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Gimv announces the creation of Olyn group, leader in omnichannel customer engagement

Gimv invests in a newly created performance-based digital marketing group focused on omnichannel customer engagement, named Olyn. As brands have become increasingly digital and consumers have made omnichannel purchasing part of their regular shopping behaviour, Olyn provides solutions to increase sales through the acquisition, conversion and reactivation of prospects. The group relies on a strong expertise in data, content creation and customer experience.

Paris, 7 April 2022 - Supported by Gimv, Christophe Bessac (CEO of Olyn Group), Léo Hauet and Kilian Le Menestrel (co-CEO's of hipto), Harrys Melki (CEO of Avent Media Group) and David Levy (CEO of Skaze) join forces to build a leader in customer engagement and qualified lead generation. Olyn offers a differentiating model with a strong alignment of collective interests: entrepreneur keeps on managing his or her company while benefiting from the value created by sharing resources and talents at group level.

The first four companies composing Olyn are:

- **hipto**, a conversociads© lead generation solution,
- **Avent Media**, a leader in customer acquisition, traffic generation and CRM solutions,
- **Skaze**, a multi-channel programmatic trading desk,
- **Influens Network**, a digital agency for influencers.

With a turnover of over EUR 35 million achieved with more than 350 clients in Europe, and relying on the expertise of 100 talented employees, the Olyn group has a strong ambition for both organic growth and acquisitions in France and abroad.

From 2022 onwards, Olyn will pursue its acquisition strategy by attracting new carefully selected companies. Newcomers will demonstrate strong potential and bring complementary offers and expertise in terms of new acquisition channels or new levers to improve the conversion rate of personalised marketing campaigns. Discussions are ongoing with several potential targets.

Christophe Bessac, CEO of Olyn, said: *"The Olyn group was born out of the conviction that, as the digital marketing market started to consolidate, entrepreneurs would be looking for an ambitious and structured project that would meet the challenges of brands developing their omnichannel sales. I am delighted to partner with such talented entrepreneurs as Léo, Kilian, Harrys and David. Together with Gimv, the group aims to become a major player in customer engagement by accelerating organic growth, recruiting around 100 new employees over the next 18 months, and pursuing our strategy to acquire new companies positioned in complementary business offerings."*

Harrys Melki, CEO of Avent Media Group, added: *"I am delighted to partner with Christophe, hipto and Gimv in this new development stage, which will allow us to carry out this beautiful project we have dreamed of. Joining Olyn gives us increased means to continue to innovate and to offer our customers the most relevant, creative and efficient solutions. I would like to thank my team and my customers for placing their trust in us on a daily basis for the past 15 years."*

Léo Hauet and Kilian Le Menestrel, co-CEOs of hipto, said: *"After having created a pioneering lead generation solution in France, our goal is to accelerate our international development. The Olyn project, based on committed entrepreneurs, experienced managers and an investment company, allows us to face the future with confidence and ambition, relying on a structured group, while keeping our entrepreneurial agility. Being part of Olyn alongside Christophe, Avent Media Group and Gimv, also enables us to pool our expertise and to offer our clients complementary solutions on the customer engagement value chain with performance-based models."*

David Levy, CEO of Skaze, adds: *"Omnichannel and hyper-personalisation are at the heart of Skaze's DNA. This is a new dynamic that is emerging thanks to Gimv, Christophe, Léo and Kilian, with the ambition to accelerate innovation and creativity in our digital marketing solutions. We are proud with Harrys to link up with partners who share the same objectives and the same human values and expertise."*

Guillaume Bardy, Partner at Gimv, concludes: *"It is a great pleasure for Gimv to support so many entrepreneurs combining talent, ambition and expertise in the creation of the Olyn group. The roadmap shared with our new partners is clear: to make Olyn a leading omnichannel customer engagement group, through ambitious organic growth in France and internationally and by attracting new talented entrepreneurs with complementary expertise. Accompanying entrepreneurs in this differentiating and ambitious project combining organic growth and acquisitions is perfectly in line with Gimv's mission as an investor. Moreover, Olyn fits perfectly within our Consumer investment platform, whose investment themes are embedded into digital and D2C strategies of brands."*

ABOUT AVENT MEDIA GROUP

Founded more than 15 years ago by Harrys Melki, Avent Media Group is an expert in digital marketing that combines performance and creativity to provide effective customer acquisition solutions adapted to brand challenges by putting data at the heart of the customer experience. Avent Media Group is made up of three companies: **Avent Media** (<https://avent-media.fr>), a specialist in drive to store operations/test drive/traffic generation, couponing & sampling, local marketing campaigns, CRM, etc.; **Skaze** (<https://www.skaze.com/fr>), a specialist in effective multi-channel programmatic campaigns combining human and technological expertise; and **Influens Network** (<https://influens.network>), a specialist in influence marketing serving brands to provide visibility and performance.

ABOUT HIPTO

Founded in 2018 by Léo Hauet and Kilian Le Menestrel, hipto (<https://hipto.com>) is the pioneer in conversiads© lead generation. hipto capitalizes on the power of social media audiences coupled with innovative conversational technologies to generate exclusive, ultra-qualified and GDPR compliant leads. hipto thus helps sales forces to convert leads more easily and quickly. Already profitable, the company is enjoying strong growth in an ultra-dynamic market, and is now present in France, Spain and Italy.

ABOUT GIMV

Gimv is a European investment company, listed on Euronext Brussels. With 40 years' experience in private equity, Gimv currently has EUR 2 billion of assets under management. The portfolio contains around 55 portfolio companies, with combined turnover of EUR 2.8 billion and 15,000 employees.

As a recognized market leader in selected investment platforms, Gimv identifies entrepreneurial, innovative companies with high growth potential and supports them in their transformation into market leaders. Gimv's four investment platforms are Consumer, Health & Care, Smart Industries and Sustainable Cities. Each platform works with an experienced team across Gimv's home markets of Benelux, France and DACH, supported by an extended international network of experts

Further information on Gimv can be found on www.gimv.com.

For further information please contact:

Guillaume Bardy, Partner – Consumer platform Gimv

T +33 1 58 36 45 60 – guillaume.bardy@gimv.com

Christophe Bessac, CEO group Olyn

T +33 6 08 86 84 33 - christophe.bessac@olyn-group.com

Cicommunication - Marion Felix & Emmanuelle Fourier-Martin

T +33 1 47 23 90 48 – gimv@cicommunication.com