

Aix-en-Provence, 24 March 2020 (6.00 p.m.)

2019: ANOTHER YEAR OF BUSINESS GROWTH AND INCREASE IN EARNINGS 2020: IMPACT OF THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

Seventh consecutive year of business growth

- Full-year 2019 gross profit of €95.22 M, up 8.7% on a reported basis and 4.6% LFL¹.
- Continued strong growth in digital businesses: up 7.8% LFL, accounting for 56.2% of the Group's total business in 2019.

Strong growth in 2019 earnings

- Adjusted headline PBIT² of €17.62 M, up 9.9%.
- Adjusted operating margin² of 18.5%, up 20 basis points.
- Recurring operating income of €16.54 M, up 17.2%.
- Attributable net income of €9.32 M, up 7.8%.

Strong cash generation

- Net cash³ of €62.38 M at 31 December 2019, up €10.22 M compared with 31 December 2018.
- Net cash excluding operating working capital of €3.1 M at 31 December 2019, rising €2.13 M compared with 31 December 2018.

2020: Impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic

- Sharp business decline expected in H1 2020

(€ M)	2019	2018	2019/2018 Change
Gross profit	95.22	87.57	+8.7% (+4.6% LFL ¹)
Adjusted headline PBIT²	17.62	16.04	+9.9%
Adjusted operating margin² (%)	18.5%	18.3%	+20 bp
Recurring operating income	16.54	14.12	+17.2%
Attributable net income	9.32	8.64	+7.8%
Net cash ³	62.38	52.17	+€10.22 M
<i>Net cash³ excluding operating working capital</i>	<i>3.10</i>	<i>0.97</i>	<i>+€2.13 M</i>

¹ Like for like: Based on a comparable scope (i.e. including Useradgents over 12 months in 2018 and 2019) and at constant exchange rates (i.e. applying the average exchange rate over the period to data from the compared period).

² Adjusted headline profit before interest and tax: Recurring operating income before restructuring costs (2019: €0.45 M; 2018: €0.71 M) and excluding the cost of performance share plans (2019: €0.62 M; 2018: €1.21 M). Adjusted operating margin: Adjusted headline PBIT/Gross profit.

³ Net cash position: Cash (asset) minus gross financial debt (liability) at 31 December.



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Didier Chabassieu, Chairman of the Management Board, stated, “HighCo has posted its seventh consecutive year of growth, driven by the strong rise in digital businesses and very good financial performance. Our financial soundness, excellent relations with our clients and financial partners, and the cohesion and involvement of our employees are our greatest strengths to get through the unprecedented health and economic crisis caused by COVID-19.”

2019 FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE

Seventh consecutive year of business growth

2019 gross profit amounted to €95.22 M, up 8.7% on a reported basis and 4.6% like for like. Growth improved with each quarter to reach 6.5% in Q4 2019. As a result, the Group posted its seventh consecutive year of organic growth, driven by continued growth in digital businesses (up 7.8% like for like) and by offline businesses, which have held up well.

In France, business growth was strong in 2019: up 5% like for like to €71.52 M, accounting for 75.1% of the Group's gross profit. This performance is marked by strong growth in **Digital (up 8.8% like for like)**. The share of Digital in total French business increased to **63.9% for 2019**, benefiting from a sustained performance across all businesses. After a good second half of the year, **International business grew 3.5% like for like in 2019 to €23.71 M**, with Benelux showing growth of 3.7% and Southern Europe (Spain and Italy) remaining stable.

Strong growth in 2019 earnings

Business growth resulted in a **sharp 9.9% rise in adjusted headline PBIT to €17.62 M in 2019** with:

- A further 9.7% increase in adjusted headline PBIT in France to €15.18 M (2018: €13.84 M);
- Higher adjusted headline PBIT for International businesses, up 11.1% to €2.44 M (2018: €2.2 M).

Adjusted operating margin (adjusted headline PBIT/gross profit) **climbed 20 basis points, coming out at 18.5%** (2018: 18.3%).

Growth in adjusted headline PBIT, the lower cost of performance share plans (2019: €0.62 M; 2018: €1.21 M) and the decrease in restructuring costs (2019: €0.45 M; 2018: €0.71 M) led to a **strong 17.2% increase in recurring operating income to €16.54 M** (2018: €14.12 M).

Operating income rose 13.7% to €16.66 M (2018: €14.66 M).

The tax expense came out much higher – mainly due to the unfavourable comparative base, with significant tax credits recognised in 2018 – totalling €5.76 M in 2019 (2018: expense of €3.86 M).

Adjusted attributable net income fell 1% to €9.65 M (2018: €9.75 M), with a **reported figure of €9.32 M, for an increase of 7.8%** (2018: €8.64 M).

The Group recorded 2019 EPS of €0.45, up 7.9% from 2018.

Strong cash generation

Cash flow amounted to €17.8 M. **The net cash position surged €10.22 M to €62.38 M** at 31 December 2019. Excluding operating working capital (€59.29 M at 31 December 2019), net cash remained positive at €3.1 M, up by €2.13 M compared to 31 December 2018.