



Press release

Date

23 May 2017

COMCO prohibits merger between Ticketcorner and Starticket

Bern, 23 May 2017 – The Competition Commission (COMCO) prohibits the proposed merger between Ticketcorner and Starticket. The new entity would have strengthened its dominance and eliminated effective competition in the market of the distribution of tickets by third parties.

Ticketcorner and Starticket distribute tickets for concerts and shows, through physical and online channels (primary ticketing) and advertise on media channels and social network platforms. They also provide software solutions for the direct sale of tickets (ticketing software).

Through this acquisition, Starticket would have become a wholly owned subsidiary of Ticketcorner. Comco undertook an in-depth review and concluded that the proposed merger would not have been problematic in the market for ticketing software. However, in the primary ticketing market, there are strong evidence that Ticketcorner has a dominant position. The proposed merger would have allowed both companies to control the national market for primary ticketing and eliminated effective competition. Furthermore, the merging parties are owned by media groups, Ticketcorner by Ringier and Starticket by Tamedia, and the merger would have strengthened its market position (conglomerate effect).

In its assessment, Comco examined the position of the current entities in the market as well as potential entry of new firms. Comco took into consideration the development and role of firms such as Spotify, Facebook and Google. Comco concluded that actual and potential competitors, along with a greater use of new technologies, would not have exerted sufficient competitive pressure on the new entity. Comco did not find obligations that could have been imposed to the new entity in order to authorise the merger. Therefore, Comco decided to prohibit the proposed merger.

Ticketcorner is owned by Ticketcorner-Holding jointly owned by Ringier Group and CTS-EVENTIM-Group. Starticket is owned by Tamedia AG.

Comco's decision can be appealed to the Federal Administrative Court.

Address for enquiries

Prof. Dr. Vincent Martenet 079 506 73 87 vincent.martenet@weko.admin.ch
President

Dr. Rafael Corazza 058 462 20 41 rafael.corazza@weko.admin.ch
Director 079 652 49 57

Dr. Olivier Schaller 058 462 21 23 olivier.schaller@weko.admin.ch
Vice-Director 079 703 80 07