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QUARTER 1 2019

Global Affinity

Finance Club

Finaccord's newsletter about affinity financial services worldwide



Welcome back to your Club!

A societal problem irrespective of geography is that most people don't start saving early enough for their retirement and then have to play catch-up later on. But what if they can be encouraged to do so with a carrot instead of being beaten with a stick if they don't? That's the idea behind Vidahorro (www.vidahorro.com), Spain-based brand run by Vidanet, a company in which AXA has acquired a 23.8% stake. This online platform allows customers to contribute to their private pension plan as they shop at over 100 associated companies, including Booking.com, El Corte Inglés and Media Markt, without incurring any extra cost. Every time users buy from one of these companies, part of the value of their purchase is paid into their pension plan, which is managed by AXA. Could initiatives like this be the future of retirement saving for the mass market? Well, it's certainly clever.

Apart from this stand-out partnership, the most recent quarter has also been characterised by the increasing prominence of multinational e-commerce, cloud computing and artificial intelligence giant Amazon as a distributor and facilitator of financial services. Its latest moves include a deal with Travelers in the US to distribute smart home kits and discounted insurance plus another with ERV in Europe to sell travel cover via Alexa, its virtual assistant. In addition, it is also working with American Express for a new co-branded card targeted at business customers in the US and has set in motion an arrangement with Western Union to support cross-border B2C e-commerce transactions which are on track to account for 20% of all e-commerce sales worldwide by 2022.

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Affinity Insurance News

ASSISTANCE

Allianz Partners provides home assistance services to customers of Iberdrola in Italy

In Italy, Allianz Partners has begun offering home assistance services to customers of Iberdrola, a provider of renewable energy services that is headquartered in Spain. These assistance services cover the maintenance of electrical and thermal systems, minor electrical or hydraulic interventions, and the fixing of sudden malfunctions.

AXA Partners ties with estate letting agent and property repairs reporting service

In the UK, AXA Partners has signed an agreement with Thornley Groves, an estate letting agent, offering home assistance services to the latter's tenants. At the time of the agreement, Thornley Groves reported that it managed over 3,000 properties in the Manchester area. Another partner, Fixflo, a property repairs reporting service, is also part of the arrangement, enabling tenants to report problems outside of normal office hours using an online dashboard, with AXA Partners then arranging for the dispatch of assistance services.

The AA extends road assistance contract in the UK with Volkswagen Group

Also in the UK, the AA has announced a two-year extension of its contract for manufacturer-branded road assistance with the Volkswagen Group, which has been valid since 2014. The partnership covers all vehicle brands within Volkswagen Group registered in the UK each year, as well as customers availing themselves of Volkswagen Financial Services, and provides access to the AA's full road assistance service including national recovery and onward travel.

IMA works with provider of assistance services distributed through workplace

In France, IMA (Inter Mutuelles Assistance) has launched a new partnership with Lily Facilite La Vie, an online company that provides advice and assistance with managing homes and families. Through this partnership, IMA will offer its assistance services to the employees of companies which subscribe to Lily Facilite La Vie, incorporating specialist advice with regards to topics such as budget management, home purchase, home repairs and care for elderly relatives.

International SOS establishes assistance joint ventures for offshore energy and shipping sectors

In the US, International SOS has launched a joint venture with Prime Occupational Medicine, a provider of occupational health services, that aims to provide medical services to oil, gas and construction companies in the Gulf of Mexico. Through the agreement, Prime Occupational Medicine will take on management of Beacon Medic Systems, an offshore company that is part of International SOS. The companies reported that this deal would allow Prime Occupational Medicine to expand into offshore medical services provision, while International SOS will strengthen its ability to provide occupational healthcare in the sectors concerned.

International SOS has also launched a joint venture with Future Care, a company providing maritime telemedicine and medical case management. Through this partnership, Future Care's services will be delivered to the clients of International SOS in the commercial maritime shipping sector.



COMMERCIAL INSURANCE

MAPFRE forges ties with trade bodies for self-employed individuals and young entrepreneurs...

In Spain, MAPFRE has entered into an agreement with the Confederación Española de Autónomos (CEAT), a federation for self-employed individuals, whereby its members will be able to gain access to a broad array of insurance products and services, plus associated advice, designed specifically for this constituency. The offer will be underpinned by a series of local seminars designed to raise awareness among self-employed individuals of the need to manage effectively their personal and business risks.

In addition, MAPFRE has also concluded a similar link with the Confederación Española de Jóvenes Empresarios (CEAJE), a trade federation for young entrepreneurs (defined as those aged up to 40) that is composed of more than 50 provincial associations with a combined total of almost 40,000 individual and corporate members.

... and works with health and safety specialist within Spanish hospital group

In the same country, MAPFRE has begun collaborating with Quirónprevención, the work-

place health and safety services subsidiary of Quirónsalud, the largest hospital group in Spain, to allow both its self-employed and commercial clients to avail themselves of services provided by its partner via its network of around 3,000 offices. A benefit of this initiative is that it makes it easier for business owners to meet their legal obligations in respect of workplace risks, reducing the chances of work-related accidents or ailments. Services available from Quirónprevención include consulting related to workplace health and safety, both in Spain and at an international level, plus its 'miSalud' app and 'miSalud' card which provide access to the hospital facilities of its parent.

AXA introduces professional liability insurance policies for nurses and economists in Spain

Again in Spain, AXA has joined forces with the Consejo General de Enfermería (a professional body representing nurses) to design a professional liability policy that will offer protection to the total of around 300,000 nurses in the country. The policy has been designed with input from both nurses and legal experts in this field, and the scheme is jointly directed by the professional body and its member associations alongside AXA. Meanwhile, the Consejo General de Economistas (a comparable

body for economists), which boasts a membership of around 55,000, has also signed an agreement with AXA, via the Alfonso Trasmonte agency, to offer professional liability insurance to its members.

