

ad pepper media International N.V.

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

Final Q2 figures

RATING PRICE TARGET

BUY € 3.30

Return Potential 26.9% Risk Rating High

Q2 EBIT TRIPLED Y/Y – UPGRADE TO BUY

ad pepper media International reported final Q2 figures which matched preliminaries. The high operating leverage of the business model transformed strong revenue growth (+17%) into very strong earnings growth (EBIT: +205%). The company posted a net result of €314k, which corresponds to a net margin of 5.5%. ad pepper reiterated 2019 EBITDA guidance of €2.5m, which it had increased from €2.0m on publication of the preliminary figures. Given that H1 EBITDA amounted to €1.6m and H2 is usually the stronger half due to the Christmas business, we view the increased guidance as conservative and expect EBITDA of €2.8m. Our updated DCF model still yields a €3.30 price target. Following the recent share price decline we upgrade the stock from Add to Buy (upside >25%).

Very strong Q2 figures Q2 gross sales increased 8% y/y to €20.1m. Revenue was up 17% at €5.7m. All segments contributed to the revenue growth, especially the ad pepper media segment (+30% y/y). EBITDA more than tripled from €290k to €883k (see figure 1 overleaf). All segments delivered positive EBITDA contributions. The strongest EBITDA contribution came from the ad pepper media segment (€859k). Higher holding costs resulted in lower Admin EBITDA (€-522k versus €352k in Q2/18). The strong increase in group EBITDA shows the strong operating leverage of the business model. Group EBIT tripled from €208k to €635k resulting in an EBIT margin increase from 4.2% to 11.1%. EBT increased from €81k to €598k, driven by a much improved financial result (€-37k versus €-128k). The net income amounted to €14k (Q2/18: €-45k).

The KPIs were also very convincing on a half-year basis. In H1, revenue grew almost 11% y/y to €10.8m, and EBITDA was up 165% at €1.6m. The H1 EBITDA margin increased from 6.2% to 14.8%. EPS rose from €0.01 to €0.03. ad pepper continues to benefit from the strong growth of the digital advertising market.

Balance sheet remains strong Liquid funds, including securities, remained stable at €20.4m versus €20.5m at the end of 2018. ad pepper does not have any liabilities to banks and thus maintains its high net cash position.

FINANCIAL HISTORY & PROJECTIONS

	2016	2017	2018	2019E	2020E	2021E								
Revenue (€m)	61.16	18.72	20.27	21.80	23.73	26.10								
Y-o-y growth	9.2%	-69.4%	8.3%	7.5%	8.9%	10.0%								
EBIT (€m)	1.61	1.82	1.03	2.23	2.85	3.26								
EBIT margin	2.6%	9.7%	5.1%	10.3%	12.0%	12.5%								
Net income (€m)	0.63	0.58	0.25	0.76	1.21	1.50								
EPS (diluted) (€)	0.03	0.03	0.01	0.04	0.06	0.07								
DPS (€)	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00								
FCF (€m)	-0.54	2.67	-1.62	1.60	4.55	2.75								
Net gearing	-126.0%	-128.1%	-116.8%	-121.1%	-138.6%	-142.1%								
Liquid assets (€m)	17.86	20.13	18.23	19.83	24.39	27.14								

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 DATA	As of 22 Aug 2019
Closing Price	€ 2.60
Shares outstanding	21.00m
Market Capitalisation	€ 54.60m
52-week Range	€ 2.06 / 3.74
Avg. Volume (12 Months)	6.998

Multiples	2018	2019E	2020E
P/E	221.1	71.7	45.1
EV/Sales	1.8	1.7	1.5
EV/EBIT	35.4	16.3	12.8
Div. Yield	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%

STOCK OVERVIEW



COMPANY DATA	As of 30 Jun 2019
Liquid Assets	€ 19.66m
Current Assets	€ 34.56m
Intangible Assets	€ 0.22m
Total Assets	€ 38.41m
Current Liabilities	€ 18.75m
Shareholders' Equity	€ 17.13m
SHAREHOLDERS	
EMA B.V.	44.1%
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5.4% 3.8% Dieter Koppitz Treasury shares 2.3% Free Float 44.3%



Total equity edged higher from €16.5m at the end of 2018 to €17.1m. The equity ratio climbed from 41.7% to 44.6%. Working capital remained negative as trade payables (€14.9m) were again higher than trade receivables (€14.3m). If working capital remains negative, growth will not result in higher working capital requirements and will drive free cash flow generation.

