de". APM has owned 26% of solute since 2023, and still plans to take over a majority stake. An updated DCF model yields an unchanged price target of €2.90. We confirm our Buy recommendation.

**Strong Q4 and 2024 thanks to Webgains** Gross sales rose 11% y/y to €26.6m in Q4. Revenue however declined 1% y/y to €5.8m due to higher media costs. Despite the slight revenue drop, EBITDA rose 120% y/y to €0.8m (see figure 1 overleaf). Webgains was the main revenue and EBITDA driver in Q4 and is by far the strongest horse in APM's stable. Annual group figures show the same trend as the Q4 figures. 2024 revenue was stable (-1% y/y) at some €21.5m, and at the EBITDA level, APM reported a strong €2m swing to €2.0m. The EBITDA margin reached a solid 9.3% (2023: 0.1%), and we expect 2024 EBIT of some €1.1m. Liquid funds rose 3% to €24.2m from €23.4m at the end of 2023. APM's financial position (no bank debt) thus remains very strong.

**Disparate segment development** While Webgains was the shining star in Q4 with 9% revenue growth y/y to  $\in$ 3.6m and 28% EBITDA growth to  $\in$ 1.1m (excellent EBITDA margin of almost 31%), ad agents' Q4 figures... (p.t.o.)

## **FINANCIAL HISTORY & PROJECTIONS**

	2021	2022	2023	2024E	2025E	2026E
Revenue (€m)	27.65	24.87	21.75	21.45	22.44	24.00
Y-o-y growth	7.9%	-10.0%	-12.5%	-1.4%	4.6%	6.9%
EBITDA (€m)	4.38	1.28	0.02	2.00	2.30	2.84
EBITDA margin	15.8%	5.1%	0.1%	9.3%	10.3%	11.8%
Net income (€m)	1.73	-0.89	-0.94	0.79	1.00	1.38
EPS (diluted) (€)	0.08	-0.04	-0.05	0.04	0.05	0.06
DPS (€)	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
FCF (€m)	1.91	1.71	1.13	1.41	1.82	1.58
Net gearing	-104.2%	-108.0%	-105.0%	-104.7%	-105.4%	-102.9%
Liquid assets (€m)	20.70	17.01	19.84	20.62	21.79	22.73

### RISKS

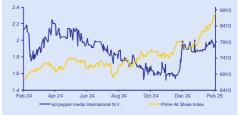
The main risks are regulatory changes, technological innovations, dependence on key customers, and intense competition.

## **COMPANY PROFILE**

ad pepper media International N.V. is an international digital performance marketing company, which acts as a holding for its three operating units ad pepper media (lead generation & audience targeting), Webgains (affiliate network), and ad agents (full service agency). The company is headquartered in Nuremberg, Germany.

MARKET DA	As of 1	7 Feb 2025	
Closing Price			€ 1.96
Shares outstand	ding		21.95m
Market Capitalis	sation	\$	€ 43.02m
52-week Range	;	€ 1.	.52 / 2.24
Avg. Volume (1	2 Months)		5,131
Multiples	2023	2024E	2025E
P/E	n.a.	54.7	43.2
EV/Sales	1.0	1.0	1.0
EV/EBITDA	919.8	11.0	9.6
Div. Yield	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%

## **STOCK OVERVIEW**



COMPANY DATA	As of 30 Sep 2024
Liquid Assets	€ 18.25m
Current Assets	€ 33.54m
Intangible Assets	€ 0.22m
Total Assets	€ 39.01m
Current Liabilities	€ 19.65m
Shareholders' Equity	€ 18.77m
SHAREHOLDERS	
EMA B.V.	40.9%
Euro Serve Media GmbH	7.1%
Treasury shares	5.4%
Free Float	46.7%

Π

...were far below our forecasts and prior year numbers. Revenue dropped 20% y/y to  $\leq$ 1.7m and EBITDA fell 36% to  $\leq$ 110k. Many clients were very reluctant to place orders. On an annual basis, ad agents' revenue was down 7% y/y at  $\leq$ 7.0m. Despite this disappointing revenue development, the segment significantly increased profitability and posted EBITDA of  $\leq$ 722k, which is 3.5 times 2023 EBITDA of  $\leq$ 209k (seefigure 1).

The ad pepper media segment, the company's problem child, reported a surprisingly good Q4 with revenue growth of 15% y/y to €533k. However, on an annual basis the revenue decline of recent years continued with a minus of 9% in 2024. Although the EBITDA loss narrowed from €-483k in 2023 to €-273k, profitability KPI's remain unsatisfactory.

APM significantly reduced holding costs in 2024, which resulted in a lower segment EBITDA loss compared with the prior year ( $\in$ -1.25m versus  $\in$ 1.76m in 2023). In 2024, APM showed that a strong turnaround is possible without growth. The  $\in$ 2m EBITDA swing was achieved through cost savings and efficiency gains only.

