

Monthly European Technology Venture Capital Bulletin November 2011

The Go4Venture Monthly Venture Capital Bulletin is a publication commenting on the latest results from our European Technology VC Headline Transactions Index®.

Go4Venture's European Tech VC Headline Transactions Index is based on the number and value of transactions reported in professional publications. The Index is compiled on a monthly basis as an early indicator of the evolution of the market for venture capital funding for European technology companies.

For more details please refer to the Methodology Note available at www.go4venture.com/research/hti.htm.

About Go4Venture

Go4Venture Advisers LLP is a London-based corporate finance advisory firm focused on providing European technology entrepreneurs and their investors with impartial advice to help them develop and execute growth strategies.

Our services encompass:

- Financing strategies
- Buy and build strategies
- Exit strategies (trade sale and IPO advisory)
- Strategic advisory and valuation

We are particularly well-known for our international equity private placement services, where we have developed a reputation second to none in Europe among international VCs.

Further information is available at www.go4venture.com.

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Dear Clients and Friends,

What can we all wish for 2012?

As we've watched 2011 unfold, **we have noticed a slowdown since summer – even if we are going to finish 2011 well ahead of 2010** (currently +15% on a year-to-date basis, but it was well over +30% earlier in the year). In short, even though our indicator captures all investors (not just venture capital funds), and focuses on larger investments which are benefiting from the renewed focus on sizeable investments, the impact of the general uncertain environment is palpable.

So far the effect on funding levels is still modest, in part because the performance of portfolio companies hasn't been impacted too badly up to now. But as companies ready their budgets for 2012, prudence is a must, which by definition will result in more modest growth next year. In short, **the recessionary environment is becoming self-fulfilling.**

We've seen the movie before: longer and more haphazard investor (and acquirer!) decision-making, increased risk-awareness away from earlier stages, smaller rounds, lower valuations – and overall fewer and smaller investments. And as a consequence, **the bar will be raised once more**, with priority given to companies with traction led by serial entrepreneurs. And companies which would have been financed in 2011 may bite the dust next year instead.

Against this morose backdrop, there are reasons to be hopeful. Overall **2012 should not feel like 2008 – when the world of VC investments just stopped.** That is of course, assuming that the Eurozone crisis doesn't degenerate into a complete freeze of investor confidence and money velocity grinding to a halt with all liquidity going cash, gold and other hard assets.

So, bar a 1929 style meltdown, here is what we can expect:

- **Lower investment but probably not disastrously so** – we have another 15% to go before we are back to 2010, and 60% before crashing back to 2008 investment levels.
 - And let's keep things in perspective – even 2008 was nothing like the calamitous 2001.
- **Continuity in investment themes** – stay the course if your strategy meets one or more of these themes:
 - Stages:
 - Growth equity – as private equity (PE) moves in VC territory (for lack of debt leverage in their traditional buyout business), creating formidable competition for VCs – but also fantastic finding opportunities for growth stage companies seeking finance. Of particular interest are companies with a predictable base business AND venture-like new growth areas (e.g. new products, application and/or geographies)
 - Later-stage – benefiting the pool of companies which are suffering for lack of a vigorous exit market. In this segment, expect more secondary transactions as larger VC funds become

more aggressive (following standard PE practice) in buying out smaller investors stranded in old situations they can neither fund nor exit