Figure 1: Reported figures

All figures in €m	Q2-19A	Q2-18A	Delta	H1-19A	H1-18A	Delta
Gross sales	20.17	18.72	7.8%	40.82	37.72	8.2%
Revenue	5.74	4.90	17.1%	10.79	9.77	10.5%
EBITDA	0.88	0.29	204.5%	1.59	0.60	164.5%
margin on revenues	15.4%	5.9%		14.8%	6.2%	
EBIT	0.64	0.21	205.3%	1.11	0.44	152.4%
margin	11.1%	4.2%		10.3%	4.5%	
EBT	0.60	0.08	638.3%	0.93	0.45	105.3%
margin	10.4%	1.7%		8.6%	4.6%	
Net income	0.31	-0.05	-	0.60	0.16	269.8%
margin	5.5%	-0.9%		5.6%	1.7%	
EPS (diluted)	0.01	0.00	-	0.03	0.01	200.0%

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

Positive free cash flow Operating cash flow amounted to €763k. Free cash flow was €626k due to CAPEX of €137k. Proceeds from the sale/maturity of securities to the amount of €1.4m resulted in cash flow from investment of €1.3m. Financing cash outflow was €652k due to the payment of lease liabilities (€366k) and dividends to non-controlling interests (€268k). Net cash flow amounted to €1.4m.

Another outstanding quarter from ad pepper media segment The subsidiary increased Q2 revenue by 30% y/y to €1.8m. Segment gross profit climbed from €1.2 to €1.6m (+36% y/y). Segment EBITDA was up 63% y/y at €859k. Advisory-related projects drove revenue and EBITDA to a new high (see figure 2 overleaf). The segment EBITDA margin climbed from 38% to 47%. ad pepper media's lead generation and audience targeting products remain in high demand. The subsidiary continues to exploit its unique and proprietary platform iLead. This helps to generate customised campaigns which are rapidly adapted to customers' markets. Based on iLead, ad pepper media has successfully launched and managed more than 30,000 campaigns worldwide and generated millions of qualified leads.

Webgains shows strong operating leverage Segment revenue and gross profit grew 11% y/y to €2.5m and €2.4m respectively. The grossmargin of more than 97% means that revenue basically matches gross profit. EBITDA more than tripled to €388k (see figure 2 overleaf). The jump in EBITDA demonstrates the enormous operating leverage of the affiliate marketing business model. Webgains is one of the leading affiliate marketing networks with more than 250,000 publishers and has more than 1,750 customers in 14 countries.

Brexit may burden Webgains in the second-half of the year. The next possible Brexit date is 31 October. Boris Johnson, the U.K.'s new prime minister, does explicitly not rule out a disorderly Brexit. This may have a negative effect on the UK economy resulting in lower advertising budgets. In H1/19, Webgains' UK revenue share was 61%.

ad agents' turnaround successful The subsidiary ad agents increased Q2 revenue by 13% y/y to €1.4m. Segment gross profit was up 11% at €1.3m. Segment EBITDA was back in positive territory at €158k versus €-3k in Q2/18 (see figure 2 overleaf). On a q/q basis, segment EBITDA doubled (Q1/19: 74k). The subsidiary has digested the loss of three important clients last year and is back on a profitable growth path. ad agents is a full-service



performance marketing agency with thorough knowledge of the entire digital advertising market. It offers a comprehensive service portfolio and has positioned itself as an early mover in the segment for Amazon SEO and SEA (search engine optimisation and search engine advertising) services.

Higher holding costs Increased holding costs, which we partly attribute to a higher headcount (+2 employees), led to a lower segment EBITDA (€-522k versus €-353k in Q2/18).

Figure 2: Reported segment figures

All figures in €m	Q2-19A	Q2-18A	Delta	H1-19A	H1-18A	Delta
ad pepper media						
Revenue	1.83	1.40	30.1%	3.00	2.55	17.6%
EBITDA	0.86	0.53	62.7%	1.39	1.01	37.5%
margin	47.1%	37.6%	-	46.3%	39.5%	-
Webgains						
Revenue	2.49	2.24	11.2%	5.09	4.57	11.3%
EBITDA	0.39	0.12	231.6%	0.81	0.17	376.3%
margin	15.6%	5.2%	-	15.8%	3.7%	-
ad agents						
Revenue	1.43	1.26	13.3%	2.70	2.64	2.1%
EBITDA	0.16	0.00	-	0.23	0.16	49.7%
margin	11.1%	-0.2%	-	8.6%	5.9%	-
Admin						
Revenue	0.00	0.00	-	0.00	0.00	-
EBITDA	-0.52	-0.35	-	-0.83	-0.73	-
Intersegment elimination						
Revenue	0.00	0.00	-	0.00	0.00	-
EBITDA	0.00	0.00	-	-0.01	0.00	
Group						
Revenue	5.74	4.90	17.1%	10.79	9.77	10.5%
EBITDA	0.88	0.29	204.8%	1.59	0.60	164.9%
margin	15.4%	5.9%	-	14.7%	6.1%	-