Pacifica leverages expertise of Hiscox for cyber protection offer in France

In France, Pacifica, a non-life insurance subsidiary of Crédit Agricole, has launched a cyber protection offer built in partnership with Hiscox. This is designed to meet the needs of both business owners and farmers, and provides assistance in several ways, including access to a network of recognised experts in IT, law and e-reputation. Hiscox was selected to provide support for this offer because of its recognised expertise in these areas.

Starr Insurance complements cyber insurance proposition with input from cyber security specialist

Also within the field of cyber insurance, this time in the US, Starr Insurance has added loss prevention services to its existing suite of products by partnering with Rapid7, a cyber security company. These services include a complimentary network vulnerability scan together with recommendations to reduce risks.



die Mobiliar switches Swiss commercial lines partnership from AXA XL to Chubb

In Switzerland, die Mobiliar has unveiled a partnership with Chubb whereby the two companies will jointly offer international insurance solutions for medium-sized and large companies based in the country and their overseas branches. The agreement includes property and liability insurance and replaces a previous arrangement that die Mobiliar had with AXA XL.

HOUSEHOLD INSURANCE

Travelers links with Amazon to market smart home kit and discounted insurance

In the US, Travelers has teamed up with Amazon to offer a number of products to the latter's customers geared towards insuring their homes: these include smart home kits and risk management information as well as the option to acquire homeowners insurance. The smart home kits, which include security cameras, water sensors, motion detectors, a smart home hub and an Amazon Echo Dot, are being offered at discounted prices for Travelers customers in participating states and are designed to help protect homeowners from some of the most common causes of loss. Moreover, eligible customers are re-

ceiving a discount on their policy with the purchase of a smart home kit. Consumers interested in a quote for homeowners insurance will be directed from the Travelers storefront on Amazon to the company's website or to an independent insurance agent.

LIFE, HEALTH AND CREDITOR INSURANCE

Generali Vie works with Binck Bank for disruptive investment-related life insurance products

In France, Generali Vie has introduced a low-cost investment-related life insurance contract branded as 'Binck Vie' in partnership with Binck Bank, a provider of online banking and broking services based in the Netherlands with over 630,000 customer accounts in total, including around 70,000 French ones. The contract can only be acquired online, with a minimum initial investment set at EUR 300. It allows customers either to manage their own investment strategy, benefiting from an ability to make trading decisions in real time across a wide range of shares, investment funds and ETFs, or to rely on the bank's customised portfolio management service. Moreover, during the statutory 'cooling off' period of 30 days, there is no obligation for customers to

make any investment decisions, thereby protecting them from potential market volatility.

Automatic alerts are received by customers if under-performance or out-performance of their investments causes deviation from financial objectives set at the outset. The two partners believe their proposition to be one with the potential to disrupt the huge market for investment-related life insurance in France by bringing together the best elements of traditional private banking and fintech.

APRIL broadens range of mortgage-related creditor insurance available to brokers

Also in France, the APRIL Group has changed its approach to mortgage-related creditor insurance by offering to its network of 15,000 brokers a broader range of products, using an online platform to bring together offers from other operators in the sector. The platform will initially offer six mortgage insurance products including five designed by APRIL with Axéria Prévoyance, MNCAP and the PREVOIR Group as underwriters, plus another from AXA Partners.

APRIL also aims to distribute mortgage-related creditor insurance through La Centrale de Financement, a mortgage insurance broker: in September 2018,



APRIL finalised the acquisition of 54% of the capital of this company.

AachenMünchener develops innovative savings product with Deutsche Vermögensberatung

In Germany, AachenMünchener, an insurer belonging to Generali, and Deutsche Vermögensberatung, a financial advice network serving around 6 million customers that has previously acted as a tied agent for companies owned by Generali, have unveiled a new long-term savings concept. Specifically, within the 'My Future Plan' pension product managed and distributed by the two partners, parents and grandparents are now able to set aside dedicated savings specifically for their children and grandchildren, and to protect them from the risk of disability or inability to attend school from the age of three months onwards by means of a 'child disability pension'. Investment options are flexible and include a new facility to invest in physical gold in order to hedge against volatility in securities markets.

Central Kranken strikes up three partnerships for digital health services

Also in Germany, Central Kranken, a health insurance underwriter owned by Generali,

has disclosed that it is working with three health sector start-ups – namely Preventicus, SkinVision and TeleClinic – to offer digital health services to its customers. The link with Preventicus means that customers can use the provider's 'Health Guide' to obtain not only an overview of their personal health but also advice and offers in relation to how they can improve it. For example, customers can use a smartphone to measure their heart rhythm and immediately receive feedback on it.

Meanwhile, SkinVision offers an app that allows customers to check and analyse moles and skin lesions, again using a smartphone, and that incorporates an algorithm that calculates signs of skin cancer in birthmarks and surrounding skin tissue. As for TeleClinic, customers are able to benefit from rapid and around-the-clock access to consultations with doctors or medical specialists delivered via video telephony, including issuance of digital prescriptions or referrals. These initiatives reflect Generali's desire to broaden access to 'smart' insurance solutions in the German market.

AXA invests in and distributes through innovative retirement savings platform

In Spain, AXA has acquired 23.8% of the capital of VI-

DANET, the owner of Vida-horro, an online platform that allows customers to contribute to their private pension plan as they shop at over 100 associated companies, including Booking.com, El Corte Inglés and Media Markt, without incurring any extra cost. Every time users buy from one of these companies, part of the value of their purchase is paid into their pension plan, which is managed by AXA.

