

Press Release  
Zurich, 17 January 2023

# Christoph Tonini to become CEO and Delegate of the Board at SMG Swiss Marketplace Group from 1st February 2023

**Following the successful merger and formation of an integrated corporate and organisational structure at SMG Swiss Marketplace Group, outgoing CEO Gilles Despas is leaving to reorient towards other opportunities outside of SMG.**

Christoph Tonini is designated to join SMG Swiss Marketplace Group (SMG) as Delegate of the Board of Directors and lead the Group as new CEO effective from 1st February 2023. SMG launched in mid-November 2021 as a result of the merger between Scout24 Switzerland and TX Markets. The change in leadership is in line with the plans of SMG's shareholders TX Group AG, Ringier AG, La Mobilière and General Atlantic. Shareholders tasked Gilles Despas, who had been serving as CEO of Scout24 Switzerland for four years before the merger, with the formation of a unified company and organisational structure as well as an independent corporate identity during SMG's start-up phase. Together with his management team, Despas has successfully positioned the group to navigate and master future challenges. This strong existing foundation means that SMG is now well-placed for an accelerated growth journey. Having played a pivotal role in SMG's early success story, Despas will hand over his role to Christoph Tonini.

Chairman of the Board of Directors, Lothar Lanz, said, «On behalf of all shareholders, I would like to thank Gilles Despas for his successful development work. With great commitment and under challenging pandemic conditions, he merged the online marketplaces of TX Markets and Scout24 Switzerland to form the SMG Swiss Marketplace Group within the defined time frame, established a new corporate culture, and consolidated the teams of fifteen brands belonging to SMG. In this vital first year for SMG, we experienced excellent results. We are extremely appreciative of his leadership, vision and commitment, and the vast amount of experience he brought to the role. We wish him every success in the future.»

Gilles Despas said, «I am grateful to have worked with so many talented people at a wonderful company with a great future. I will always have fond memories of my time at the helm of both Scout24, followed by the founding of SMG and its exhilarating first year. SMG has the potential to become one of the most attractive groups of marketplaces in Europe, and I wish SMG and its employees the utmost success that they deserve.»

Christoph Tonini is an experienced executive board member and dynamic leader. In addition to serving as CEO of Tamedia (TX Group) from January 2013 to June 2020, he held many senior positions within the group. From 2007, he also served as Deputy Chairman of the Executive Board and sits on several other boards of directors. Before joining Tamedia, Tonini held various senior positions at Ringier, including Chief Financial Officer of Ringier Europe.

Lothar Lanz added, «Christoph Tonini, with his deep experience and skill set, is the perfect fit to take over the baton as we continue on our innovation journey. As CEO of the TX Group, he invested primarily in digital platforms. He orchestrated the integration of the jobs portal Jobs.ch, which the TX Group owns jointly with Ringier, the expansion of the digital activities of '20 Minuten' as well as the acquisition of ricardo.ch and Homegate.»

Tonini is excited about his new role and is looking forward to taking SMG Swiss Marketplace Group to the next level on its transformational journey. He said «I look forward to joining Switzerland's new pioneering digital hub as CEO and Delegate of the Board of Directors at such an exciting time. I will have the privilege of taking over a well-positioned company with committed, highly motivated employees and executing the roadmap to becoming the most innovative digital company in Switzerland. Today, we already have around 50 million monthly visits on our platforms and more than 15 million users. I thank Gilles Despas for his excellent stewardship, which puts me in a strong position to continue leading SMG and delivering innovative products to help simplify people's lives.»



