

## ***Media release***

### **PubliGroupe takes a stake in German online entertainment network Fantastic Zero**

Lausanne and Munich, 23 June 2008 – **PubliGroupe is taking an investment stake in German online entertainment network Fantastic Zero (FZ). PubliGroupe is buying 39% of the company's capital from a subsidiary of Wunder Media GmbH and has an option from majority shareholder Holtzbrinck eLAB to acquire a majority stake. The transaction will go ahead once approval has been granted by the German competition authorities. Munich company Fantastic Zero was founded in 2007. It is one of the first vertical network in Germany to develop and bundle high-end entertainment websites (gaming, film, technology and music) and then sell advertising space on them. Under its "Fantastic Zero" label the company reaches its young, male target group with little waste coverage.**

"By investing in Fantastic Zero, PubliGroupe is opening up attractive advertising sales opportunities outside Switzerland, which matches our strategy of stronger growth in the interactive sector and international markets," says Thomas Kaiser, CEO of the business segment "Digital & Marketing Services" at PubliGroupe. Hans-Peter Rohner, CEO of PubliGroupe adds: "Fantastic Zero operates simultaneously as a publisher and an advertising sales company. This gives us some interesting opportunities for cooperation with the online marketing services provider zanox, which we acquired together with Axel Springer a year ago."

Fantastic Zero ([www.fantasticzero.com](http://www.fantasticzero.com)) operates - and sells advertising on - a vertical network of more than 20 entertainment websites that are all aimed at the same target group: men between the ages of 18 and 34. With 1.638 million unique users and 35 million page impressions per month, Fantastic Zero has established one of the widest reaching online offerings for a young male target group (Nielsen // Net Ratings March 2008, IWW March 2008). Within the "Fantastic Zero" network, advertisers and media agencies gain access to a whole world of gaming, film, technology and music within which they can advertise to this target group with minimal waste coverage. They can use traditional advertising campaigns or special customized forms of advertising, as well as promotions, dialogue marketing campaigns and editorial offerings.

The founder and CEO of Fantastic Zero is American Aric Austin, who successfully developed the business model in the USA as Vice President, Sales, Research & Operations at UGO.com. Aric Austin said the following about PubliGroupe's investment: "We can scale the Fantastic Zero model in other European countries too. Thanks to PubliGroupe's commitment we can go international more quickly. We believe that in three years we can be one of the leading European online marketers in the entertainment sector for the young male target group."

Fantastic Zero's main shareholder is Holtzbrinck eLAB GmbH. For eLAB Director Arnd Benninghoff, PubliGroupe's involvement is an important step: "We are pleased because this partnership means that we will be able to extend Fantastic Zero's reach even more quickly in future. After the success in Germany, the next logical step is to enter new markets." PubliGroupe is acquiring 39% of the company's capital from a subsidiary of Munich-based Wunder Media GmbH. PubliGroupe has also been given an option by Holtzbrinck eLAB to acquire a majority stake. Fantastic Zero's CEO Aric Austin remains invested in the company.

Following the launch of the "Webradiopool", this investment in Fantastic Zero is the second project managed by PubliGroupe's "Emerging Media Network" (EMN). EMN was created within PubliGroupe's Corporate Development to support and help the launch of new projects in the New Media arena.

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