

## **Newly founded Gadget abc Entertainment Group AG to take a leading role in the Swiss entertainment market**

**wepromote and Gadget are joining forces, CTS EVENTIM bringing abc Production into the new partnership**

**Following their successful cooperation within the wepromote group, the companies that not only organise festivals such as OpenAir St. Gallen, SummerDays, Seaside, and Unique Moments but also events such as the sold-out Rammstein stadium concerts in 2019 and 2020 are taking the next step: uniting forces to form one joint, new company. They will be known as Gadget abc Entertainment Group AG, covering all facets of musical experiences: from live entertainment (concerts/bookings) to festivals, all the way to artist management (including labels/publishing) and brand partnerships (marketing, consulting and activation).**

**CTS EVENTIM, an international market leader in the areas of ticketing and live entertainment, will become the majority shareholder of this powerful partnership, integrating its Swiss promoter abc Production and its corresponding group companies into the new enterprise. André Béchir, long-term CEO of abc Production and Swiss live entertainment pioneer, will remain with Gadget in a consultative role.**

*Zurich, 24<sup>th</sup> January 2020.* Four years ago, several partner companies joined forces under the wepromote umbrella: Gadget Entertainment AG, Incognito Productions AG, wildpony AG, OpenAir St. Gallen AG, SummerDays Festival AG, Seaside Festival AG, and wepromote Live AG. The partners of the wepromote group were able to leverage the synergies between them, successfully applying their shared expertise at existing festivals, large concerts, as well as new projects such as the Seaside Festival in Spiez or Unique Moments at the National Museum Zurich. Today's move is the logical next instalment of this success story: "We have been working together towards this step for a long time. With CTS EVENTIM coming on board and integrating abc Production's business, we can create the necessary momentum for our continued development", explains Christof Huber, wepromote's chairman of the board.

### **Synergistic leverage**

The new company will create additional synergies and is uniquely positioned within in the music and live entertainment markets due to its comprehensive service portfolio. "Thanks to our diversification, we are ideally situated for the rapid changes within the market environment and are able to use our many synergies in an optimal way", explains Oliver Rosa, one of the two designated Managing Partners of the new Gadget abc Entertainment Group AG.

### **Market partnership with CTS EVENTIM**

The new partnership will be completed by CTS EVENTIM, an international market leader in the areas of ticketing and live entertainment who will also introduce abc Production AG into the partnership. Other members of the group are ALL IN ONE Communication AG, You are Special-Events AG, as well as Production Service Switzerland AG. Thanks to this partnership, Gadget abc Entertainment Group AG will get a more direct access to the international market via the newly founded EVENTIM LIVE promoter network. In May 2013, CTS EVENTIM acquired a majority stake in abc Production AG that was founded in 2009 by André Béchir who continued to be responsible for the operational management of the company in his role as CEO up to now. "Merging the existing companies is a logical and natural next step that will shape the live business in Switzerland for many years to come. I look forward to cooperating with Gadget abc Entertainment Group AG as a consultant and will actively support them with my extensive knowledge and experience", explained André Béchir, CEO of

abc Production. André Béchir will remain an important asset to the new partnership thanks to his extensive network and well-established connections with agents.

Klaus-Peter Schulenberg, CEO of CTS EVENTIM, added: “With the acquisition of the majority stake in Gadget and wepromote and the subsequent integration of abc Production, we are able to streamline and expand our business activities in the Swiss live entertainment market. Gadget abc Entertainment Group AG constitutes a new powerful event and entertainment network. The expansion of EVENTIM LIVE, our international promoter network, is coming along nicely. Not only can we offer artists powerful ticketing options, but also enhanced international touring possibilities and custom solutions – all from a single source.”

### **Successful movers and shakers of the music business united under one brand**

The newly formed Gadget abc Entertainment Group AG is owner-operated, its management consisting of five partners centred on Christof Huber, festival director in St. Gallen and Arbon. Besides Christof Huber, it also includes Cyrill Stadler, long-standing CFO and VR of the wepromote group, and the current Gadget partners Eric Kramer, Oliver Rosa, and Stefan Wyss. Eric Kramer and Oliver Rosa will represent the company as Managing Partners, Stefan Wyss will run the live business while Christof Huber will manage festival-related activities. Cyrill Stadler will take on the role of Financial Director.

