



Press release

Malta, 3 December 2007

## Unibet announces intention to acquire Maria Holdings to further strengthen its position in Bingo and the Nordic markets

- Significant potential within the female customer segment
- Excellent value creation opportunity in the fast growing online bingo market
- Acquisition value of SEK 705 million (GBP 54 million)

Unibet Group plc today announces that it has signed an agreement to acquire 100 per cent of the Maltese company Maria Holdings Ltd, owned by the Swedish investment company Maria Invest AB. The agreement is subject to Unibet obtaining financing for the acquisition as well as certain other legal prerequisites being in place. Maria Invest AB's subsidiary Parabol LTD owns several attractive domains like Mariabingo.com, Mariacasino.com, Carlospoker.com and Carlosplace.com. Maria Holding LTD owns Bingo.se.

At closing of the acquisition, all current subsidiaries under Maria Invest AB will have been restructured under Maria Holdings Ltd.

The acquisition price is SEK 705 million (GBP 54 million), payable as cash up front at day of closing. Unibet's intention is to finance the acquisition with either bank debt or through capital raised in the bond market.

For the first nine months of 2007, total income for Maria Invest was SEK 77.1 million (GBP 5.9 million) and the operating profit was SEK 26.1 million (GBP 2.0 million). Total income in Q3 2007 was SEK 29.5 million, compared to SEK 6.5 million in Q3 2006 (a growth of 354%).

In Q3 Maria Invest had 176,361 registered customers and 11,659 active customers (active last 3 months).

For the first nine months of 2007, total gross winnings revenue for Unibet Group plc was GBP 59 million (SEK 773 million) and the operating profit was GBP 16.5 million (SEK 216 million).

### Telephone conference

Today, Monday 3 December 2007, Unibet's CEO Petter Nylander, CFO Ragnar Hellenius and Maria Invest's CEO Jörgen Nordlund will host a telephone conference. The conference will start at **8.30 GMT / 9.30 CET**. Please call in on telephone number **+44 (0)20 7806 1957** passcode **9488024**.

We kindly ask participants to call in 5 to 10 minutes in advance to register. The telephone conference can be replayed by calling telephone number +44 (0)20 7806 1970 passcode **9488024#**.

### Strategic rationale

Unibet has previously announced its intention to broaden the demographic coverage, especially in the Nordic countries. The acquisition of Maria Holdings achieves this aim and provides Unibet with a well established marketing and customer base within the bingo area and with a special appeal to female customers.



It is well known that the female customer base is highly valuable for all FMCG (Fast Moving Consumer Goods) industries, but its potential remains largely untapped within the gaming industry. Unibet is today the online gaming market leader among men in the Nordic countries. With this acquisition a valuable complementary female customer base will be added to the current business, ascertaining Unibet's position as the no. 1 of the private operators in the Nordic region. Unibet's strong footprint in Europe and Maria's market leading position and competence within the fast growing online bingo market makes for an ideal industrial fit between the two companies.

"With this acquisition we will strengthen our position in the Nordic region as well as within the fast growing online bingo market. Unibet is today the leading private gaming company among men, and with this acquisition we will also be leading among women", says Petter Nylander, CEO of Unibet Group plc.

Maria Invest's marketing strategy and product innovations have proved successful and have given the company a leading Nordic position in the lucrative female customer segment for gaming.

"We strongly believe that the combined Unibet and Maria product offering, structural capital and top talent will create a unique European gaming operator with four strong product pillars and substantial growth potential", says Jörgen Nordlund, CEO of Maria Invest.

#### **Timetable**

Signing of the transaction (subject to Unibet obtaining financing for the acquisition as well as certain other legal prerequisites being in place) took place today. It is the intention of Unibet and Maria Invest to close the deal before the year end.

Hjalmarsson & Partners Corporate Finance AB is acting as financial adviser to Unibet in relation to this transaction.

#### **For more information:**

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#### **About Unibet**

Unibet was founded in 1997 and is an online gambling company listed on OMX Nordic Exchange in Stockholm. Unibet is one of the largest privately-owned gambling operators in the European market and provides services in 20 languages through [www.unibet.com](http://www.unibet.com). Today, Unibet has more than 2.0 million customers in over 100 countries. Unibet is a member of the EGBA, European Gaming and Betting Association, RGA, Remote Gambling Association in the UK and is certified by G4, Global Gaming Guidance Group.

More information about Unibet Group plc can be found on [www.unibetgroupplc.com](http://www.unibetgroupplc.com)

#### **About Maria Invest**

Maria Invest AB invests in companies that develop and provide entertainment and games over the Internet. The group's focus is to appeal to women. The portfolio companies develop new market-leading products, attract new target groups and provide players with the highest returns.

Maria Invest AB owns Parabol Ltd, Maria Holding LTD, Maria Services LTD, Mantaray SA, Maria Plaza AB and Tibay AB.

Parabol LTD owns the domains MariaBingo, CarlosPoker, Mariacasino and Carlosplace. Maria Holding owns Bingo.se.

More information about Maria Invest AB can be found at [www.mariainvest.se](http://www.mariainvest.se)