MOTOR INSURANCE

Generali works with DriveNow to promote safer driving...

In Italy, Generali Jeniot, an entity owned by Generali that is focused on connected insurance and the so-called 'internet of things', has unveiled a new initiative in partnership with DriveNow, a car club owned by BMW. Branded as 'DriveNow, DriveSafe', the promotion means that individuals using any of around 500 cars operated by DriveNow in Milan can earn free driving minutes if their driving style is judged to be sufficiently safe by Generali's 'Real Time Coaching' system, a 'black box' that provides interactive feedback to vehicle users. Factors taken into consideration by this system include outright speed of driving plus acceleration, deceleration, braking and



steering. The aim of the initiative is to encourage safer driving which is in the interests of BMW, Generali and also of the drivers themselves and other road users.

... and agrees cross-selling deal with FCA Group

Also in Italy, Generali and FCA Group (the owner of various vehicle marques including Fiat, Alfa Romeo and Chrysler) have signed a letter of intent whereby the two partners intend to develop and promote innovative products and services in the realm of connected vehicles, insurance and leasing. For example, these include the aforementioned 'Real Time Coaching' system plus insurance policies sold through FCA Bank (the manufacturer group's joint venture finance company) underwritten by GenerTel (Generali's direct insurance arm) and leasing contracts distributed through Generali's agency network and managed by Leasys (the manufacturer group's leasing business). Also in scope are FCA Bank's extended warranties and prepaid service contracts (with Generali's agents again providing a new distribution channel). Furthermore, the two partners hope to find efficiencies in using each other's network of authorised vehicle repair shops and making greater use in repairs of the manufacturer's original parts.

NICHE INSURANCE

Covéa Insurance wins partnership with RSPCA for added-value pet insurance

In the UK, Covéa Insurance has expanded its pet proposition by partnering with the country's largest animal welfare charity, the RSPCA. The pet insurance policy on offer comprises varying cover levels, no upper age limit for pets and covers all breeds apart from those listed under the Dangerous Dogs Act. Furthermore, it includes benefits such as waiving remaining premiums if a pet dies plus cover for cremations and burials. This policy also benefits sick and neglected animals, because 15% of the price paid on each policy goes towards caring for such animals. In addition, Covéa Insurance is providing short-term, free-of-charge insurance to anyone who re-homes a cat or dog through the RSPCA.

Legal & General secures new pet insurance partnership with Asda

Also in the UK and in the field of pet insurance, Legal & General has kicked off a three-year partnership with Asda to sell pet insurance both by phone and online. The new agreement is also part of Legal & General's strategy to offer customers a

broader range of pet insurance products across a full range of distribution channels and partnerships. According to Legal & General, the UK pet insurance sector was worth over GBP 1 billion in gross written premiums in 2018 and has grown at a compound annual rate of 9% since 2014. However, in spite of this, more than a half the pet owners in the UK still have no insurance cover for veterinary bills and other associated costs.

PRODUCT WARRANTIES / INSURANCE

Allianz Partners initiates relationship for product insurance with eBay

In France, Allianz Partners and eBay have begun collaborating for insurance and extended warranties covering electronic devices, most notably including mobile phones and tablets, as well certain other items including jewellery. eBay has around 4.4 million users in France and the supplementary insurance that has been developed is applicable to over 2 million products sold on eBay's French site each year.

SPB and CNP Assurances combine for device insurance sold through mobile payment app

Also in France, Lydia, a peer-to-



peer payment app with more than 1.5 million users, is now offering its users the opportunity to insure all their mobile devices via its mobile payment app. Lydia's app enables its users to protect their phones and all their other mobile devices through two offerings underwritten by CNP Assurances: namely, these are cover for smartphones against breakage and corrosion for EUR 4.29 per month, or additional cover for all mobile devices (laptops, tablets, audio headphones, smart watches etc.) against theft for EUR 9.99 per month. SPB, a provider of affinity insurance and related services, is administering the scheme.

Assurant works with KDDI for mobile device protection in Japan

In Japan, Assurant has embarked on a partnership with KDDI Corporation, a Japanese telecoms operator, by means of which customers of the latter will be offered the option of a new and enhanced mobile device support program whenever they purchase new Apple devices. Assurant explained that the introduction of this scheme was due to the fact that Japanese mobile users have a high level of awareness of protection services, making Japan the world's second-largest mobile protection market.

The program is available to all customers who purchase a qualifying new Apple device and in-

cludes four years of cover against mechanical breakdown and accidental damage. In addition, it offers a comprehensive loss and theft service that replaces the customer's phone with an Apple-certified device, with the availability of a next-day replacement service, apart from in remote areas. The program will be available to consumers via KDDI shops under the au brand as well as through KDDI's own website.

Allstate bolsters SquareTrade proposition by integrating PlumChoice

In the US, Allstate has agreed to acquire PlumChoice, a provider of cloud and technical support services to consumers and small businesses as part of a USD 30 million deal. PlumChoice will become part of SquareTrade, an Allstate subsidiary that devises protection plans for mobile phones, consumer electronics and appliances. At the time that the acquisition was announced, Allstate reported that PlumChoice had handled over 15 million tech support requests and delivered market-leading customer satisfaction scores.

PROPERTY INSURANCE

Assurant secures mandate from short-term rental platform for property cover

In the US, Assurant has been

selected as the exclusive insurance provider for Rent Like A Champion, a platform providing short-term rental services near colleges during the national football season. Insurance for short-term accommodation backed by Assurant has now been incorporated into the booking process, protecting both homeowners and renters. As a result of the new partnership, all homeowners who rent their property through Rent Like A Champion will be covered by the policy to protect them in the event of incidents. This includes USD 1 million of cover for both liability protection and structural damage plus USD 50,000 of cover for personal property within the home.