All figures in €m	Q4-24A	Q4-24E	Delta	Q4-23A	Delta	2024A	2023A	Delta
ad pepper media								
Revenue	0.53	0.43	23%	0.46	15%	2.10	2.29	-9%
EBITDA	-0.38	-0.45	-	-0.52	-	-0.27	-0.48	-
margin	-72.0%	-103.7%	-	-112.8%	-	-13.0%	-21.1%	-
Webgains								
Revenue	3.59	3.45	4%	3.30	9%	12.36	11.97	3%
EBITDA	1.10	0.91	22%	0.86	28%	2.81	2.06	36%
margin	30.7%	26.3%	-	26.1%	-	22.7%	17.2%	-
ad agents								
Revenue	1.70	2.12	-20%	2.11	-20%	7.00	7.49	-7%
EBITDA	0.11	0.28	-60%	0.17	-36%	0.72	0.21	247%
margin	6.5%	13.1%	-	8.1%	-	10.3%	2.8%	-
Admin & Consolidation								
Revenue	0.00	0.00	-	0.00	-	0.00	0.00	-
EBITDA	-0.02	0.00		-0.14	-	-1.25	-1.76	-
Group			001		101	o		10/
Revenue	5.83	6.00	-3%	5.87	-1%	21.45	21.75	-1%
EBITDA	0.81	0.74	10%	0.37	120%	2.00	0.02	8609%
margin	13.9%	12.4%	-	6.3%	-	9.3%	0.1%	-

## Figure 1: Reported segment and group figures versus forecasts

Source: First Berlin Equity Research, ad pepper media International N.V.

**Webgains is APM's workhorse** 2024 figures show the importance of Webgains for APM. The segment contributed 58% to group revenue, and 86% of the three operating segments' EBITDA contributions came from Webgains. The affiliate network has a high operating leverage and we believe that increasing Webgains' revenue base will be the key priority for APM management in 2025 apart from concluding the solute deal (see next paragraph).

**Consolidating solute would be a win for APM** In 2023, APM acquired a 26% stake in solute with the intention of taking over a majority stake. The Germany-based e-commerce pioneer solute GmbH operates the price comparison portal "billiger.de". The AdTech company, which has 20 years of experience in e-commerce, has grown into a powerful network which connects publishers and advertisers and has +100 connected partner portals.

In 2023, solute generated sales of  $\in$ 35.5m and a gross profit of  $\notin$ 9.6m. EBIT amounted to  $\notin$ 1.6m (margin: 4.5%), and the net result was  $\notin$ 1.2m. solute's assets amounted to  $\notin$ 19.7m and equity was  $\notin$ 13.4m (equity ratio: 68%). These figures show that solute is a profitable company with a healthy balance sheet.

Although the planned takeover of a majority stake is taking longer than anticipated, we believe the investment has so far been beneficial for APM for pure financial reasons: APM invested less than €4m (issue of 1,693,244 shares, which had a value of €2.28 per share on 2 October 2023, when the deal was signed). In APM's balance sheet at the end of 2023, the book value of the investment was €3.7m. In 2023, APM's profit share for its 25.64% stake was €199k, a rate of return of more than 5% in three months. For the full year, the profit share would have been €303k (1.183m \* 25.64%), which corresponds to a yield north of 8%. If APM succeeds in consolidating solute, the combined revenue will be ca. €57m (2023 figures). The 2024 annual report on 30 April will reveal how much solute contributed to APM's 2024 net result.

Slight e-commerce growth in Germany in 2024 & 2025E For an online performance marketing company such as APM, the economic development of the e-commerce sector is important, as it is a decisive factor for the online marketing budgets of APM's customers. The German Trade Association "Handelsverband Deutschland" (HDE) reported e-commerce revenue growth of 3.5% y/y to €88.4bn in 2024. For 2025E, HDE expects sector revenue to rise 3.0% to €91.0bn. After two years of recession and a bleak 2025 GDP growth forecast from the German government of 0.3%, we believe that growth in German online performance marketing will be some 5%.

**Rising digital ad spend in 2025 in APM's main markets** According to the dentsu Global Ad Spend Forecasts from December 2024, ad spend in 2025 will rise by 5.0% to €180bn in the EMEA region. In APM's main markets, Germany and the UK, total ad spend is expected to rise by 3.3% to €35.2bn (2024: 3.1%), and 5.7% to €51.7bn (2024: 7.5%), respectively. The report does not reveal *digital* ad spend growth projections in both countries, but states that total ad spend growth in the UK is driven by strong growth from digital media. Globally, *digital* ad spend is expected to increase by 9.2% in 2025 to capture 62.7% of the total advertising market.

**Forecasts revised after Q4/24 figures** Based on the preliminary Q4/24 figures, we have adjusted our forecasts for 2025E and the following years. We are slightly more cautious regarding our growth assumptions and now expect revenue growth of some 5% y/y in 2025E and 7% in 2026E. Given the better than expected EBITDA margin in 2024, we have raised our EBITDA margin forecasts. As Webgains' earnings were better than anticipated, we assume that APM's other AdTech investment, its share in solute, will deliver higher at-equity contributions, which will boost APM's net results.