- Sectors:
 - Internet – because of its infinite scalability and the mobile internet wave (apps and all, but soon also 4G). Note however, that capital efficiency will come back to a premium, so we'll see probably smaller rounds for companies with de-risked, investment-efficient goto market strategies (white label, B2B2C, etc)
 - SaaS – which has now become the norm in software. Investors will refinance SaaS companies started in the past five years which are now coming to maturity
 - And also – medtech (where it saves money for healthcare systems) and of course cleantech (where it saves money for the value chain – and makes the world better)
- Countries:
 - Germany – the sleeping giant of Europe (from a VC standpoint) is rejuvenating because a) its economy is doing comparatively well, b) it is the largest homogeneous market in Europe (and more if one extends the play to Austria, German-speaking Switzerland and adjacent Central Eastern European countries) and c) it is going through a revival of entrepreneurial spirit around its internet-fuelled capital city Berlin
 - Emerging markets – more funding will go towards companies with exposure to fast-growing emerging markets such as BRIC countries (Brazil, Russia, India, China) and similar (e.g. Turkey).
- Strategies – priority to companies with:
 - Experienced management teams
 - More aggressive buy-and-build plans (including consolidation of smaller me-toos)
 - Closer links with established corporates as partners and investors – as a way to de-risk, reduce costs and create obvious exit options

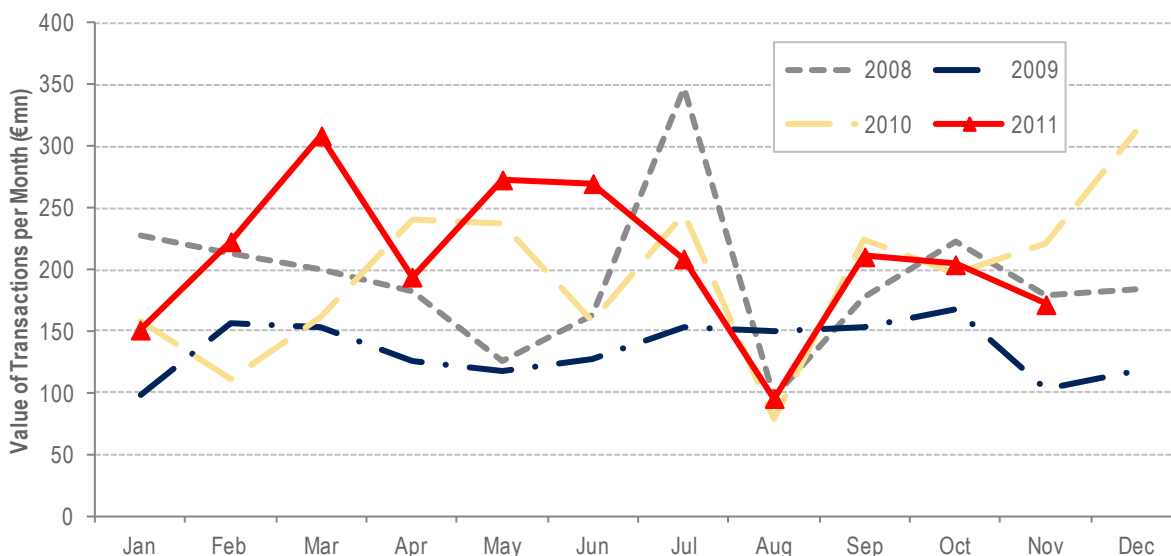
With all these good reasons to be optimistic for investment next year, wishing you, your family and colleagues, a very happy festive season and a wonderful start to the New Year: **all the very best for 2012 from the team at Go4Venture.**

Enjoy the reading. Please direct any questions or comments to vcbulletin@go4venture.com. If you do not wish to receive future HTI updates from us, please send an email with the title “unsubscribe” to vcbulletin@go4venture.com.

