

Press Release

## **Waterland portfolio company mrge expands North American footprint**

**Hamburg/Montreal, 03 April 2023 – Leading international commerce advertising platform mrge has expanded its product and customer portfolio by acquiring Canadian performance advertising platform SourceKnowledge. mrge was supported in this deal by its majority investor Waterland Private Equity. The acquisition marks an important milestone in the company’s history – following digidip, shopping24 and Yieldkit, SourceKnowledge is the first non-European firm to join the group, strengthening the company’s competitive position in North America.**

Founded in 2009 in Montreal, Canada, SourceKnowledge offers performance marketing opportunities to online shops, agencies and advertising networks on the open web, outside the “walled gardens” of Google, Facebook and Amazon. The company concentrates on cost-per-click (CPC)-based advertising formats in the deal/coupon, content, social and search environment. Online publishers can use SourceKnowledge’s SmartBidder™ technology to automatically monetise its inventory in real time as optimally as possible via the SourceKnowledge marketplace or through third channels.

In 2022, SourceKnowledge delivered more than 1,000 advertising campaigns a day, primarily in the US, generating more than 6 million conversions. SourceKnowledge has therefore expanded the capacity of the mrge Group, which generated e-commerce sales for its customers of more than EUR 2 billion in 2022 alone.

**Michael von Stern, CFO at mrge,** notes: “The SourceKnowledge platform is complementing our product portfolio and will strengthen our footprint in North America. Jointly, we are able to provide increased monetization offerings to our publishing clients while our advertising partners profit from a larger pool of premium traffic in the open web. We are welcoming the team of SourceKnowledge to our group and are looking forward deepen our existing cooperation.”

“mrge has extensive expertise in the performance marketing area, which is why we are delighted to become part of the mrge family”, says **Hector Pantazopoulos, SourceKnowledge cofounder and CRO.** “Together we have substantial monetization opportunities for publishers through relationships with advertisers in the highest revenue-generating verticals, which will drive our customers’ growth. As part of mrge Group, we’re delighted to provide our knowledge, experience, and strong relationships from over a decade of highly successful work



in ad tech. Together, we are stronger and can enhance our competitive position in the North American advertising market.”

“For mrge, SourceKnowledge is an optimal strategic fit that will allow us to leverage common synergies and significantly develop our presence in the US and Canada”, says **Dr. Carsten Rahlfs, Managing Partner at Waterland**. “As a leading international platform for commerce advertising, mrge already brings together more than 55,000 advertisers, 5,500 publishers and 100 advertising networks in over 160 countries – a competitive position that we intend to strengthen even further in the future.”

### **About Waterland**

Waterland is an independent private equity investment group that supports businesses in realizing their growth ambitions. With substantial financial resources and industry expertise, Waterland enables its portfolio companies to achieve accelerated growth both organically and through acquisitions. Waterland has offices in the Netherlands (Bussum), Belgium (Antwerp), France (Paris), Germany (Hamburg and Munich), Poland (Warsaw), the UK (London, Manchester), Ireland (Dublin), Denmark (Copenhagen), Norway (Oslo), Spain (Barcelona), and Switzerland (Zurich), and currently manages approx. 14 billion euros of investor commitments.

Since its founding in 1999, Waterland has consistently achieved above-average performance with its investments. Waterland stands in fourth place globally in the HEC/Dow Jones Private Equity Performance Ranking (January 2023) and is ranked seventh in the Preqin Consistent Performers in Global Private Equity & Venture Capital Report 2022 among the world’s private equity firms.

### **About mrge**

mrge is the world’s leading commerce advertising platform, connecting 5,500+ publishers, 55,000+ advertisers, and 100+ networks – in over 160 countries. In 2022, the group generated 3.5 billion affiliate clicks for its publisher clients, resulting in more than two billion euros of additional e-commerce revenue for its advertiser clients. By merging smart tools, technologies, and formats, mrge brings campaign messages closer to content, creating value for publishers, advertisers, and users alike.

mrge combines the strengths of four market-leading companies: digidip, which focuses on premium publishers with high traffic, shopping24, which offers product recommendation solutions, SourceKnowledge, an established CPC platform, and Yieldkit, which enables high reach and performance. mrge is backed by the private equity investment group Waterland as majority shareholder and is led by CFO Michael von Stern and CTO Nils Grabbert. mrge has offices in Germany (Hamburg, Berlin) and Canada (Montreal) and currently employs over 140 people.

### **About SourceKnowledge**

SourceKnowledge is an ad network that empowers incremental reach for retailers and increased yield for publishers. The performance-first platform allows retailers and DTC brands to spend based on their goals, and rewards publishers that drive conversions with a CPC model. The company has direct integrations with key eCommerce plugins – Shopify, WooCommerce and Magento.



**WATERLAND**  
PRIVATE EQUITY INVESTMENTS

Committed to ensuring that open-web publishers are compensated for their efforts in audience curation and content creation, the SourceKnowledge team utilizes its patented SmartBidder™ technology to detect and reward converting traffic in real time.

SourceKnowledge is headquartered in Montreal, Québec.

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