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/ Wellington Partners finances gaming portal Wazap! /

Munich, February 7, 2006. Wellington Partners has invested in the Eastbeam Group in connection with an initial round of financing totaling €3 million. This German-Japanese company operates Wazap!, a vertical, i.e. subject-specific, search engine that users can employ to inform themselves about online, PC and console games. In addition to gaming-related websites, the search engine also checks its own database, which has already been filled with information by more than 70,000 users in Japan. "The know-how possessed by tens of thousands of gamers is what makes Wazap! unique," explains the CEO of the company's German arm, Andreas Rührig. "We intend to leverage this unique selling proposition in Europe and to use the new funding from our first round of financing to also establish ourselves here as the central portal for gamers."

Wazap! was launched in Japan in mid 2004, and has already become the clear market leader in the world's largest gaming market with 130 million page impressions in December 2005. Worldwide, the high-growth gaming market reached a volume of nearly €30 billion in 2005. The dynamics of this market are underscored by the fact that Wazap! is currently adding 300,000 additional websites each day.

What prompted Wellington Partners to invest in this fast-growing market were the Wazap! business model, which is already highly successful in Japan, the company's competitive edge in terms of technology and content, as well as the know-how possessed by its management team. In addition to the company's three German-Japanese founders, this management team also includes Tomoko Matsuoka, a former top manager at Ubisoft, as well as Andreas Rührig and German-Japanese Timo Meyer, two serial entrepreneurs who had previously built the Uni.de and Gamez.de portals. Wellington Partner Frank Böhnke says: "This young team is intimately familiar with the global gaming market, and now is poised to set standards worldwide with a vertical search engine."

About Wazap!

Wazap! is a gaming search engine that provides internet users with optimum, comprehensive presentations of information about gaming-relating content on the World Wide Web. Wazap! is operated by the Eastbeam Group, which is based in Berlin and Tokyo. Wazap! Japan (<http://wazap.jp>) has been doing business since mid 2004 and is already the clear market leader with over 130 million page impressions in December 2005 (95 million Web-based / 35 million mobile). A beta version of Wazap! was launched in Germany in April 2004.

About Wellington Partners

Wellington Partners, formed in 1991, ranks amongst Europe's most successful early-stage investors. With €400 million under management and offices in Munich and Zurich, the firm focuses on helping European entrepreneurs build companies with a large global market opportunity, mostly in the areas of information technology and media convergence.

To date, Wellington Partners has invested in over 80 companies, selling a third of them at a profit, in five cases through an IPO. Serving as the lead or co-lead investor, Wellington Partners has already accompanied Chipbroker ACG in its IPO, and guided online service company Ciao AG, for example, in its merger with Greenfield Online, software company Meiosys in its merger with IBM and German auctioneer Alando when acquired by eBay. For further information please see: www.wellington-partners.com

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