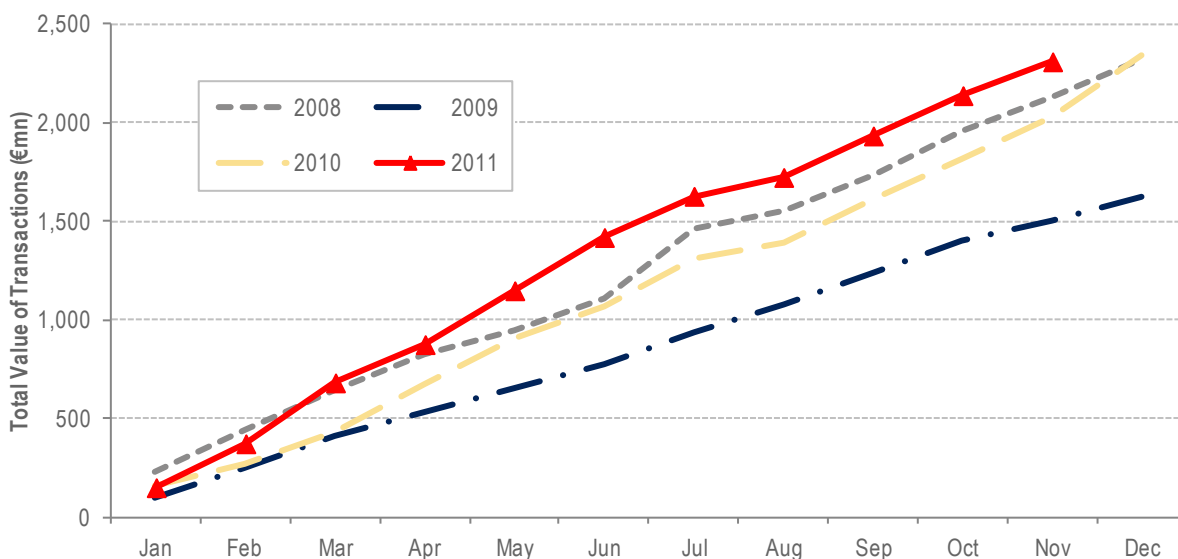
The Go4Venture Team

Investment Summary

Go4Venture HTI Index by Deal Value



Go4Venture HTI Index by Cumulative Deal Value



November		2010	2011
Landmark Deals	#	3	1
	€m	79.4	71.0
Headline Deals	#	4	5
	€m	55.0	52.1
Small Deals	#	31	22
	€m	90.0	48.7
All Deals	#	38	28
	€m	224.4	171.8

Year-to-Date		2010	2011
Landmark Deals	#	16	23
	€m	521.8	1,036.3
Headline Deals	#	59	56
	€m	686.3	625.0
Small Deals	#	265	225
	€m	827.9	649.3
All Deals	#	340	304
	€m	2,036.0	2,310.6

Large Headline Transactions Summary

(> £5mn / €7.5mn / \$10mn)

Company	Sector	Round	€mn	Description	Investors
Biocartis (Switzerland) www.biocartis.com	Medical Technology	C	71.0	Developer of molecular diagnostic and biomarker detection platforms for personalised medicine.	Biovest, Debiopharm, IHL, Johnson & Johnson, Korys, New Rhein Healthcare, PMV, Royal Philips Electronics, Valiance, Wellcome Trust.
HouseTrip (Switzerland) www.housetrip.com	Internet Services	B	12.2	Provider of peer-to-peer online holiday apartment bookings.	Balderton Capital , Index Ventures.
Tinubu Square (France) www.tinubu.com	Internet Services	Late Stage	11.3	Provider of SaaS credit risk management tools for corporate, credit insurers and credit insurance brokers.	Fonds Strategique d'Investissement.
La Compagnie des Animaux (France) www.santevet.com	Internet Services	B	10.6	Provider of online pet insurance.	Idinvest, Serena Capital.
Sapiens (Netherlands) www.sapiensneuro.com	Medical Technology	B	10.0	Developer of a Deep Brain Stimulation (DBS) medical device for the treatment of neurological disorders such as Parkinson's disease and dystonia.	Agentschap, MJFF, Wellcome Trust.
svh24.de (Germany) www.svh24.de	Internet Services	Late Stage	8.0	E-tailer selling tools, electrical and IT equipment both B2B and B2C.	Unspecified Family Office.