A successful takeover of the majority in solute would transform APM's mixed business model (AdTech and agency) into an AdTech company with some added agency business. This would give a much more compelling business case and equity story. We will revise our forecasts and valuation as soon as the takeover is completed.

		2024E			2025E			2026E	
All figures in €m	Old	New	Delta	Old	New	Delta	Old	New	Delta
Revenue	21.62	21.45	-1%	22.77	22.44	-1%	24.93	24.00	-4%
EBITDA	1.93	2.00	4%	2.25	2.30	3%	2.60	2.84	9%
margin	8.9%	9.3%		9.9%	10.3%		10.4%	11.8%	
Net income	0.59	0.79	33%	0.45	1.00	123%	0.71	1.38	95%
margin	2.7%	3.7%		2.0%	4.4%		2.8%	5.7%	
EPS (diluted)	0.03	0.04	33%	0.02	0.05	123%	0.03	0.06	95%

### Figure 2: Revisions to forecasts

Source: First Berlin Equity Research, ad pepper media International N.V.

Buy rating confirmed at unchanged price target Based on our revised estimates, an updated DCF model yields an unchanged €2.90 price target. We confirm our Buy recommendation.

## **VALUATION MODEL**

2024E	2025E	2026E	2027E	2028E	2029E	2030E	2031E
21,450	22,444	24,003	26,283	28,779	31,506	34,468	37,654
673	872	1,238	1,473	1,771	2,112	2,501	2,941
854	860	877	895	910	920	930	941
1,527	1,733	2,115	2,369	2,681	3,032	3,431	3,882
-734	- 592	- 1,275	- 1,269	- 375	- 427	- 487	- 554
- 215	-269	- 312	- 342	- 374	- 4 10	- 448	-489
- 5 19	- 323	-963	-928	- 1	- 18	-39	-64
793	1, 14 1	839	1,100	2,306	2,604	2,944	3,329
793	1,042	690	8 14	1,538	1,564	1,593	1,622
	<b>21,450</b> <b>673</b> 854 1,527 -734 -215 -519 793	21,450 22,444   673 872   854 860   1,527 1,733   -734 -592   -215 -269   -519 -323   793 1,141	21,450 22,444 24,003   673 872 1,238   854 860 877   1,527 1,733 2,115   -734 -592 -1,275   -215 -269 -312   -519 -323 -963   793 1,141 839	21,45022,44424,00326,2836738721,2381,4738548608778951,5271,7332,1152,369-734-592-1,275-1,269-215-269-312-342-519-323-963-9287931,1418391,100	21,450 22,444 24,003 26,283 28,779   673 872 1,238 1,473 1,771   854 860 877 895 910   1,527 1,733 2,115 2,369 2,681   -734 -592 -1,275 -1,269 -375   -215 -269 -312 -342 -374   -519 -323 -963 -928 -1   793 1,141 839 1,100 2,306	21,45022,44424,00326,28328,77931,5066738721,2381,4731,7712,1128548608778959109201,5271,7332,1152,3692,6813,032-734-592-1,275-1,269-375-427-215-269-312-342-374-410-519-323-963-928-1-187931,1418391,1002,3062,604	21,45022,44424,00326,28328,77931,50634,4686738721,2381,4731,7712,1122,5018548608778959109209301,5271,7332,1152,3692,6813,0323,431-734-592-1,275-1,269-375-427-487-215-269-312-342-374-410-448-519-323-963-928-1-18-397931,1418391,1002,3062,6042,944

All figures in thousands	
PV of FCFs in explicit period (2024E-2038E)	21,241
PV of FCFs in terminal period	18,132
Enterprise value (EV)	39,372
+ Net cash / - net debt	18,552
+ Investments / minority interests	8,676
Shareholder value	66,600
Number of shares (diluted)	22,751
Fair value per share in FUR	2.93

2.0%
16.0%

	,								
Fair value per share in EUR	2.93				Terminal g	grow th rate	•		
			0.5%	1.0%	1.5%	2.0%	2.5%	3.0%	3.5%
WACC	11.0%	7.09	6 4.26	4.42	4.61	4.83	5.10	5.44	5.87
Cost of equity	11.0%	8.0	6 3.74	3.84	3.96	4.10	4.27	4.46	4.70
Pre-tax cost of debt	5.0%	ပ္ 9.09	6 3.35	3.42	3.50	3.59	3.70	3.82	3.97
Tax rate	25.0%	0.0 V	% 3.05	3.10	3.15	3.21	3.29	3.37	3.46
After-tax cost of debt	3.8%	3 11.0	% 2.81	2.84	2.88	2.93	2.98	3.03	3.10
Share of equity capital	100.0%	12.0	% 2.61	2.64	2.67	2.70	2.74	2.78	2.82
Share of debt capital	0.0%	13.0	% 2.46	2.48	2.50	2.52	2.55	2.58	2.61
Price target in EUR	2.90	14.0	% 2.32	2.34	2.36	2.37	2.39	2.41	2.44