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

Forecasts unchanged We leave our forecasts for 2019E unchanged. Figure 3 overleaf gives a detailed picture of our revenue and EBITDA estimates both for the group and segments. The H1/H2E split shows that our H2 EBITDA forecast for the group amounts to just €1.2m and thus remains below the H1 figure (€1.6m), although H2 is usually stronger than H1 due to the Christmas business. Despite this rather cautious assumption, we arrive at a 2019E EBITDA of €2.8m, which is €0.3m above guidarce.



Figure 3: H1 figures, H2 and 2019E forecasts

All figures in €m	H1-19A	H2-19E	2019E
ad pepper media			
Revenue	3.01	2.66	5.67
EBITDA	1.39	0.62	2.01
margin	46.3%	23.4%	35.5%
Webgains			
Revenue	5.09	5.72	10.81
EBITDA	0.81	0.80	1.60
margin	15.8%	13.9%	14.8%
ad agents			
Revenue	2.70	2.61	5.31
EBITDA	0.23	0.33	0.56
margin	8.6%	12.6%	10.6%
Admin & Consolidation			
Revenue	0.00	0.00	0.00
EBITDA	-0.84	-0.56	-1.40
Group			
Revenue	10.80	11.00	21.80
EBITDA	1.59	1.19	2.77
margin	14.7%	10.8%	12.7%

^{*} We note that the ad pepper media segment usually posts a lower H2 EBITDA due to licence payments to the Admin segment in Q4.

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

Upgrade to Buy at unchanged price target An updated DCF model still yields a €3.30 price target. Following the share price decline in recent weeks, we upgrade the stock from Add to Buy, as the upside potential to our price target is now >25%.



VALUATION MODEL

DCF valuation model								
All figures in EUR '000	2019E	2020E	2021E	2022E	2023E	2024E	2025E	2026E
Net revenue	21,795	23,729	26,102	28,973	32,159	35,687	39,570	43,801
NOPLAT	1,578	1,984	2,276	2,547	2,837	3,160	3,516	3,906
+ depreciation & amortisation	540	115	171	207	237	263	289	315
Net operating cash flow	2,119	2,099	2,447	2,753	3,074	3,423	3,805	4,221
- total investments (CAPEX and WC)	-400	2,428	280	211	280	321	363	403
Capital expenditures	-196	-214	-235	-261	-284	-308	-335	-362
Working capital	-203	2,641	515	472	564	629	697	766
Free cash flows (FCF)	1,719	4,527	2,727	2,965	3,354	3,743	4,167	4,624
PV of FCF's	1,656	3,928	2,131	2,088	2,128	2,139	2,145	2,144

All figures in thousands	
PV of FCFs in explicit period (2019E-2033E)	31,714
PV of FCFs in terminal period	17,239
Enterprise value (EV)	48,953
+ Net cash / - net debt	19,663
+ Investments / minority interests	1,529
Shareholder value	70,145
Number of shares (diluted)	21,555
Fair value per share in EUR	3.25

WACC	11.0%
Cost of equity	11.0%
Pre-tax cost of debt	6.0%
Tax rate	30.0%
After-tax cost of debt	4.2%
Share of equity capital	100.0%
Share of debt capital	0.0%
Price target in EUR	3.30

Terminal growth rate								
	0.5%	1.0%	1.5%	2.0%	2.5%	3.0%	3.5%	
7.0%	4.68	4.86	5.08	5.34	5.65	6.05	6.56	
8.0%	4.12	4.24	4.38	4.55	4.74	4.98	5.26	
9.0%	3.70	3.78	3.88	3.99	4.12	4.26	4.44	
10.0%	3.37	3.43	3.50	3.57	3.66	3.76	3.87	
11.0%	3.11	3.15	3.20	3.25	3.32	3.38	3.46	
12.0%	2.89	2.92	2.96	3.00	3.04	3.09	3.15	
13.0%	2.71	2.74	2.77	2.80	2.83	2.86	2.90	

2.63

2.65

2.68

2.71

2.60

WACC

14.0%

2.56

2.58

 $^{^{\}ast}$ for layout purposes the model shows numbers only to 2026, but runs until 2033