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**SMG Swiss Marketplace Group Ltd. is a pioneering network of online marketplaces and an innovative European digital company that simplifies people's lives with groundbreaking products.**

SMG Swiss Marketplace Group Ltd. provides customers with the best tools to meet their life decision needs. The portfolio includes Real Estate (immoscout24.ch, homegate.ch, ImmoStreet.ch, home.ch, Acheter-Louer.ch), Automotive (autoscout24.ch, motoscout24.ch, Car For You), General Marketplaces (anibis.ch, tutti.ch, Ricardo.ch) and Finance & Insurance (financescout24.ch). The company is owned by TX Group AG (31%), Ringier AG (29.5%), La Mobilière (29.5%), and General Atlantic (10%).  
[www.swissmarketplace.group](http://www.swissmarketplace.group)

### **About Ringier**

Ringier is a Media- and Technology Company Swiss by nature. The Group includes over 130 companies operating numerous leading media brands, digital platforms and marketplaces. Ringier addresses every walk of life and touches the lives of millions of people - every day in 19 countries. 73 percent of operating profit comes from the digital sector. This puts Ringier in the group of leading European media companies. The family-owned enterprise believes in entrepreneurship, collaboration, innovation, trust and courage for nearly 190 years. [www.ringier.com](http://www.ringier.com)

### **About TX Group**

The TX Group forms a network of platforms and participations that offers users information, orientation, entertainment and assistance for everyday life on a daily basis. Its roots lie in journalism with the diverse newspapers of Tamedia and the free media of 20 Minuten. The portfolio is complemented by the advertising marketer Goldbach. The TX Group is an anchor shareholder of the SMG Swiss Marketplace Group and JobCloud, holds majority stakes in Doodle and Zattoo and is an investor in the fintech sector through TX Ventures. Founded in 1893, the company has been listed on the Swiss stock exchange since 2000. [www.tx.group](http://www.tx.group)

### **About General Atlantic**

General Atlantic is a leading global growth equity firm with more than four decades of experience providing capital and strategic support for over 445 growth companies throughout its history. Established in 1980 to partner with visionary entrepreneurs and deliver lasting impact, the firm combines a collaborative global approach, sector specific expertise, a long-term investment horizon and a deep understanding of growth drivers to partner with great entrepreneurs and management teams to scale innovative businesses around the world. General Atlantic currently has over \$73 billion in assets under management inclusive of all products as of September 30, 2022, and more than 215 investment professionals based in New York, Amsterdam, Beijing, Hong Kong, Jakarta, London, Mexico City, Miami, Mumbai, Munich, Palo Alto, São Paulo, Shanghai, Singapore, Stamford and Tel Aviv. For more information on General Atlantic, please visit the website: [www.generalatlantic.com](http://www.generalatlantic.com).

### **About Mobilière Group**

Every third household and every third company in Switzerland is insured by la Mobilière. Active in all lines of insurance, the Swiss insurance company la Mobilière had an annual premium volume of roughly CHF 4.3 billion as at 31 December 2021. Eighty entrepreneurially run general agencies with their own claims service at around 160 locations guarantee proximity to over 2.2 million customers. The insurance group under the umbrella organisation Mobilière Holding Ltd. includes Mobilière Insurance Company Ltd. domiciled in Berne, Mobilière Life Insurance Company Ltd. domiciled in Nyon, Mobilière Asset Management Ltd., Protekta Legal Protection Insurance Ltd., Mobilière Services Ltd., all domiciled in Berne, as well as Trianon SA, domiciled in Nyon, SC, SwissCaution SA, domiciled in Nyon, bexio AG, domiciled in Rapperswil, and Liiva AG, domiciled in Zurich. Also part of Mobilière Group are Protekta Risk-Consulting Ltd., Mobi24 Ltd., XpertCenter Ltd., Flatfox AG, Buildigo Ltd. and Lightbird Ventures Ltd., all domiciled in Berne, as well as Companjon, with headquarters in Dublin and Düsseldorf. La Mobilière has around 6,000 employees in its home markets of Switzerland and the Principality of Liechtenstein and provides 330 positions for trainees. La Mobilière, founded in 1826 as a cooperative, is Switzerland's oldest private insurance company. The Board of Directors of Mobilière Cooperative has ensured that the cooperative principles of the Group are upheld to this day.