 $^{\ast}$  for layout purposes the model shows numbers only to 2031, but runs until 2038

## **INCOME STATEMENT**

All figures in EUR '000	2021A	2022A	2023A	2024E	2025E	2026E
Gross sales	111,539	98,229	85,988	89,656	93,811	100,326
Media costs	83,893	73,361	64,239	68,206	71,367	76,323
Revenues	27,646	24,868	21,749	21,450	22,444	24,003
Cost of sales	1,059	1,164	873	600	868	922
Gross profit	26,587	23,704	20,876	20,850	21,576	23,081
S&M	15,739	16,638	14,867	13,426	13,610	14,038
G&A	7,707	7,164	7,785	7,283	7,352	7,441
Other operating income	530	937	966	1,308	1,122	720
Other operating expenses	477	651	184	300	292	360
EBITDA	4,378	1,275	24	2,003	2,305	2,839
Depreciation and amortisation	1,184	1,088	1,018	854	860	877
Operating income (EBIT)	3,194	187	-994	1,149	1,445	1,962
Net financial result	-38	-131	363	615	674	740
Non-operating expenses	0	0	0	0	0	0
Pre-tax income (EBT)	3,156	56	-631	1,763	2,119	2,702
Income taxes	592	306	68	476	572	724
Minority interests	-839	-643	-245	-500	-550	-600
Net income / loss	1,725	-893	-944	787	997	1,378
Diluted EPS (in €)	0.08	-0.04	-0.05	0.04	0.05	0.06
Ratios						
Gross margin in % of gross sales	23.8%	24.1%	24.3%	23.3%	23.0%	23.0%
Gross margin in % of revenues	96.2%	95.3%	96.0%	97.2%	96.1%	96.2%
EBITDA margin in % of revenues	15.8%	5.1%	0.1%	9.3%	10.3%	11.8%
EBIT margin	11.6%	0.8%	-4.6%	5.4%	6.4%	8.2%
Net margin	6.2%	-3.6%	-4.3%	3.7%	4.4%	5.7%
Tax rate	18.8%	542.6%	-10.8%	27.0%	27.0%	26.8%
Expenses as % of sales or revenues						
Media costs (as % of gross sales)	75.2%	74.7%	74.7%	76.1%	76.1%	76.1%
S&M (as % of revenues)	56.9%	66.9%	68.4%	62.6%	60.6%	58.5%
G&A (as % of revenues)	27.9%	28.8%	35.8%	34.0%	32.8%	31.0%
Depreciation and amortisation	4.3%	4.4%	4.7%	4.0%	3.8%	3.7%
Other operating expenses	1.7%	2.6%	0.8%	1.4%	1.3%	1.5%
Y-Y Growth						
Gross sales	10.1%	-11.9%	-12.5%	4.3%	4.6%	6.9%
Net revenues	7.9%	-10.0%	-12.5%	-1.4%	4.6%	6.9%
EBITDA	-33.3%	-70.9%	-98.1%	8245.5%	15.1%	23.2%
Operating income	-41.4%	-94.1%	n.m.	n.m.	25.7%	35.8%
Net income/ loss	-52.9%	n.m.	n.m.	n.m.	26.6%	38.2%

## **BALANCE SHEET**

All figures in EUR '000	2021A	2022A	2023A	2024E	2025E	2026E
Assets						
Current assets, total	40,753	41,768	37,297	37,877	40,262	42,513
Cash and cash equivalents	20,704	17,008	19,842	20,617	21,788	22,728
Financial assets	26	6,334	3,621	3,621	3,621	3,621
Receivables	19,319	17,568	13,124	12,929	14,143	15,454
Inventories	0	0	0	0	0	0
Other current assets	704	858	710	710	710	710
Non-current assets, total	5,599	2,186	5,644	5,637	5,690	5,765
Property, plant & equipment	346	230	173	159	182	232
Goodw ill & other intangibles	628	374	168	174	204	230
Right-of-use assets	1,177	1,318	1,184	1,184	1,184	1,184
Financial assets	3,448	184	3,936	3,936	3,936	3,936
Other assets	0	79	183	183	183	183
Total assets	46,352	43,954	42,941	43,514	45,952	48,278
Shareholders' equity & debt						
Current liabilities, total	25,318	27,448	23,238	22,523	23,415	23,763
Short-term debt	0	0	0	0	0	0
Accounts payable	20,247	20,836	17,657	16,942	17,834	18,182
Current provisions	0	0	0	0	0	0
Other current liabilities	4,566	6,089	5,045	5,045	5,045	5,045
Lease liabilities	505	523	536	536	536	536
Long-term liabilities, total	946	840	822	822	822	822
Long-term debt	0	0	0	0	0	0
Lease liabilities	741	840	754	754	754	754
Other liabilities	205	0	68	68	68	68
Minority interests	1,413	1,176	1,217	1,717	2,267	2,867
Shareholders' equity	18,675	14,490	17,664	18,451	19,448	20,826
Share capital	1,075	1,075	1,160	1,160	1,160	1,160
Capital reserve	63,782	63,782	67,173	67,173	67,173	67,173
Other reserves	0	0	0	0	0	0
Loss carryforw ard / retained earnings	-46,182	-50,367	-50,669	-49,882	-48,885	-47,507
Total consolidated equity and debt	46,352	43,954	42,941	43,514	45,952	48,278
Ratios						
Current ratio (x)	1.61	1.52	1.61	1.68	1.72	1.79
Quick ratio (x)	1.61	1.52	1.61	1.68	1.72	1.79
Net debt	-19,458	-15,645	-18,552	-19,327	-20,498	-21,438
Net gearing	-104.2%	-108.0%	-105.0%	-104.7%	-105.4%	-102.9%
Equity ratio	43.3%	35.6%	44.0%	46.3%	47.3%	49.1%
Book value per share (in €)	0.89	0.71	0.85	0.84	0.89	0.95
Return on equity (ROE)	9.2%	-6.2%	-5.3%	4.3%	5.1%	6.6%
Return on investment (ROI)	3.7%	-2.0%	-2.2%	1.8%	2.2%	2.9%
Return on assets (ROA)	4.0%	-1.6%	-2.1%	1.8%	2.2%	2.9%