INCOME STATEMENT

All figures in EUR '000	2015A	2016A	2017A	2018A	2019E	2020E	2021E
Gross sales	56,009	61,164	75,563	82,653	88,607	96,470	106,117
Media costs	n.a.	n.a.	56,839	62,381	66,812	72,741	80,015
Revenues	n.a.	n.a.	18,724	20,272	21,795	23,729	26,102
Cost of sales	40,165	45,076	376	726	741	935	1,044
Gross profit	15,844	16,088	18,348	19,546	21,054	22,794	25,058
S&M	10,575	9,055	10,771	12,621	12,980	13,866	14,930
G&A	6,382	6,155	6,087	5,925	6,009	6,306	6,995
Other operating income	1,406	1,059	723	494	623	704	392
Other operating expenses	49	329	396	467	453	481	261
EBITDA	540	1,748	2,209	1,354	2,775	2,960	3,433
Depreciation and amortisation	296	140	391	327	540	115	171
Operating income (EBIT)	244	1,608	1,818	1,027	2,235	2,845	3,263
Net financial result	199	82	-17	-190	-117	26	26
Non-operating expenses	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Pre-tax income (EBT)	443	1,690	1,801	837	2,118	2,871	3,289
Income taxes	308	594	664	302	656	861	987
Minority interests	-168	-467	-556	-288	-700	-800	-800
Net income / loss	-33	629	581	247	761	1,210	1,502
Diluted EPS (in €)	0.00	0.03	0.03	0.01	0.04	0.06	0.07
Ratios							
Gross margin in % of gross sales	28.3%	26.3%	24.3%	23.6%	23.8%	23.6%	23.6%
Gross margin in % of revenues	n.a.	n.a.	98.0%	96.4%	96.6%	96.1%	96.0%
EBITDA margin in % of revenues	1.0%	2.9%	11.8%	6.7%	12.7%	12.5%	13.2%
EBIT margin	0.4%	2.6%	9.7%	5.1%	10.3%	12.0%	12.5%
Net margin	-0.1%	1.0%	3.1%	1.2%	3.5%	5.1%	5.8%
Tax rate	69.5%	35.1%	36.9%	36.1%	31.0%	30.0%	30.0%
Expenses as % of sales or revenues							
Media costs (as % of gross sales)	n.a.	n.a.	75.2%	75.5%	75.4%	75.4%	75.4%
S&M (as % of revenues)	18.9%	14.8%	57.5%	62.3%	59.6%	58.4%	57.2%
G&A (as % of revenues)	11.4%	10.1%	32.5%	29.2%	27.6%	26.6%	26.8%
Depreciation and amortisation	0.5%	0.2%	2.1%	1.6%	2.5%	0.5%	0.7%
Other operating expenses	0.1%	0.5%	2.1%	2.3%	2.1%	2.0%	1.0%
Y-Y Growth							
Gross sales	n.a.	9.2%	23.5%	9.4%	7.2%	8.9%	10.0%
Net revenues	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	8.3%	7.5%	8.9%	10.0%
Operating income	n.a.	559.0%	13.0%	-43.5%	117.6%	27.3%	14.7%
Net income/ loss	n.a.	n.m.	-7.7%	-57.5%	208.2%	58.9%	24.2%