Source: Go4Venture

Key

Bold indicates lead investor(s)

* Internal round

** Led by existing investors

Company	Sector	Round	€mn	Description	Investors
Biocartis (Switzerland) www.biocartis.com	Medical Technology	C	71.0	Developer of molecular diagnostic and biomarker detection platforms for personalised medicine.	Biovest, Debiopharm, IHL, Johnson & Johnson, Korys, New Rhein Healthcare, PMV, Royal Philips Electronics, Valiance, Wellcome Trust.



Biocartis (Switzerland), a developer of molecular diagnostic and biomarker detection platforms for personalised medicine, raised **€71mn** in a **Series C** round from new investors **IHL, Korys, New Rhein Healthcare, PMV, Royal Philips Electronics, Valiance** and the **Wellcome Trust** with participation by existing investors **Biovest, Debiopharm** and **Johnson & Johnson**.

Similar to Curetis which featured in [last month's bulletin](#), Biocartis is the developer of a molecular diagnostics platform. In addition to its molecular diagnostics platform, Biocartis also has biomarker detection technology based on antibodies or DNA-probes mounted on silicon micro-particles. Biocartis' platform reduces the need for expensive molecular biologists and laboratory time and hence directly addresses the need of governments and healthcare insurers to control costs.

This latest round brings total equity investment in Biocartis to about €110mn. Returning investors Biovest (the Belgian VC specialising in mid-market biotech investments), [Debiopharm](#) and [Johnson & Johnson](#) were described when we featured Biocartis' [November 2009](#) and [April 2010](#) investment rounds.

They are joined by a plethora of new investors. The largest is the [Wellcome Trust](#) with its £14bn investment portfolio. Just over £2bn of this portfolio is in venture investments, roughly half of which is in VCTs and the rest in a combination of funds and direct investments in healthcare knowledge and financial companies.

Equally well known is the healthcare division of [Philips Electronics](#). Biocartis' relationship with Philips goes back to 2009 when the firms collaborated in developing the molecular diagnostics part of Biocartis' platform. Biocartis bought the platform from Philips early in 2010.

This is not the first time that Biocartis has combined its investors and collaboration partners. In January 2011, Biocartis entered an agreement with Janssen Pharmaceutica (part of Johnson & Johnson) to co-develop assays in the fields of neurological and certain viral infectious diseases. The firm had signed a similar agreement with second round strategic investor [BioMérieux](#) in November 2010 for microbiology assays. Combining investors and strategic partners both sped up Biocartis' development programme and allowed its partners to diversify their risk by investing in the platform and not just their own individual assay.

The reader may wonder why, for a Swiss firm, a number of the other investors in this round focus primarily on Belgium. IHL is the investment vehicle of Luc Verelst, the philanthropist and former owner of the Verelst construction company who has made a number of healthcare investments. [Korys](#) is the family office of the Colruys family and specialises in cleantech, consumer goods, retail and life sciences. [PMV](#) (AUM €900mn) is a regional development fund investing in Flanders. The reason is simply that Biocartis chose to site its production and research in Mechelen – a Dutch-speaking city in the province of Antwerp. This is not purely because of Belgium's prominence in pharmaceuticals (Belgium accounts for 20% of the global expenditure on pharmaceutical R&D) but it is also where Biocartis' CEO Rudi Pauwels built up his previous firms Tibotec and Virco and is convenient for the Eindhoven office of Philips.

Other investors include [New Rhein Healthcare](#), which invests in late stage healthcare businesses with revenues of €5-50mn, and co-investment specialist [Valiance](#) (\$40mn (2010); AUM \$300mn).

Company	Sector	Round	€mn	Description	Investors
HouseTrip (Switzerland) www.housetrip.com	Internet Services	B	12.2	Provider of peer-to-peer online holiday apartment bookings.	Balderton Capital , Index Ventures.



HouseTrip (Switzerland), a provider of peer-to-peer online holiday apartment bookings similar to AirBnB, raised **€12.2mn** in a **Series B** round led by **Balderton Capital** with participation by existing investor **Index Ventures**. The money will be used to improve the website and for marketing to both hosts and potential guests.