At the time that the announcement was made, Rent Like A Champion claimed to have hosted over 80,000 guests and had operations across 40 cities in the US.

TRAVEL INSURANCE

ERV begins selling travel cover through Amazon's virtual assistant

As part of a pan-European deal, ERV has announced that customers are now able to purchase travel health insurance via Amazon's voice recognition system and virtual assistant, Alexa. During the dialogue with Alexa,



buyers need to provide relevant details in relation to their trip. The purchase is made entirely verbally and requires no signature. Alexa then verifies the identities of buyers by comparing them with customer data in Amazon accounts. Moreover, ERGO, the immediate parent company of ERV, is currently investigating opportunities to sell its products through other voice recognition assistants as it expects them to become an important distribution channel for insurance in the near future.

Allianz Partners earns pan-European tie with GoEuro...

Across Europe, Allianz Partners has been adding to its distribution agreements with various partners in the travel sector. First, it has begun offering travel cover to customers of GoEuro, a Europe-wide online travel platform. The agreement initially covers customers in France, Germany, Italy and Spain, with plans to extend to other countries. At the time of the agreement, GoEuro reported that its network comprised more than 800 providers of travel services in Europe.

... and launches new product with SNCF in France...

Meanwhile, in France, Allianz Partners has launched a new insurance product through the Allianz Travel brand in partner-

ship with OUI.sncf, a travel booking website operated by France's national rail operator. Through this agreement, any customer with travel insurance from Allianz Travel receives compensation in the event of a train delay of more than one hour, with this compensation fixed at EUR 10. This launch follows the commencement of a partnership between the companies in June 2016.

... and wins new relationships with Ouibus and Affinity Insurance Solutions

Also in France, Allianz Travel has begun offering a comprehensive range of insurance and assistance products to customers of Ouibus, a coach travel booking website.

Lastly, Allianz Partners has partnered with Affinity Insurance Solutions, a UK-based insurance intermediary, to distribute its travel insurance policies to smaller travel companies, including coach companies and tour operators, allowing these companies in turn to offer the cover to their customers. As part of this arrangement, Allianz Partners provides underwriting and claims handling services.

Europ Assistance augments travel insurance sold through UVET in Italy

In Italy, Europ Assistance has

launched a new travel assistance product in partnership with UVET, a travel group. A unique feature of this policy is that it provides assistance for older people who remain at home while relatives travel, including regular phone calls to check on their well-being, care visits and medical assistance if needed, plus transportation to medical facilities. Coverage will initially be offered to UVET's customers as part of a comprehensive travel policy.

PZU collaborates with Chubb to configure travel insurance for LOT

In Poland, PZU has disclosed that it has started providing travel insurance for customers of LOT, the country's flagship carrier. Three variants of the policy can be acquired online at the same time as flight tickets, namely basic cancellation insurance, a broader construct that embraces travel health and inconvenience cover, and comprehensive insurance that combines the first two variants. These are embedded in the Amadeus system, which is the world's largest operator of airline ticket distribution systems given that around a half of all tickets sold are processed through its systems. Meanwhile, for policies bought via LOT by customers not based in Poland, cover will be underwritten by Chubb, which is also responsible for the



underlying technology and management of the whole scheme.

Société Générale insurtech division ties with online travel agency for automatic flight delay insurance

Returning to France, Moonshot-Internet, an insurtech company that is owned by Société Générale, has signed a distribution partnership with Tridea, a start-up online travel agency specialising in flights from small and medium-sized airports. The Tridea website enables travellers to purchase airline tickets from such airports, while the insurance policy developed by Moonshot-Internet provides them with access to a VIP lounge plus automatic compensation in the event of a delay of more than two hours, paid without the customer needing to submit proof of the delay.

Blue Cross integrates Blink's travel disruption app into insurance sold in Eastern Canada

In Canada, CPP Group has announced that the travel disruption solution developed by Blink, its subsidiary acquired in 2017, is now being included within most Blue Cross travel insurance policies in Eastern Canada. Through the partnership with Blink, Blue Cross will expand its product offering to include real-time travel solutions

when flight disruptions occur. Blink's platform tracks flight delays, while automatically resolving inconveniences by endowing insured travellers with access to lounges and hotel rooms, and providing cash payments.

Starr Insurance underwrites policies for provider of ski and snowboard evacuation insurance

In the US, Starr Insurance has begun underwriting policies sold by Safe Descents, a provider of ski and snowboard evacuation insurance, covering transportation costs incurred due to accidental injuries.

GENERAL

Wallapop chooses MAPFRE as provider of insurance related to second-hand purchases

In Spain, MAPFRE and its VERTI direct insurance brand have entered into an agreement for the distribution of selected insurance products with Wallapop, the largest platform in the country for the sale and purchase of second-hand goods with over 30 million registered users. Specifically, because cars, motor cycles, bicycles and household goods are the main items traded on Wallapop, the insurance products in scope will

be focused on these items.

Zurich extends and strengthens insurance distribution link with Brazilian retailing group

In Brazil, Zurich has announced that it is strengthening its relationship with the Via Varejo retailing group, which operates the Casas Bahia and Ponto Frio brands, having worked with it already since 2012. Specifically, until the end of 2024, Zurich will be the provider used exclusively by the retailing group for insurance products including extended warranties plus creditor, household, life and theft cover. Moreover, these will be made available online as well as via the bricks and mortar outlets of the two retail brands owned by Via Varejo.