## **CASH FLOW STATEMENT**

All figures in EUR '000	2021A	2022A	2023A	2024E	2025E	2026E
EBIT	3,194	187	-994	1,149	1,445	1,962
Depreciation and amortisation	1,184	1,088	1,018	854	860	877
EBITDA	4,378	1,275	24	2,003	2,305	2,839
Changes in working capital	636	3,256	1,975	-519	-323	-963
Other adjustments	-2,806	-2,600	-760	138	102	16
Operating cash flow	2,208	1,931	1,239	1,622	2,084	1,891
Investments in PP&E	-121	-111	-53	-107	-135	-168
Investments in intangibles	-178	-108	-61	-107	-135	-144
Free cash flow	1,909	1,712	1,125	1,407	1,815	1,579
Acquisitions & disposals, net	57	1,938	6,091	0	0	0
Other investments	-1,999	-5,000	-3,521	0	0	0
Investment cash flow	-2,241	-3,281	2,456	-215	-269	-312
Debt financing, net	0	0	0	0	0	0
Equity financing, net	-2,489	-1,232	0	0	0	0
Dividends paid	0	0	0	0	0	0
Other financing	-1,340	-1,124	-893	-632	-644	-639
Financing cash flow	-3,829	-2,356	-893	-632	-644	-639
FOREX & other effects	236	10	33	0	0	0
Net cash flows	-3,626	-3,696	2,834	775	1,171	940
Cash, start of the year	24,330	20,704	17,008	19,842	20,617	21,788
Cash, end of the year	20,704	17,008	19,842	20,617	21,788	22,728
EBITDA/share (in €)	0.21	0.06	0.00	0.09	0.10	0.13
Y-Y Growth						
Operating cash flow	-34.7%	-12.5%	-35.8%	30.9%	28.5%	-9.3%
Free cash flow	-26.4%	-10.3%	-34.3%	25.1%	29.0%	-13.0%
EBITDA/share	-32.7%	-69.9%	-98.2%	7760.9%	15.1%	23.2%

## **Imprint / Disclaimer**

#### First Berlin Equity Research

First Berlin Equity Research GmbH ist ein von der BaFin betreffend die Einhaltung der Pflichten des §85 Abs. 1 S. 1 WpHG, des Art. 20 Abs. 1 Marktmissbrauchsverordnung (MAR) und der Markets Financial Instruments Directive (MiFID) II, Markets in Financial Instruments Directive (MiFID) II Durchführungsverordnung und der Markets in Financial Instruments Regulations (MiFIR) beaufsichtigtes Unternehmen.

First Berlin Equity Research GmbH is one of the companies monitored by BaFin with regard to its compliance with the requirements of Section 85 (1) sentence 1 of the German Securities Trading Act [WpHG], art. 20 (1) Market Abuse Regulation (MAR) and Markets in Financial Instruments Directive (MiFID) II, Markets in Financial Instruments Directive (MiFID) II Commission Delegated Regulation and Markets in Financial Instruments Regulations (MiFIR).

Anschrift: First Berlin Equity Research GmbH Mohrenstr. 34 10117 Berlin Germany

Vertreten durch den Geschäftsführer: Martin Bailey

Telefon: +49 (0) 30-80 93 9 680 Fax: +49 (0) 30-80 93 9 687 E-Mail: info@firstberlin.com Amtsgericht Berlin Charlottenburg HR B 103329 B UST-Id.: 251601797

Ggf. Inhaltlich Verantwortlicher gem. § 6 MDStV First Berlin Equity Research GmbH

Authored by: Dr. Karsten von Blumenthal, Analyst All publications of the last 12 months were authored by Dr. Karsten von Blumenthal.