HouseTrip is unusual in that it was founded by an entrepreneurial *couple* – Arnaud Bertrand and Junjun Chen – who met while they were both students at the Ecole Hôtelière de Lausanne in Switzerland. Founded in 2009, the company provides a peer-to-peer platform which allows homeowners to rent out their houses on a short-term basis. Initially it focussed on the holiday apartment segment of the market.

With offices in London, Lausanne and Lisbon and 70 employees, HouseTrip has 55,000 properties on its books, primarily in Europe. This makes it significantly larger than 9Flats which featured in our [May issue](#) and, at least in Europe, bigger than the best known player in this industry, AirBnB. On this basis HouseTrip claims that it is already the market leader in Europe and in second place worldwide.

*Transaction leader [Balderton Capital](#) (\$500mn (2008); AUM: \$1.9bn), which featured in [last month's issue](#) with second hand fashion e-tailer *Vestiaire de Copines*, will be well known to our readers although they may like to take a look at Balderton's streamlined new website which has just gone live.*

Following €2mn of investment from supporting investor [Index Ventures](#) (€500mn (2011); AUM: €3.4bn) back in April, HouseTrip re-launched in order to appeal to a wider market beyond the holiday apartments sector, including the rental of spare rooms or whole properties for short stays. While co-founder and CEO Arnaud Bertrand does not like to be described as an AirBnB or Wimdu clone, this is the space in which his company now operates. Moreover, as we've said several times in this bulletin, there is nothing wrong with cloning successful business models in new territories.

AirBnB clones are not HouseTrip's only competitors, however. There are also traditional rental-lettings firms with which to contend. A prime example is US giant [HomeAway](#) (NASDAQ:AWAY) which has said that it will have online booking for the majority of its portfolio within the next couple of years. Given that this portfolio consists of 625,000 properties in 145 countries, this is formidable competition. Aside from being a competitor, HomeAway also shows the potential of this market. Founded in 2005, over a period of time HomeAway received almost \$300mn of investment. Having bought 14 companies in five years, HomeAway also provides an obvious exit opportunity. Just as AirBnB bought a German clone of itself Accoleo, it is not inconceivable that HomeAway would decide to leapfrog to pole position in Europe through an acquisition of HouseTrip. It certainly has the firepower. Following \$25mn of investment from Google in October 2010, Texas-based HomeAway achieved 2010 revenues of almost \$170mn. In June 2010, the firm raised a further \$216mn in a Nasdaq IPO which gave the company a market cap of around \$3bn.

*Given the size of the market – the holiday rental market alone was worth \$85bn in 2010 for the US and Europe – the pressure to consolidate this market of fragmented AirBnB clones is perhaps not that strong. It is possible that the online holiday lets market will end up similar to the hotel bookings market, with a number of large players such as *Booking.com*, *eBookers* and *Expedia*.*

Company	Sector	Round	€mn	Description	Investors
Tinubu Square (France) www.tinubu.com	Internet Services	Late Stage	11.3	Provider of SaaS credit risk management tools for corporate, credit insurers and credit insurance brokers.	Fonds Stratégique d'Investissement.



Tinubu Square (France), a provider of SaaS credit risk management tools for corporate, credit insurers and credit insurance brokers, raised **€11.3mn** in a **Late Stage** round from **Fonds Stratégique d'Investissement (FSI)**.

Founded in 2000, Tinubu provides both credit risk management tools and business services such as credit risk analysis through its proprietary SaaS platform. It has two main products:-

- A Risk Management Centre (RMC) for corporates which combines economic, financial and commercial data from a number of sources to provide rapid credit assessments. This enables companies to manage tens of thousands of client accounts without investing in their own IT.
- A Credit Insurance Suite (CIS) for credit insurers and credit insurance brokers. Tinubu's system can assess 93% of credit limit assessments the same day in France and 85% in the rest of Europe.