Wildpony AG which is headed by Philippe Cornu, Bernese cultural manager and director of the Seaside Festival in partnership with Pascal Rötheli, will be integrated in the new enterprise. Christof Huber’s Incognito Productions AG based in St. Gallen will also merge with the new construct. Reto Lazzarotto, long-standing partner of Gadget Entertainment AG, will leave the company at his own request; he will, however, continue to retain a close and friendly relationship with Gadget as a cooperating partner. In addition, Martin Zahner, long-standing VR President of Openair St. Gallen, will resign from all of his functions within the wepromote group.

Eric Kramer, one of the two designated Managing Partners of the new enterprise, explains: “We will be able to leverage our reliability and consistency as an important shaper within the Swiss music business. We will be better able to respond to market conditions and take our business to a successful future.”

**Opportunities for information and enquiries from media professionals:** Friday, 24<sup>th</sup> January 2020 from 8.15 to 10.00 a.m. and from 2.00 to 3.30 p.m.:

Gadget abc Entertainment Group AG:

Nicole Graf Strübi, mail: [medien@gadget.ch](mailto:medien@gadget.ch) or mobile +41 (0)79 635 75 85

CTS EVENTIM:

Thomas Kollner, Corporate Communications, mail: [Thomas.kollner@eventim.de](mailto:Thomas.kollner@eventim.de) or phone +49 40 380 788 7299

Attachment:

- Group photograph of Gadget abc Entertainment Group AG’s management team

## Company portraits

### **wepromote AG**

Since 2015, the partner companies OpenAir St. Gallen AG, SummerDays Festival AG, Seaside Festival AG, and Unique Moments have been pooling their resources under the wepromote Live AG umbrella brand. In addition, wepromote Live AG is the organiser of the sold-out Rammstein stadium concerts in Bern and Zurich. wepromote is also a partner of Gadget Entertainment AG, Incognito Productions AG, and wildpony AG. [www.wepromote.ch](http://www.wepromote.ch)

### **Gadget Entertainment AG**

Founded in 1994 by Eric Kramer, Gadget Entertainment AG is Switzerland's leading full-service music agency. Every year, Gadget organises and books more than 450 concerts of Swiss and international artists at locations of all sizes. As artist managers, Gadget accompanies the careers of many successful artists and new talents from all of Switzerland. In addition, the company runs its own record label and publishing business. In the areas of youth and music marketing, Gadget also develops comprehensive campaigns and strategic concepts for the entertainment sector. [www.gadget.ch](http://www.gadget.ch)

### **wildpony AG**

wildpony AG has several decades' worth of experience in the areas of booking and event management, including serving as booking agent of the renowned Gurtenfestival in Bern for many years. Committed to finding the perfect artistic content for any type of event, wildpony creates well-founded event concepts and acts as consultant in a variety of event-specific areas. [www.wildpony.ch](http://www.wildpony.ch)

### **Incognito Productions AG**

Incognito Productions AG has enjoyed a successful record both as an event agency with innovative and forward-looking event concepts and as a promoter and booking agency for music and comedy since the early 1990s. Always with an eye on success and projected goals, Incognito looks after its clients, creates event and gastronomic concepts, and makes use of its know-how to run festivals and events with differing levels of capacity as an independent booking agency. [www.incognito.ch](http://www.incognito.ch)

### **CTS EVENTIM AG & Co. KGaA**

CTS EVENTIM is one of the leading providers of ticketing and live entertainment. In 2018, approx. 250 million tickets were marketed using the company's systems – through stationary box offices, online, or via mobile devices. The company's online portals operate under brands such as eventim.de, oeticket.com, ticketcorner.ch, ticketone.it, and entradas.com. The EVENTIM group also includes numerous promoters of concerts, tours, and festivals such as "Rock am Ring", "Rock im Park", "Hurricane", "Southside", and "Lucca Summer". CTS EVENTIM also operates some of Europe's most renowned venues, such as the LANXESS arena in Cologne, the Waldbühne in Berlin, and the EVENTIM Apollo in London. CTS EVENTIM AG & Co. KGaA (ISIN DE 0005470306) has been listed on the stock exchange since the year 2000 and is currently a member of the MDAX segment. In 2018, 3141 employees in 21 countries generated more than 1.2 billion Euros in revenue. <https://corporate.eventim.de/unternehmen/>

### **abc Production AG**

abc Production AG was founded in 2009 by André Béchir. In May 2013, CTS EVENTIM became the majority shareholder of abc Production AG while André Béchir continued to run the company as co-shareholder and CEO. Since 2017, abc Production has been wholly owned by CTS EVENTIM, organising approx. 80 concerts, festivals, shows, and events per year with a total of over 300,000 visitors. abc Production is the owner of companies such as ALL IN ONE Communication AG, You are Special-Events AG, and Production Service Switzerland AG. <https://www.abc-production.ch>