Company responsible for preparation: First Berlin Equity Research GmbH, Mohrenstraße 34, 10117 Berlin

The production of this recommendation was completed on 18 February 2025 at 10:22

#### Person responsible for forwarding or distributing this financial analysis: Martin Bailey

**Copyright**© **2025 First Berlin Equity Research GmbH** No part of this financial analysis may be copied, photocopied, duplicated or distributed in any form or media whatsoever without prior written permission from First Berlin Equity Research GmbH. First Berlin Equity Research GmbH shall be identified as the source in the case of quotations. Further information is available on request.

INFORMATION PURSUANT TO SECTION 85 (1) SENTENCE 1 OF THE GERMAN SECURITIES TRADING ACT [WPHG], TO ART. 20 (1) OF REGULATION (EU) NO 596/2014 OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND OF THE COUNCIL OF APRIL 16, 2014, ON MARKET ABUSE (MARKET ABUSE REGULATION) AND TO ART. 37 OF COMMISSION DELEGATED REGULATION (EU) NO 2017/565 (MIFID) II.

First Berlin Equity Research GmbH (hereinafter referred to as: "First Berlin") prepares financial analyses while taking the relevant regulatory provisions, in particular section 85 (1) sentence 1 of the German Securities Trading Act [WpHG], art. 20 (1) of Regulation (EU) No 596/2014 of the European Parliament and of the Council of April 16, 2014, on market abuse (market abuse regulation) and art. 37 of Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) no. 2017/565 (MiFID II) into consideration. In the following First Berlin provides investors with information about the statutory provisions that are to be observed in the preparation of financial analyses.

#### CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

In accordance with art. 37 (1) of Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) no. 2017/565 (MiFID) II and art. 20 (1) of Regulation (EU) No 596/2014 of the European Parliament and of the Council of April 16, 2014, on market abuse (market abuse regulation) investment firms which produce, or arrange for the production of, investment research that is intended or likely to be subsequently disseminated to clients of the firm or to the public, under their own responsibility or that of a member of their group, shall ensure the implementation of all the measures set forth in accordance with Article 34 (2) lit. (b) of Regulation (EU) 2017/565 in relation to the financial analysts involved in the production of the investment research and other relevant persons whose responsibilities or business interests may conflict with the interests of the persons to whom the investment research is disseminated. In accordance with art. 34 (3) of Regulation (EU) 2017/565 the procedures and measures referred to in paragraph 2 lit. (b) of such article shall be designed to ensure that relevant persons engaged in different business activities involving a conflict of interests carry on those activities at a level of independence appropriate to the size and activities of the investment firm and of the group to which it belongs, and to the risk of damage to the interests of clients.

In addition, First Berlin shall pursuant to Article 5 of the Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) 2016/958 disclose in their recommendations all relationships and circumstances that may reasonably be expected to impair the objectivity of the financial analyses, including interests or conflicts of interest, on their part or on the part of any natural or legal person working for them under a contract, including a contract of employment, or otherwise, who was involved in producing financial analyses, concerning any financial instrument or the issuer to which the recommendation directly or indirectly relates.

With regard to the financial analyses of ad pepper media International N.V. the following relationships and circumstances are exist which may reasonably be expected to impair the objectivity of the financial analyses: The author, First Berlin, or a company associated with First Berlin reached an agreement with the ad pepper media International N.V. for preparation of a financial analysis for which remuneration is owed.

Furthermore, First Berlin offers a range of services that go beyond the preparation of financial analyses. Although First Berlin strives to avoid conflicts of interest wherever possible, First Berlin may maintain the following relations with the analysed company, which in particular may constitute a potential conflict of:

- The author, First Berlin, or a company associated with First Berlin owns a net long or short position exceeding the threshold of 0,5 % of the total issued share capital of the analysed company;
- The author, First Berlin, or a company associated with First Berlin holds an interest of more than five percent in the share capital of the analysed company;

- The author, First Berlin, or a company associated with First Berlin provided investment banking or consulting services for the analysed company within the past twelve months for which remuneration was or was to be paid;
- The author, First Berlin, or a company associated with First Berlin reached an agreement with the analysed company for preparation of a financial analysis for which remuneration is owed;
- The author, First Berlin, or a company associated with First Berlin has other significant financial interests in the analysed company;

With regard to the financial analyses of ad pepper media International N.V. the following of the aforementioned potential conflicts of interests or the potential conflicts of interest mentioned in Article 6 paragraph 1 of the Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) 2016/958 exist: The author, First Berlin, or a company associated with First Berlin reached an agreement with the ad pepper media International N.V. for preparation of a financial analysis for which remuneration is owed.