Based in Paris, Tinubu has had a presence in London since 2010 and has recently opened an office in Singapore. Its 60 employees generated revenues in excess of €12mn in 2010, 38% of which came from outside France. Customers include well-known companies such as credit insurers CESCE, Coface and Swiss Re, brokers such as Aon and Marsh, as well as Credit Agricole and RBS.

This investment by French sovereign wealth fund [FSI](#) (AUM €20bn) brings total investment in Tinubu to roughly €20mn. It follows on from a €2mn round when the company was founded in 2000, a further €4mn in 2001 and €4.5mn in 2002. The 2002 round was led by well-known north European investor [Gimv](#) (€610mn (2010); AUM €1.8bn), which came in alongside existing investors and contributed two thirds of the funds (€3mn) in return for a 20-25% stake.

Mechanically, the investment was structured as a capital increase and the issue of convertible bonds. As well as providing new investment, the round is a partial buy-out of the majority of Gimv's position. Gimv is believed to be retaining a 5% stake with an option allowing Gimv and Tinubu's management to either sell or buy the remaining stake during the next 30 months. According to Gimv, its investment had generated a positive return slightly below its long term average which is thought to be about 12%.

Although the French State has had a number of institutions which could be loosely considered as sovereign for some time – most notably the AAA-rated Caisse des Dépôts et Consignations (CDC) – the FSI is a relatively new addition. It was created in autumn 2008 to support the French economy by taking minority stakes in French companies which had need of stable investors. Initially endowed with €6bn, this was later augmented and had reached €20bn in 2011. FSI is now 51% owned by CDC and 49% by the French state. In turn, the FSI has created a whole range of specialist funds such as the FCID (focused on SMEs for investment of less than €10mn) and the FSN (specialising in smaller investments in IT and digital media companies). In 2009, FSI signed a memorandum of understanding with Abu Dhabi's sovereign wealth fund the [Mubadala Development Company PJSC](#), with a view to joint investments in French companies.

Readers may remember France's sovereign wealth fund Fonds Stratégique d'Investissement (FSI) from its recent investments in [Qosmos](#) in September and [Ercom](#) in June.

Company	Sector	Round	€mn	Description	Investors
La Compagnie des Animaux (France) www.santevet.com	Internet Services	B	10.6	Provider of online pet insurance.	Idinvest, Serena Capital .



La Comagnie des Animaux (France), a provider of online pet insurance, raised **€10.6mn** in a **Series B** round led by **Serena Capital** with participation from **Idinvest**. The money is being used partly for growth and partly to buy out existing investors.

Those not familiar with the industry may not be aware of the commercial potential of pet insurance. Actually, the 20mn cats and dogs in the UK are catered for by 240 insurance products from 86 different providers in a market worth £2bn. Some of these products even cover foreign travel and complementary medicine.

Pet insurance has long been a favourite with online advertisers of financial services and has shown itself to be relatively insensitive to recession over the last few years. While Sweden and the UK are far ahead of the US and the rest of Europe in terms of market penetration, with 80% of Swedish pets and 30% of British pets being insured compared to only 3% in France, the industry has been growing steadily world-wide.

Pet insurance broker SantéVet (a trading name of Compagnie des Animaux), was founded in 2003 by Jérôme Solard, a former veterinary pharmaceutical executive with Vetoquinol. So far, the company caters purely to the French market which, perhaps surprisingly given the low penetration of pet insurance, has over 8mn dogs and 11mn cats and leads Europe in terms of the number of pets per capita. The company has developed close links with French veterinarians who, while they are not allowed to sell insurance, are allowed to promote it. In this way SantéVet has become a market leader with over 50 employees and €10mn of premium income in 2010 – a CAGR of 13% for the last three years.

This transaction is actually a combination of the buy-out of existing investors [OTC Asset Management](#) (OTC AM) and certain angel investors as well as an injection of new capital. The €10.6mn widely reported in the press is the total consideration for both the buy-out and new investment.

