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for immediate publication

## German Startups Group invests in Bezahl.de/Blackbill, the new FinTech startup of Kreditech founder Sebastian Diemer

- *Increase of stake in Junique*

**Berlin, 17 October 2016** - German Startups Group, the second most active venture capital investor in Germany in the time period since 2012 (CB Insights, 2015), invests in Bezahl.de/Blackbill, a further FinTech startup, and increases its stake in the e-commerce startup Junique.

The new portfolio company Bezahl.de/Blackbill offers factoring solutions for freelancers, self-employed entrepreneurs as well as small and medium-sized enterprises. Up until now, this market segment has not been sufficiently addressed since individual risk assessments cause high costs. The experienced founding team - the four-member management team has 13 years of FinTech experience - employs already established scoring concepts and achieves lower costs and process complexities through digitalisation and automation. It is the goal of Bezahl.de/Blackbill to carry out the risk assessment automatically within seconds for the first time and to reduce the default risk so that by, for example, simply taking a picture of an outgoing invoice with a mobile phone the invoice amount can be collected almost immediately. Through cooperations with leading European FinTech companies, the functionality of the financial solution has been maximised. The founding team around CEO Sebastian Diemer has already collectively built one of the most successful German FinTech startups in Kreditech, which offers private loans on the basis of a data-driven scoring model. Further investors in Bezahl.de/Blackbill are, among others, Point Nine Capital und Fly Ventures.

CEO Christoph Gerlinger comments on the investment in Blackbill: „Already for some time we have invested in some of the most attractive German FinTech companies. Through Blackbill we expand our portfolio by another very promising investment in this sector. Sebastian Diemer and his team have previously demonstrated that they are proven big data experts in the FinTech segment. Blackbill now tackles an entirely new, very attractive FinTech segment. We are convinced that Sebastian Diemer and team will be successful again and that they can grow considerably in the coming years.“

German Startups Group increases its stake in Junique. Junique is a lifestyle brand for handpicked, affordable art. Designs of international artists are offered on posters and prints for walls as well as on shirts, stationery, and home textiles by the online shop. The production is made to order, which is why the business model does not require a large inventory and generates higher margins. Additionally, the offered products cause lower return rates than is the case with conventional e-commerce providers. Junique already ships, according to the company, to 13 European countries, grew 190% p.a. on average in revenue, and achieved a double-digit million revenue already in 2015. Junique was ranked first on CB Insights' list of “15 High Momentum German Early Stage Startups“ in August 2015. The founders appeared on the Forbes list “30

Under 30“ in the category retail and e-commerce in January 2016. German Startups Group has invested in Juniqe since the Series A financing round already. The increase of the stake is a result of German Startup Group’s approach to invest in promising companies, particularly of serial entrepreneurs, early and with limited employment of capital and to gradually increase its investment in case of positive growth indicators. This is unreservedly possible since German Startups Group does not provide its capital in the form of venture capital funds with limited terms, but as an investment company and therefore “evergreen”. This approach has recently become known as “patient capital“ in the US. There, the hypothesis is advocated that patient capital per se attains higher returns in the VC segment since it is thus possible to invest for longer periods of time in stake holdings and acquired shares do not have to be sold untimely. Furthermore, patient capital is beneficial for the receivers of venture capital and therefore attracts better investment opportunities.

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German Startups Group is a listed investment company based in Berlin that focuses on young, fast-growing companies, so-called startups. The company acquires majority and minority shareholdings mainly by providing venture capital. The portfolio companies that German Startups Group holds also stand to benefit from German Startups Group’s expertise, experience and network with respect to strategy development, financing rounds, restructuring necessities, M&A transactions or selling the company, including a possible IPO. According to its own assessment, German Startups Group provides startups with so-called “smart money” by acquiring a shareholding. Its focus is on companies whose products or business models represent a disruptive innovation, allow for a high degree of scalability to be expected, and in which it has a great deal of trust in the entrepreneurial abilities of the founders to whom it feels that it obtains early access to due to its close relationships to relevant players in the startup scene. The geographical focus is on the German-speaking region. Since it commenced with operations in 2012, German Startups Group has in its opinion built up a diversified portfolio of investments in young companies and become the second most active venture capital investor in Germany since 2012 (CB Insights, Germany Venture Capital Overview). 25 of the 47 minority stakeholdings in operationally active companies are of particular significance to German Startups Group and together comprise 89% of the total value of all 47 active minority stakeholdings. The ten core holdings alone make up 61% of the value of all active minority stakeholdings. According to German Startups Group, its investment portfolio reflects a cross-section of promising German startups of various maturity stages (“Seed,” “Early” and “Growth Stage,” by German Startups Group’s own definition) and includes some of the most successful and best known German startups.

More information is available on our website at [www.german-startups.com](http://www.german-startups.com).