In order to avoid and, if necessary, manage possible conflicts of interest both the author of the financial analysis and First Berlin shall be obliged to neither hold nor in any way trade the securities of the company analyzed. The remuneration of the author of the financial analysis stands in no direct or indirect connection with the recommendations or opinions represented in the financial analysis. Furthermore, the remuneration of the author of the financial analysis is neither coupled directly to financial transactions nor to stock exchange trading volume or asset management fees.

### INFORMATION PURSUANT TO SECTION 64 OF THE GERMAN SECURITIES TRADING ACT [WPHG], DIRECTIVE 2014/65/EU OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND OF THE COUNCIL OF 15 MAY 2014 ON MARKETS IN FINANCIAL INSTRUMENTS AND AMENDING DIRECTIVE 2002/92/EC AND DIRECTIVE 2011/61/EU, ACCOMPANIED BY THE MARKETS IN FINANCIAL INSTRUMENTS REGULATION (MIFIR, REG. EU NO. 600/2014).

First Berlin notes that is has concluded a contract with the issuer to prepare financial analyses and is paid for that by the issuer. First Berlin makes the financial analysis simultaneously available for all interested security financial services companies. First Berlin thus believes that it fulfils the requirements of section 64 WpHG for minor non-monetary benefits.

#### PRICE TARGET DATES

Unless otherwise indicated, current prices refer to the closing prices of the previous trading day.

#### AGREEMENT WITH THE ANALYSED COMPANY AND MAINTENANCE OF OBJECTIVITY

The present financial analysis is based on the author's own knowledge and research. The author prepared this study without any direct or indirect influence exerted on the part of the analysed company. Parts of the financial analysis were possibly provided to the analysed company prior to publication in order to avoid inaccuracies in the representation of facts. However, no substantial changes were made at the request of the analysed company following any such provision.

#### ASSET VALUATION SYSTEM

First Berlin's system for asset valuation is divided into an asset recommendation and a risk assessment.

#### **ASSET RECOMMENDATION**

The recommendations determined in accordance with the share price trend anticipated by First Berlin in the respectively indicated investment period are as follows:

Category Current market capitalisation (in €)			2 > 2 billion	
		0 - 2 billion		
Strong Buy <sup>1</sup>	An expected favourable price trend of:	> 50%	> 30%	
Buy	An expected favourable price trend of:	> 25%	> 15%	
Add	An expected favourable price trend of:	0% to 25%	0% to 15%	
Reduce	An expected negative price trend of:	0% to -15%	0% to -10%	
Sell	An expected negative price trend of:	< -15%	< -10%	

<sup>1</sup> The expected price trend is in combination with sizable confidence in the quality and forecast security of management

Our recommendation system places each company into one of two market capitalisation categories. Category 1 companies have a market capitalisation of  $\leq 0 - \leq 2$  billion, and Category 2 companies have a market capitalisation of  $> \leq 2$  billion. The expected return thresholds underlying our recommendation system are lower for Category 2 companies than for Category 1 companies. This reflects the generally lower level of risk associated with higher market capitalisation companies.

#### **RISK ASSESSMENT**

The First Berlin categories for risk assessment are low, average, high and speculative. They are determined by ten factors: Corporate governance, quality of earnings, management strength, balance sheet and financial risk, competitive position, standard of financial disclosure, regulatory and political uncertainty, strength of brandname, market capitalisation and free float. These risk factors are incorporated into the First Berlin valuation models and are thus included in the target prices. First Berlin customers may request the models.

#### **RECOMMENDATION & PRICE TARGET HISTORY**

Report No.:	Date of publication	Previous day closing price	Recommendation	Price target €4.30	
Initial Report	9 January 2018	€4.06	Add		
252	Ļ	Ļ	Ļ	Ļ	
53	9 February 2024	€2.12	Buy	€2.80	
54	17 April 2024	€2.18	Buy	€2.90	
55	28 May 2024	€2.14	Buy	€2.90	
56	1 July 2024	€1.99	Buy	€2.90	
57	16 July 2024	€1.93	Buy	€2.90	
58	19 August 2024	€1.87	Buy	€2.90	
59	16 October 2024	€1.62	Buy	€2.90	
60	22 November 2024	€1.57	Buy	€2.90	
61	Today	€1.96	Buy	€2.90	

### **INVESTMENT HORIZON**

Unless otherwise stated in the financial analysis, the ratings refer to an investment period of twelve months.

#### UPDATES

At the time of publication of this financial analysis it is not certain whether, when and on what occasion an update will be provided. In general First Berlin strives to review the financial analysis for its topicality and, if required, to update it in a very timely manner in connection with the reporting obligations of the analysed company or on the occasion of ad hoc notifications.