OTC AM led a €1mn Series A round in January 2004 in return for a 27% stake. Business angels put in a further €600k at the same time. According to Serena Capital, OTC and the angels were bought out at a three-fold multiple implying over €5mn of new capital.

The investment was led by [Serena Capital](#) (€100mn (2009); AUM: €100mn) which we described in detail when it last featured in our bulletin with an investment in BonitaSoft in our [September issue](#). Supporting investor [Idinvest](#) (€250mn (2011); AUM €3bn), formerly known as AFG Private Equity, has a dedicated secondary transaction business as well as being a growth capital investor. This transaction is, therefore, particularly appropriate for Idinvest as it sits in both their preferred sectors – life sciences and information technology. We last discussed Idinvest when it invested in Mediastay in our [April issue](#) and Crocus Technology in our [May issue](#).

Following this transaction, Serena and Idinvest have a majority stake, with founder and CEO Jérôme Solard maintaining a small minority interest. This will be familiar to serial entrepreneur M. Solard who was in the same position with his first company Mediavet. Mediavet, a publisher of pet supplies portal and e-tailer monanimal.com, was sold to Netup, the internet subsidiary of d'Avenir Telecom, in 2000.

Company	Sector	Round	€mn	Description	Investors
Sapiens (Netherlands) www.sapiensneuro.com	Medical Technology	B	10.0	Developer of a Deep Brain Stimulation (DBS) medical device for the treatment of neurological disorders such as Parkinson's disease and dystonia.	Agentschap, MJFF, Wellcome Trust.

Sapiens

Steering
Brain Stimulation

Sapiens (Netherlands), a developer of Deep Brain Stimulation (DBS) medical device for the treatment of neurological disorders such as Parkinson's disease and dystonia, raised **€10mn** in a **Series B** round from **Agentschap**, the **Michael J. Fox Foundation (MJFF)** and the **Wellcome Trust**. The funds will be used to further develop Sapiens' brain stimulation system and software, conduct in-man trials and ultimately seek regulatory approval in Europe.

Deep Brain Stimulation (DBS) is an established surgical treatment involving electrical stimulation using a probe implanted in the brain – a so-called 'brain pacemaker'. It was approved by the US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) in 1997 as a treatment for Essential Tremor (ET), in 2002 as a treatment for Parkinson's disease, and in 2003 as a treatment for dystonia. Unfortunately, current systems use millimetre-sized probes which can inadvertently stimulate nearby areas of the brain leading to potential neuropsychiatric side effects such as apathy, hallucinations, compulsive gambling, hypersexuality, cognitive dysfunction and depression.

Sapiens, which was spun out from Royal Philips Electronics in January 2011, has developed a patented probe design based on thin films. This is based primarily on work conducted at Philips since 2006. Not only can this probe be directed more accurately than existing probes, but in conjunction with the firm's hardware and software platform, it should enable treatment to be tailored more accurately to the individual patient.

Agentschap, a part of the Dutch Ministry of Finance, contributed €5mn itself and a further €1.5mn in collaboration with the [Academic Medical Centre of Amsterdam](#) and [Twente Medical Systems](#).

The Michael J. Fox Foundation is a US-based not-for-profit organisation dedicated to finding a cure for Parkinson's disease. Since it began in 2000, it has funded over \$270mn of research, either directly or through partnerships. It targets the funding gap between academic blue skies research and commercial R&D.

Well known in the UK, the Wellcome Trust last featured in our bulletin with an investment in Wonga in our [February bulletin](#). Its contribution took the form of an equity investment of €3.5mn as a [Strategic Translation Award](#). These awards are for R&D projects that are close to existing Wellcome Trust interests and, in this case, the funding is ear-marked for the development of specific components of Sapiens' probe.

