

Hosting group Intelligent splits into Combell and Sentia

Intelligent, the hosting group over Combell and Sentia, is splitting itself into two independent hosting companies. Each company will be able to forge its own future path autonomously: Combell with products and services for SMEs (small and medium-sized enterprises) and the self-employed, and Sentia with complex hosting and application solutions for large companies.



Until recently, Intelligent functioned as a hosting group over Combell and Sentia, the two flagship brands of the group. Since Combell's acquisition of the Danish hosting group Zitcom in 2017, it has been a logical step for both Sentia and Combell to split into two independent groups, each with its own commercial focus as, in operational terms, they were already largely autonomous. This division will allow both businesses to focus not only on their own client segment but, above all, to put their own stamp on areas such as R&D, business processes and culture.

Both companies also have a declared ambition to consolidate their respective market positions in Europe through an active Buy & Build strategy. By clearly opting for product specialisation, market niches and client segments, both will be able to carry out acquisitions more efficiently and realise synergies more quickly.

Frederik Poelman remains as Managing Director for Combell Group Benelux, Stefan Rosenlund (former CEO Zitcom) becomes Managing Director of Combell Group Scandinavia. For Sentia, Jakob Norup (former CEO of Hosters) is appointed as Managing Director Denmark. Ian Zein remains as CEO of Sentia Group.

Combella and Sentia employ respectively more than 330 and 430 enthusiastic hosting specialists spread across Belgium, the Netherlands and Denmark. In 2017, Intelligent had a turnover of approximately 200 million euros, more or less evenly divided between Combella Group and Sentia Group.

“The division allows us to let both Combella and Sentia continue working on their own ambitious growth plans through the continuation of the Buy & Build strategy and the achievement of strong organic growth. That is only possible with a razor-sharp focus and clearly-defined structures.”

— Jonas Dhaenens, CEO Combella Group

A story of growth and big ambitions

Combella’s ambition in the medium term is to grow into one of the largest European hosting providers and it has been supported in this since 2015 by growth capital supplied by management and by Waterland Private Equity.

“After 23 acquisitions in four years, both Combell and Sentia have grown into strong and professional organisations. We are pleased that both businesses have now attained sufficient scale not only to stand on their own two feet, but also to independently bring about further organic and acquisitive growth.”

— Cedric Van Cauwenberghe, Managing Partner Waterland Private Equity Investments

With the recent takeover in June 2017 of Zitcom in Denmark, itself preceded by numerous other local acquisitions, Combell has now become the third largest web host in Europe. The group has most clients in the Scandinavian market. This is thanks to the acquisition of DanDomain at the end of 2016 and, more recently Surftown. This latest acquisition gave Combell Group a foothold in Sweden, a country where it intends to grow further in 2018.

Combell is the market leader in Belgium with a market share of more than 70% in standardised website and application hosting for SMEs. The latter is not only thanks to acquisitions but equally because of strong organic growth and high customer satisfaction.

Around 18 months ago, Sentia also expanded its Danish activities via the acquisition of Solido and Jaynet. At the end of 2017, it also took over Dutch cloud specialists Amsio and Vellance. Now the group is using the same successful formula to increase its exposure to the Danish market. With the strategic acquisitions of Hosters, Athena and Cohaesio, Sentia is now one of the leading companies at a European level, delivering enterprise managed cloud services in every country in which the group is active.

“Thanks to the split, it is possible to take on more with increased focus. The recent growth in Denmark fits in with Sentia’s plans to become a leading European player in managed services for complex and critical applications on scalable cloud platforms.”

— Ian Zein, CEO Sentia Group



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ABOUT COMBELL GROUP

Combella Group is de overkoepelende holding voor gerespecteerde hostingmerken zoals Combella in België, Byte in Nederland en UnoEuro en DanDomain in Denemarken. Het startte in 1999 met domeinnamen en traditionele shared hosting, maar ondertussen biedt de groep ook KMO-oplossingen voor online presence, applicatiehosting, e-commerce en serverhosting in de cloud. De groep heeft ongeveer 330 experts aan boord.

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