Groupama offers personal lines insurance to members of association of small town officials

In France, Groupama has formalised an agreement with the Association des Petites Villes de France (APVF), which represents the interests of agents and elected officials within small towns across the country. The agreement offers motor and household insurance to members of the association and plans are afoot to introduce other types of cover in future. The APVF is oriented to municipalities with between 2,500 and



25,000 inhabitants and currently has about 1,200 members.

Codan and Velliv agree to cross-sell each other's products in Denmark

From April 2019 onwards, Velliv (previously known as Nordea Liv & Pension) has disclosed that it will enter into an agreement with Codan, another Danish insurer, in the field of pensions. The co-operation means that Codan's corporate and private customers will be offered low-cost pension solutions from Velliv. In exchange, Velliv's corporate and private customers will have access to Codan's products in the non-life insurance arena. In total, the collaboration has the potential to affect around 700,000 customers.

Mitsui Sumitomo Insurance concludes alliance with German insurtech firm for digital insurance

Mitsui Sumitomo Insurance (MSI) has embarked on a strategic alliance with ELEMENT Insurance, an insurtech firm holding a licence to underwrite and sell digital insurance products across all EU countries. In addition to promoting and developing insurance products using digital technology, ELEMENT also develops digital platforms for insurance businesses. MSI will utilise ELEMENT's expertise in perform-

ing entirely digitised procedures from the purchase of cover to claims payment, and will also work with ELEMENT to create brand-new bespoke products that address individual risks by using insights gained both from the collection of customers' data and from internal data sources.

Bancassurance

LIFE INSURANCE AND PENSIONS

Legal & General unveils lifetime mortgage partnership with RBS Group

In the UK, Legal & General has established a partnership with RBS Group to offer lifetime mortgages, a type of equity release product, to interest-only borrowers of the banking group's brands which include RBS itself and NatWest. In particular, it hopes to target those aged 55 and above who arrive at the end of their mortgage term but are unable to repay their loan.

GENERAL

BNP Paribas targets business customers with commercial lines policies underwritten by AXA

In France, BNP Paribas has rolled out a new range of non-

life insurance products underwritten by AXA for its business customers with an annual turnover of between EUR 2 and EUR 100 million, and for professional associations. The new products are being sold through the bank's business banking centres and comprise property, liability, motor fleet, construction, legal protection and cyber insurance, plus a special package available for digital start-ups.

MAPFRE enhances relationship with Bankia across both life and non-life insurance

In Spain, MAPFRE and Bankia are strengthening their bancassurance ties by means of an agreement whereby, subject to regulatory approval, MAPFRE will acquire a 51% stake in two of the banking group's life insurance subsidiaries, namely Caja Granada Vida and Caja Murcia Vida y Pensiones, for a consideration of EUR 110 million. Furthermore, by means of the agreement, Bankia has also agreed to distribute non-life insurance products underwritten by MAPFRE across its entire network, adding around 400 branches carrying the BMN brand to those that are already selling MAPFRE's policies. The deal enhances significantly the distribution reach of MAPFRE in south-eastern Spain.



Zurich purchases majority stake in Indonesian bancas-surer

In Indonesia, Zurich is strengthening its role in the country's bancassurance sector by acquiring from Bank Danamon and a minority investor an 80% stake in Adira Insurance, a major non-life insurer. By means of this transaction, whereby the bank retains a 20% holding, Zurich is becoming the largest non-indigenous provider of non-life insurance in Indonesia, simultaneously benefiting from long-term distribution agreements with Bank Danamon, the country's fifth-largest bank by market capitalisation, and with Adira Finance, which is ranked second in the automotive finance market.

The total consideration amounts to IDR 6.15 trillion (approximately USD 414 million) with potential future incremental payments subject to business performance. Established in 1996, Adira Insurance generated gross written premiums of USD 158 million in 2017, mostly driven by a diversified product offering and strong distribution capabilities.

Tryg rolls out partnership with Danske Bank across the Nordic region

In the Nordic region, Tryg has unveiled a new agreement with Danske Bank whereby it will deliver insurance solutions to the customers of Danske Bank in Denmark, Norway and Sweden beginning in the spring of 2019.

AUTOMOTIVE FINANCE

BNP Paribas Personal Finance forms finance partnerships with GoMore and Uber

In France, BNP Paribas Personal Finance has formed partnerships with two different companies to finance cars used in the 'sharing economy'.

First, it has begun collaborating with GoMore, a Danish car-sharing start-up created in 2005 and Arval, the vehicle leasing business of BNP Paribas, to launch a medium- and long-term rental offer in the country. GoMore already offers its customers a rental package with Europcar for four to 12 months and is now adding long-term rental with Arval and hire purchase with BNP Paribas Personal Finance under the latter's Cetelem brand, with rental periods of 12 to 60 months. GoMore's customers can then offer their leased cars to other GoMore subscribers for car-pooling, car-sharing and short-term rentals. GoMore has been present in France since 2016, as

well as in Denmark, Norway, Spain and Sweden, and has established a base of more than 170,000 members.

Secondly, BNP Paribas Personal Finance has also formed a partnership to help Uber drivers in France to buy nearly new second-hand cars. Specifically, it has introduced a dedicated website that provides access to a large choice of second-hand vehicles that meet the regulations for private hire cars and which can be reserved online. While more than 50% of drivers buy their vehicle second-hand, they can sometimes have problems getting a loan because they are self-employed. This partnership is designed for such drivers, and the terms of leases take into account their very high mileage.