This €10mn round is actually a follow-on from an earlier €13mn Series A round in June of this year. The earlier round was co-led by well known VC [Wellington Partners](#) (€265mn (2008); AUM: €800mn) and the life science team of [Edmond de Rothschild Investment Partners](#) (EDRIP) (€150mn (2008); AUM: €220mn) with participation by [Life Sciences Partners \(LSP\)](#) (€150mn (2006); AUM: €500mn). EDRIP's seven person life science team focuses on venture and growth capital to acquire minority stakes. Founded in the late 1980s and with offices in Amsterdam, Munich and Boston, LSP was a founding investor in Movetis, Crucell, DNage, Qiagen, Rhein Biotech and Pharming. It is one of Europe's largest life sciences specialists.

Philips and [NeuroNexus Technologies](#) have a minority shareholding in Sapiens on account of their contribution to the development of Sapiens' technology.

Company	Sector	Round	€mn	Description	Investors
svh24.de (Germany) www.svh24.de	Internet Services	Late Stage	8.0	E-tailer selling tools, electrical and IT equipment both B2B and B2C.	Undisclosed Family Office.



svh24 (Germany), an e-tailer selling tools, electrical and IT equipment both B2B and B2C, raised **€8mn** in a **Late Stage** round from an **undisclosed family office** introduced by original investor **eCAPITAL entrepreneurial Partners**. The money will be used for marketing and sales in order to fuel growth.

Formerly known as S/V/H Werkzeuge und Maschinen, svh24 was founded in 1998 and sold tools and machinery to both the trade and DIY markets in Germany. Initially the firm sold primarily through a catalogue but online sales have come to dominate. In the second half of 2008 it changed its name to svh24, entered into a partnership agreement with KNO logistics to provide distribution and additional warehousing and also broadened its range to include electrical and IT equipment.

The company now lists over 10,000 items in its online store and guarantees delivery within 24 hours. svh24 aims to differentiate itself through superior customer service and provides a call centre for technical advice. It is certainly serious about customer interaction and runs not just a Facebook fan page but also a [blog](#) with regular product testing by its customers. The company has also consistently won awards for the usability of its website, which has just been substantially revamped both technically and from a UI perspective.

The company still runs a catalogue business as a complement to its online business, but has only one physical store (its head office) in Dortmund. In this sense it differs from its British equivalents Screwfix and Machine Mart which have networks of widely distributed physical stores as well as catalogues and on-line shops.

Although this is only the second round of investment in svh24, we have described it as late stage because the company already has all of its technology and other infrastructure in place and this investment is clearly intended for growth rather than new development.

Notwithstanding this, svh24 only received its first investment of €4mn in June 2010. This was provided by German technology investor [eCAPITAL entrepreneurial Partners](#) (€50mn (2010); AUM €120mn). Founded as KAIROS Venture Fonds in 1999, eCAPITAL focuses on IT, telecoms, new materials, optical technologies, cleantech and technology enabled services in the famous 'Deutsche Mittelstand'.

Stage agnostic, the firm explicitly divides its business into three stages:-

- *Seed investments through two regional funds Gründerfonds Bielefeld-Ostwestfalen and Gründerfonds Münsterland*
- *Growth finance of €0.5-2.5mn for companies with revenues of €3-10mn*
- *Late stage investments of €0.5-5mn for companies with revenues of €10-50mn.*

eCAPITAL also participates in cleantech investments of €0.25-5mn for firms with revenues of up to €10mn, which are made through the €50mn eCAPITAL III Cleantech fund which the firm closed in December 2010.

The firm's five funds – growth, late stage, cleantech and two seed funds – have 22 active investments and are supported by an unusually high proportion of entrepreneurs or former entrepreneurs, many of whom are also angel investors.

While many press sources attribute the second round to eCAPITAL itself, eCAPITAL states that: "Following the first financing round with eCAPITAL in early 2010, svh24.de GmbH has secured a second financing round from a reputable German family office".

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