**Solitea Becomes the Majority Owner of the Slovak Payment Gateway Besteron**

* ***The international IT company Solitea is strengthening its position in the field of payment solutions***
* ***Solitea has purchased a share in the Slovak company Pay Solutions, which developed the on-line payment service Besteron***
* ***The transaction also includes the transfer of the activities of Slovak player Tapeon, which operates in the field of payment intermediation through payment terminals under the company Pay Solutions***
* ***Together, they want to conquer Central and Eastern Europe with Slovak technology***

**Bratislava, 28.03.2022 –** The Czech-Slovak company [Solitea](https://solitea.com/) has acquired a majority share in the company Pay Solutions, developer of the on-line payment gateway [Besteron](https://www.besteron.sk/). Its founders, Róbert Kabina and Miroslav Kráľ, will continue to manage the company. The payment gateway, which is used by more than 1,500 e-shops, is further complemented by the payment services and business team of the company [Tapeon](https://tapeon.sk/), which intermediates contact and contactless payments through payment terminals in Slovakia, the Czech Republic and Slovenia. Its founder is Ivan Duliak, who now also joins the management of Pay Solutions. Their joint vision is the expansion of their technology and products into Central and Eastern Europe.

“*We believe that our entry into Pay Solutions in combination with the activities of Tapeon will help the company to progress even more quickly. High-quality payment solutions have enormous potential for success not only on the local market. But their development is costly, so I think that we will be able to take advantage of mutual synergy to develop a competitive product which will appeal to customers in the entire region of Central and Eastern Europe”,* says Martin Cígler, CEO of Solitea.

The Besteron system for speeding up payment transactions was created in 2014. Its main aim is to make online payments more convenient for customers. It was created by two Slovaks, Róbert Kabina and Miroslav Kráľ, who worked on its development with security analysts from Germany. A year after its creation, the service even earned its founders a place among the finalists of the competition Young Innovative Entrepreneur. Pay Solutions is also a licensed entity of the National Bank of Slovakia.

*“We founded the payment gateway when we were still owners of e-shops that we ran in the past. The systems that were available at that time didn’t meet market needs, so quickly after launching the gateway we gained hundreds of e-shops. We have now identified a similar opportunity 8 years on. Thanks to the investment capital of Sandberg Capital we are planning the market launch of a number of innovations that will meet the criteria of a 21st-century payment gateway. These criteria will include deferred payments, approval of merchants within 1 hour, payment in 32 European countries in 12 currencies, and advanced connections to ERP systems, which will make accounting easier for companies”,* says CEO of Pay Solutions Miroslav Kráľ*.* The acquisition of Tapeon will make Besteron a significant payment system in Slovakia. With more than 1,500 on-line merchants and 3,000 POS terminals, it will purchase payments worth over €400 million in 2022. During the year, the company is also preparing to expand in Central and Eastern Europe, providing innovative services, security and high-quality support for e-shops and business services throughout the Central European region.

“*Today, we know that over half of online transactions are not completed mainly because customers can’t find their preferred payment option among the choices. Solitea’s investment in Pay Solutions and the Besteron payment gateway will significantly help to kick-start the company’s innovation and growth, while also accelerating the process of obtaining Payment Facilitator certification. As a result, it will be able to export Slovak know-how for developing online payment solutions on the European market”,* says Michal Rybovič, a partner of the Slovak private equity company [Sandberg Capital](https://sandbergcapital.com/), a majority owner of Solitea. Rybovič adds that Sandberg’s long-term investment strategy is to support modern IT solutions created by Slovak and Czech businesses.

**About Pay Solutions**

Pay Solutions a.s. is the developer of the payment gateway Besteron, which provides comprehensive payment solutions for merchants - on-line card payments which can be accepted from all over the world, on-line transfers of Slovak and Czech banks, and POS terminals. On-line payments are secured by the highest safety standard PCI DSS Service Provider Level 1. The goal of the company is not only to cover every need of its customers with the abovementioned payment services under one roof, but also to provide professional advice in choosing solutions, implementation and, last but not least, to provide high-quality customer support. Besteron’s philosophy is to ensure the best possible customer experience through a professional, but above all human approach.

**About Tapeon**

The company Tapeon was founded in 2015, with the aim of improving the accessibility of payment services on the Slovak market. It operates on the market as an official certified ISO partner of Visa and Mastercard. Through its partners, it supplies solutions for individual services, retail networks, self-service kiosks and e-shops. The company’s activities also include PCI DSS certification of payment institutions, transaction processors and merchants, together with advice on compliance with local standards within the EU. It primarily develops its activities on the markets of three countries - Slovakia, the Czech Republic and Slovenia.

**About Solitea**

Solitea, a.s. is a major European supplier of ICT solutions. The company employs over 1,400 people in seven countries, and serves more than 260,000 customers in 35 countries worldwide. This year, Solitea expects consolidated revenues in excess of €130 million and has long been one of the fastest growing IT companies in the region. Over the past four years, Solitea has made numerous important acquisitions of IT companies in Europe. Solitea has long been strengthening its position as a major European supplier of information technologies for commercial entities and the state administration. The majority owners of the company are Slovak private equity company Sandberg Capital and Martin Cígler.

**About Sandberg Capital**

Sandberg Capital is a Slovak management company founded in 2014. It focuses on investment in small and medium-sized enterprises in Slovakia and Central and Eastern Europe. In its first fund, it manages assets worth more than €210 million, which it has invested in IT, telecommunications, agriculture, education and retail. In December 2021, Sandberg successfully founded its second investment fund with a locked-up capital of €130 million, which primarily attracted institutional investors, including one of the largest European investors - the European Investment Fund. In 2021, the company first invested in Titans freelancers, a Slovak company that outsources IT specialists, then in Daktela, a Czech leader in solutions for contact centres and communication with customers.