CGI Finance distributes finance products through used car sales platform

Also in France, CGI Finance, a subsidiary of Société Générale, has taken a minority stake in Reezocar, a start-up specialising in the sale of used cars to private individuals. Reezocar's website attracts nearly 1 million visitors each month and positions itself as a trusted third party to assist buyers looking for used vehicles from France and other European markets. As a part of the transaction, CGI Finance is offering a full range of finance products including tradi-



tional credit, balloon credit and finance leasing to customers buying via the platform.

Ally Financial extends relationship with online used car sales brand in US

As reported in previous editions of this publication, Ally Financial has continued building its relationship with Carvana, an online platform for the purchase and sale of used cars in the US. In fact, Ally has agreed to extend the partnership through 2019 providing up to USD 2.3 billion in financial commitments over 12 months. This will provide retail finance for Carvana's customers and will also facilitate inventory finance for Carvana itself. Moreover, Ally Financial's 'SmartAuction' platform will continue to be a source of used vehicles for sale by Carvana.

LeasePlan seals tie with company pioneering production of solar-powered cars

In the Netherlands, LeasePlan has announced that it will collaborate with Lightyear, which believes that it is the first company in the world to develop an electric car for consumers that runs on solar power. Specifically, LeasePlan will become Lightyear's leasing partner for its 'One' model, the first produced by the company, which is expected to be available for purchase in 2020. It is anticipated

that the solar cells integrated in the five-seater vehicle, the design details for which remain secret, will allow customers to use it to drive up to 10,000 kilometres per year with a range of 800 kilometres.

Mazda reconstitutes its finance arm in Japan as a joint venture co-owned by Toyota

In Japan, Toyota and Mazda have agreed to integrate their financial services businesses. Specifically, Toyota will buy 49% of SMM Auto Finance, Mazda's joint venture automotive finance division, from current shareholders Sumitomo Mitsui Banking and Cedyne Financial Corporation, with Mazda keeping the remaining 51%. Moreover, Toyota Financial Services, the captive finance arm of Toyota, will act as the preferred provider of finance for Mazda elsewhere in the world. As such, the alliance delivers global coverage to Mazda and domestic optimisation to Toyota, given that Mazda has no captive financial services offering outside of Japan (working instead through partnerships with local finance firms), and Toyota wants to optimise its own captive's performance in the mature Japanese market.

FCA Bank allies with Harley-Davidson Financial Services in Poland and Spain

In both Poland and Spain, FCA Bank has begun working with Harley-Davidson Financial Services, the financial services arm of the American motorcycle brand, to supply financial products to the latter's local clients. The Polish agreement is taking effect in April 2019 with the Spanish equivalent having been rolled out already in January.

CO-BRANDED CARDS

Wirecard introduces co-branded prepaid Visa card with lastminute.com...

In partnership with lastminute.com, a travel booking site that is available in 40 countries and which handles around 10 million travellers each year, Wirecard is launching a co-branded prepaid Visa card that will allow travellers to pay in their local currency at millions of acceptance points worldwide, avoiding currency conversion fees. The card will be also quickly reloadable, potentially via a mobile app, making it as convenient as possible for users to take advantage of the best exchange rates while traveling. The mobile app also includes a multi-currency dashboard and allows cardholders to view their transaction history, carry out wallet-to-wallet transfers, withdraw cash from ATMs and complete online purchases.



... and works for travel-themed, multi-currency cards with Ctrip and United Money

In China, Wirecard has unveiled a multi-currency card developed in association with Ctrip, one of the country's largest providers of travel services with around 110 million active users each month. The card can be loaded with seven different currencies, eliminating need to convert currency abroad, and facilitates digital cashless payments.

Also in China, Wirecard is partnering with United Money, one of the largest currency exchange companies in the country with close to 100 offices across major airports, business districts and communities, to offer multi-currency prepaid travel cards on the Visa network. Branded as the "Travel Cashcard", the new offer is targeted at Chinese nationals who plan to travel abroad and are seeking a convenient payment method that can be managed via an online account. The Travel Cashcard supports multiple currencies including those of Australia, Hong Kong, Japan, Singapore, the UK and the US plus many across the Eurozone. Consumers can load up their cards before traveling, thereby locking in their preferred exchange rates.

Avanzia Bank launches Miles & More co-branded card in France

In France, Avanzia Bank has launched a co-branded credit card program with Lufthansa and Mastercard that provides reward miles through the Miles & More scheme plus other benefits including insurance and lounge access. The companies reported at the time of the deal that around 1.4 million people globally were using Miles & More credit cards with the number boosted by customers of member airlines of the Star Alliance.

Air France-KLM selects Bank of America for co-branded program in the US

Meanwhile, in the US, another airline co-branded card launch is that of Air France-KLM and Bank of America for a Mastercard product that allows cardholders to gain air miles and reward points through the Flying Blue loyalty scheme.

Mastercard ties with University Fancards for branded gift and prepaid cards

Also in the US, Mastercard has announced a partnership with University Fancards, a company that issues co-branded sports-themed payment cards for college and university students. Through this agreement,

Mastercard is acting as the exclusive payment network for branded gift and prepaid cards under the University Fancards label.

Alliance Data inaugurates co-branded card program for US gaming operator

Still in the US, Alliance Data has signed a new agreement to provide co-branded credit card services for Penn National Gaming, which claims to be the largest regional gaming and entertainment company in North America. Penn National Gaming operates 40 properties in the US, including multiple casinos in Hollywood and Las Vegas. Its existing loyalty program currently offers its customers the opportunity to earn points for gaming and other purchases at its locations

The addition of the credit card program is intended to allow customers to accumulate even more points on hotel, dining and non-gambling entertainment purchases at the company's properties, while earning additional points when they use the card elsewhere for daily purchases. As is typical with other co-branded programs run by Alliance Data, Penn National will also leverage its partner's full suite of data-driven marketing services to gain further customer insights and to increase loyalty.