#### SUBJECT TO CHANGE

The opinions contained in the financial analysis reflect the assessment of the author on the day of publication of the financial analysis. The author of the financial analysis reserves the right to change such opinion without prior notification

#### Legally required information regarding

- key sources of information in the preparation of this research report
- valuation methods and principles
- sensitivity of valuation parameters

#### can be accessed through the following internet link: https://firstberlin.com/disclaimer-english-link/

SUPERVISORY AUTHORITY: Bundesanstalt für Finanzdienstleistungsaufsicht (German Federal Financial Supervisory Authority) [BaFin], Graurheindorferstraße 108, 53117 Bonn and Marie-Curie-Straße 24-28, 60439 Frankfurt am Main

### EXCLUSION OF LIABILITY (DISCLAIMER)

### **RELIABILITY OF INFORMATION AND SOURCES OF INFORMATION**

The information contained in this study is based on sources considered by the author to be reliable. Comprehensive verification of the accuracy and completeness of information and the reliability of sources of information has neither been carried out by the author nor by First Berlin. As a result no warranty of any kind whatsoever shall be assumed for the accuracy and completeness of information and the reliability of sources of information, and neither the author nor First Berlin, nor the person responsible for passing on or distributing the financial analysis shall be liable for any direct or indirect damage incurred through reliance on the accuracy and completeness of information and the reliability of sources of information.

#### **RELIABILITY OF ESTIMATES AND FORECASTS**

The author of the financial analysis made estimates and forecasts to the best of the author's knowledge. These estimates and forecasts reflect the author's personal opinion and judgement. The premises for estimates and forecasts as well as the author's perspective on such premises are subject to constant change. Expectations with regard to the future performance of a financial instrument are the result of a measurement at a single point in time and may change at any time. The result of a financial analysis always describes only one possible future development - the one that is most probable from the perspective of the author - of a number of possible future developments.

Any and all market values or target prices indicated for the company analysed in this financial analysis may not be achieved due to various risk factors, including but not limited to market volatility, sector volatility, the actions of the analysed company, economic climate, failure to achieve earnings and/or sales forecasts, unavailability of complete and precise information and/or a subsequently occurring event which affects the underlying assumptions of the author and/or other sources on which the author relies in this document. Past performance is not an indicator of future results; past values cannot be carried over into the future.

Consequently, no warranty of any kind whatsoever shall be assumed for the accuracy of estimates and forecasts, and neither the author nor First Berlin, nor the person responsible for passing on or distributing the financial analysis shall be liable for any direct or indirect damage incurred through reliance on the correctness of estimates and forecasts

#### INFORMATION PURPOSES, NO RECOMMENDATION, SOLICITATION, NO OFFER FOR THE

#### PURCHASE OF SECURITIES

The present financial analysis serves information purposes. It is intended to support institutional investors in making their own investment decisions; however in no way provide the investor with investment advice. Neither the author, nor First Berlin, nor the person responsible for passing on or distributing the financial analysis shall be considered to be acting as an investment advisor or portfolio manager vis-à-vis an investor. Each investor must form his own independent opinion with regard to the suitability of an investment in view of his own investment objectives, experience, tax situation, financial position and other

The financial analysis does not represent a recommendation or solicitation and is not an offer for the purchase of the security specified in this financial analysis. Consequently, neither the author nor First Berlin, nor the person responsible for passing on or distributing the financial analysis shall as a result be liable for losses incurred through direct or indirect employment or use of any kind whatsoever of information or statements arising out of this financial analysis

A decision concerning an investment in securities should take place on the basis of independent investment analyses and procedures as well as other studies including, but not limited to, information memoranda, sales or issuing prospectuses and not on the basis of this document.

#### NO ESTABLISHMENT OF CONTRACTUAL OBLIGATIONS

By taking note of this financial analysis the recipient neither becomes a customer of First Berlin, nor does First Berlin incur any contractual, quasi-contractual or pre-contractual obligations and/or responsibilities toward the recipient. In particular no information contract shall be established between First Berlin and the recipient of this information.

#### NO OBLIGATION TO UPDATE

First Berlin, the author and/or the person responsible for passing on or distributing the financial analysis shall not be obliged to update the financial analysis. Investors must keep themselves informed about the current course of business and any changes in the current course of business of the analysed company.

DUPLICATION

Dispatch or duplication of this document is not permitted without the prior written consent of First Berlin.

#### SEVERABILITY

Should any provision of this disclaimer prove to be illegal, invalid or unenforceable under the respectively applicable law, then such provision shall be treated as if it were not an integral component of this disclaimer; in no way shall it affect the legality, validity or enforceability of the remaining provisions.

#### APPLICABLE LAW, PLACE OF JURISDICTION

The preparation of this financial analysis shall be subject to the law obtaining in the Federal Republic of Germany. The place of jurisdiction for any disputes shall be Berlin (Germany).

#### NOTICE OF DISCLAIMER

By taking note of this financial analysis the recipient confirms the binding nature of the above explanations.

By using this document or relying on it in any manner whatsoever the recipient accepts the above restrictions as binding for the recipient

#### QUALIFIED INSTITUTIONAL INVESTORS

First Berlin financial analyses are intended exclusively for qualified institutional investors.

This report is not intended for distribution in the USA and/or Canada.