BALANCE SHEET

All figures in EUR '000	2015A	2016A	2017A	2018A	2019E	2020E	2021E
Assets							
Current assets, total	27,726	28,672	34,896	36,346	36,441	42,100	46,218
Cash and cash equivalents	16,932	17,859	20,127	18,233	19,835	24,388	27,140
Short-term investments	297	138	27	55	55	55	55
Receivables	9,983	10,116	14,129	17,629	16,122	17,228	18,593
Inventories	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Other current assets	514	559	613	429	429	429	429
Non-current assets, total	6,314	2,706	3,719	3,264	2,919	3,018	3,082
Property, plant & equipment	150	212	424	330	134	196	235
Goodwill & other intangibles	349	572	362	218	70	106	131
Financial assets	5,815	1,922	2,933	2,716	2,716	2,716	2,716
Other assets	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total assets	34,040	31,378	38,615	39,610	39,361	45,117	49,300
Shareholders' equity & debt							
Current liabilities, total	17,436	16,282	21,696	22,560	20,850	24,597	26,477
Short-term debt	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Accounts payable	13,618	12,357	17,838	18,967	17,257	21,004	22,884
Current provisions	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Other current liabilities	3,818	3,925	3,858	3,593	3,593	3,593	3,593
Long-term liabilities, total	96	117	402	538	538	538	538
Long-term debt	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Deferred revenue	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Other liabilities	96	117	402	538	538	538	538
Minority interests	503	690	779	853	1,553	2,353	3,153
Shareholders' equity	16,005	14,289	15,738	15,659	16,420	17,629	19,132
Share capital	1,150	1,150	1,150	1,150	1,150	1,150	1,150
Capital reserve	63,305	61,116	61,312	60,999	60,999	60,999	60,999
Other reserves	-2,199	-2,356	-1,683	-1,208	-1,208	-1,208	-1,208
Loss carryforward / retained earnings	-46,250	-45,621	-45,041	-45,281	-44,520	-43,311	-41,808
Total consolidated equity and debt	34,040	31,378	38,615	39,610	39,361	45,117	49,300
Ratios							
Current ratio (x)	1.59	1.76	1.61	1.61	1.75	1.71	1.75
Quick ratio (x)	1.59	1.76	1.61	1.61	1.75	1.71	1.75
Net debt	-17,229	-17,997	-20,154	-18,288	-19,890	-24,443	-27,195
Net gearing	-107.6%	-126.0%	-128.1%	-116.8%	-121.1%	-138.6%	-142.1%
Equity ratio	48.5%	47.7%	42.8%	41.7%	45.7%	44.3%	45.2%
Book value per share (in €)	0.75	0.67	0.74	0.74	0.77	0.83	0.90
Return on equity (ROE)	-0.2%	4.4%	3.7%	1.6%	4.6%	6.9%	7.9%
Return on investment (ROI)	-0.1%	2.0%	1.5%	0.6%	1.9%	2.7%	3.0%
Return on assets (ROA)	0.1%	2.2%	1.5%	0.6%	1.9%	2.7%	3.0%



CASH FLOW STATEMENT

All figures in EUR '000	2015A	2016A	2017A	2018A	2019E	2020E	2021E
EBIT	244	1,608	1,818	1,027	2,235	2,845	3,263
Depreciation and amortisation	296	140	391	327	540	115	171
EBITDA	540	1,748	2,209	1,354	2,775	2,960	3,433
Changes in working capital	2,257	-1,164	3,095	-2,192	-203	2,641	515
Other adjustments	-1,014	-561	-2,203	-684	-774	-835	-961
Operating cash flow	1,783	23	3,101	-1,522	1,798	4,766	2,988
Investments in PP&E	-67	-144	-378	-51	-131	-142	-157
Investments in intangibles	-118	-417	-55	-44	-65	-71	-78
Free cash flow	1,598	-538	2,667	-1,617	1,602	4,553	2,753
Acquisitions & disposals, net	3,363	3,920	3	66	0	0	0
Other investments	16	209	0	-35	0	0	0
Investment cash flow	3,194	3,568	-431	-64	-196	-214	-235
Debt financing, net	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Equity financing, net	176	-2,217	105	0	0	0	0
Dividends paid	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Other financing	0	-280	-467	-296	0	0	0
Financing cash flow	176	-2,497	-362	-296	0	0	0
FOREX & other effects	8	-167	-39	-12	0	0	0
Net cash flows	5,162	927	2,269	-1,894	1,602	4,553	2,753
Cash, start of the year	11,926	16,932	17,859	20,127	18,233	19,835	24,388
Cash, end of the year	17,088	17,859	20,128	18,233	19,835	24,388	27,140
EBITDA/share (in €)	0.03	0.08	0.10	0.06	0.13	0.14	0.16
Y-Y Growth							
Operating cash flow	n.a.	-98.7%	13381.7%	n.m.	n.m.	165.1%	-37.3%
Free cash flow	n.a.	n.m.	n.m.	n.m.	n.m.	184.2%	-39.5%
EBITDA/share	n.a.	227.8%	26.3%	-39.0%	105.0%	6.7%	16.0%



FIRST BERLIN RECOMMENDATION & PRICE TARGET HISTORY

Report No.:	Date of publication	Previous day closing price	Recommendation	Price target
Initial Report	9 January 2018	€4.06	Add	€4.30
211	\downarrow	\downarrow	\downarrow	↓
12	23 April 2019	€2.18	Buy	€3.20
13	27 May 2019	€2.33	Buy	€3.20
14	19 July 2019	€2.87	Add	€3.30
15	Today	€2.60	Buy	€3.30

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Category Current market capitalisation (in €)			2 > 2 billion	
		0 - 2 billion		
Strong Buy ¹	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%	

¹ The expected price trend is in combination with sizable confidence in the quality and forecast security of management.

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- key sources of information in the preparation of this research report
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