BNP Paribas joins forces with Yoigo for co-branded credit card launch in Spain

In Spain, Cetelem has partnered with Yoigo, a mobile network operator that is part of the MÁSMÓVIL telecoms group, to launch a new co-branded credit card. The card is available to customers who buy a new mobile handset with payments spread over 24 months. It can also be used for other purchases at a relatively low interest rate with repayments possible across three, six or 12 months, as preferred.

Amazon works with American Express to unveil co-branded card for US business customers...

Returning to the US, American Express and Amazon have launched a co-branded business credit card that incorporates cashback and extended payment terms for purchases made through Amazon or Whole Foods Market as well as a lower level of cashback for purchases made elsewhere. The cards also offer a year's free membership of Amazon's small business services plan.

... and rolls out new card with Landesbank Berlin in Germany

Moreover, in Germany, Ama-

zon has unveiled a new co-branded Amazon Prime Visa card issued by Landesbank Berlin, its partner for an existing co-branded card, incorporating loyalty points and cashback with purchases at Amazon and at other retailers.

COMMERCIAL BANKING

Mastercard links with DPO Group to enable online and offline payments for merchants across Africa...

Across Africa, Mastercard has revealed that it is collaborating with DPO Group, a payment service provider, to allow over 40,000 merchants on the continent to accept Mastercard payments both online and offline, with DPO authorising transactions.

... and brings payment options to savings and credit unions in Zambia

Furthermore, in Zambia, Mastercard has announced an agreement with the National Association of Savings and Credit Unions (NASCU) to use its systems to enable a range of payments including payroll, loans and disbursements for savings and credit cooperatives across the country. Mastercard has also reported that it intends to issue around 1.5 million contactless debit cards to NASCU

members over five years.

American Express targets SME borrowers in the UK through partnership with ezbob

In the UK, American Express has announced a partnership with ezbob, an online business finance platform, to allow small and medium-sized enterprises that are business clients of American Express to access financing of up to GBP 300,000, with fixed annual interest rates starting at 3%.

Bank of Montreal subsidiary is chosen by American Dental Association for practice financing

In the US, BMO Harris Bank, a subsidiary of the Bank of Montreal (BMO), has been named the new and exclusive lender for practice financing for members of the American Dental Association (ADA). The bank will be the only one recommended by ADA Member Advantage, a program serving over 163,000 members of the association across the US. Through this agreement, the ADA's members gain access to preferred rates on practice finance. BMO currently provides financial services to several thousand dental practices across North America.

CONSUMER FINANCE

Synchrony Financial extends partnership with Qurate Retail Group...

In the US, Synchrony Financial has signed a long-term agreement reaffirming its strategic consumer financing and credit relationship with Qurate Retail Group, a specialist in social, video and digital commerce.

In particular, it has embarked on a new partnership with the Home Shopping Network (HSN), a retailer that operates on a broadcast and satellite TV network owned by Qurate. The agreement will take effect from August 2019 at which point HSN will replace its current financing provider with Synchrony.

Synchrony has also announced a multi-year extension of its current agreements with two other Qurate Retail Group brands, namely QVC, another home shopping brand, and zulily, an online retailer. Indeed, Synchrony and QVC have worked together since 2005, and zulily has utilized Synchrony's services since 2017.

Overall, Qurate Retail Group is made up of seven leading retail brands and claims that it reaches approximately 370 million homes worldwide through 16

TV networks and multiple websites, social network pages, mobile apps, print catalogues and in-store destinations. According to industry sources, Qurate Retail Group ranks third in aggregate in both e-commerce and mobile commerce in the US, in terms of volume of sales.

... and incorporates healthcare finance arm with Henry Schein software solutions

Also in the US, Synchrony has incorporated CareCredit, its healthcare financing wing, into dental and veterinary practice management software solutions operated by Henry Schein, a distributor of healthcare products and services. The integration promises to offer dental and veterinary practices more financing options for their customers, while improving practice efficiency.

Avant re-brands digital loan product and distributes it through mainstream banks

Once again in the US, Avant, a fintech lender, has rebranded its 'Powered by Avant' business, which started off as a digital loan product, to 'Amount'. Amount differs from its predecessor in that it allows for customised configurations and offers end-to-end lending products, as well as individual tools such as fraud prevention and account verification. Working

with a network of banks and other financial institutions, Amount also provides them with analytical services including risk assessment and underwriting. Several of these partners, including Regions Bank and Eloan, a lending platform run by Banco Popular, already use the Amount platform to provide customers with digital lending products. Avant plans to announce additional partnerships for Amount over the next few months.

Agos and Banco BPM extend consumer finance partnership in Italy for 15 more years

In Italy, Agos has signed a binding memorandum of understanding with Banco BPM that will reaffirm their existing partnership for consumer finance for a further 15 years. The transaction aims to reinforce the leading position and market share of Agos in the sector in which it had loans outstanding of EUR 13.8 billion at the end of September 2018 while its net profit in 2017 was EUR 296 million. As part of the agreement, Agos will acquire Pro-Family, a subsidiary of Banco BPM, which offers consumer loans distributed across the BPM network, for a consideration of EUR 310 million. Agos will offer its products across the entire Banco BPM network, comprising around 2,300 branches, plus other distribution

channels. The shareholder structure of Agos will remain unchanged with 61% held by Crédit Agricole Consumer Finance and 39% by Banco BPM.

INTERNATIONAL PAYMENTS / REMITTANCES

Western Union facilitates cross-border shopping with Amazon partnership...

At a multi-country level, Western Union has announced that it has been engaged by Amazon to launch a new payment option that allows international shoppers to make purchases from different vendors around the world while paying in local currency. According to industry sources, cross-border shopping is expected to make up 20% of e-commerce transactions by 2022 with sales reaching USD 630 billion. By means of the initiative, shoppers will be sent a code plus instructions for how to make the payment at participating Western Union agent locations. Western Union's platform will also power cash refunds for product returns.

... ties with Terrapay to enable international money transfers...

Western Union has also formed another alliance spanning multiple territories to facilitate international money transfers. Spe-

cifically, it is working with TerraPay, a mobile payments service, to allow the latter's customers to send remittances directly into the mobile wallets of their intended recipients across Africa, Asia, Europe and Latin America.

... advances use of digital wallet services in China and Hong Kong for remittances...

Meanwhile, in China, Western Union has inked an agreement with JD Digits (known as JD Finance until November 2018) to facilitate remittances for the latter's international consumers and businesses based in the country. JD Digits states that the first phase of the agreement involves the enabling of cross-border payments into the mobile wallets and bank accounts of its 400 million customers although it also hopes to work with Western Union to explore new ways to employ technology to make these remittances more convenient.

Moreover, in Hong Kong, Western Union has signed an analogous agreement to enable customers of Tap & Go, a mobile wallet service, to send money around the world via the Western Union mobile app and through its website. Tap & Go users can pay for their Western Union money transfer transactions online using any credit card issued in Hong Kong. Ac-

cording to Western Union, smartphone penetration in Hong Kong has reached 96% with 97% of Internet users having used a smartphone to access a website, highlighting the growing importance of the mobile channel.

... and integrates services into M-Pesa in Kenya

In Kenya, Western Union has started working with M-Pesa, a digital money transfer and microfinancing service launched by Vodafone for Safaricom, a mobile network operator. A newly optimised feature branded as 'M-PESA Global' is allowing customers to send money from their M-Pesa wallets across the Western Union network. According to the World Bank, net received remittances in Kenya increased by 13% in 2017. Furthermore, in the same year, outbound remittances came to more than USD 36 million, having risen at the same rate of growth.

BBVA promotes mobile money transfer service to customers of Amigo Energy

As part of a new partnership that will benefit its customers in both Mexico and the US, BBVA has started working with Amigo Energy, an electricity and gas firm belonging to Just Energy, to promote its mobile money transfer service branded as

‘Tuyyo’. The collaboration will enable customers of Amigo Energy, to receive a USD 100 bill credit when using the Tuyyo app. Tuyyo customers that make the switch to Amigo Energy as their energy provider will also gain eligibility for a USD 100 bill credit on their electricity bill. BBVA hopes that the deal will increase usage of the Tuyyo app, which currently allows users in the US to transfer up to USD 1,000 to friends and family in Mexico at no cost.

MOBILE / ONLINE PAYMENTS

American Express rolls out mobile payments initiatives with Apple and PayPal

In the field of mobile payments, American Express has signed two agreements that will affect its customers in different territories. In Germany, it has partnered with Apple Pay, enabling its cardholders in the country to make contactless and in-app payments using Apple mobile devices linked to American Express cards. Furthermore, in the US, it has added to its existing partnership with PayPal, allowing its cardholders to use reward points for purchases via PayPal, to send money using PayPal and Venmo (another mobile payment service owned by PayPal) via the American Express mobile app, and to use PayPal or

Venmo balances to pay their American Express bill.

Klarna works with multiple retailers to grow presence in online payments and consumer finance...

Across a number of countries in Europe, Klarna has been rolling out new partnerships, mostly with retailers, to strengthen its presence in the online payment and consumer finance sector. First, following an equity investment in it by H&M, a multinational fashion brand, Klarna has embedded a variety of its payment options into all of H&M’s sales channels. The agreement means that H&M’s customers can make purchases through a payment account operated by Klarna, as well as through Klarna’s ‘try before you buy’ deferred payment service. The two companies plan to introduce the agreement initially in Sweden and the UK, before extending it across all 14 countries where H&M is active. Klarna has also reached an analogous agreement to offer the same payment options to merchants in Germany who use Shopify, an e-commerce platform, to market their goods.

... including H&M across multiple countries and Clas Ohlson in the Nordic region

Meanwhile, in Finland, Germany, Norway, Sweden and the

UK, Klarna has started working with Clas Ohlson, a hardware store chain with more than 200 branches in total, to offer a mobile wallet service and deferred payment option known as ‘Pay later’ to the retailer’s customers. Likewise, it has agreed to activate the ‘Pay later’ option for shoppers at Missguided, a UK-based online clothing retailer. On the other hand, in a separate agreement, Klarna is making its ‘Slice it’ payment option available to customers of Indochino, a Canada-based menswear retailer. This means that Indochino’s customers can spread the cost of their purchase over a period of between six and 36 months.

In addition, aside from its retailer partnerships, in Sweden, where Klarna is active in the credit card market, Klarna is enabling its cardholders to sync their cards to Apple Pay to make purchases.

Visa enables customers of three German banks to use Apple Pay

In another move that extends the reach of Apple Pay, Visa is working with three banks in Germany – namely, comdirect, Hanseatic Bank and HypoVer-einsbank – so that customers with Visa cards issued by them can make contactless payments using Apple mobile devices. Visa expects that all payment

terminals in Germany will allow contactless Visa payments, including those via Apple Pay, by 2020.

UnionPay extends international use of its mobile payment services

In keeping with previous quarters, UnionPay has been highly active in broadening awareness and usage of its mobile payment solutions. For example, in Russia, it is enabling users of Honor and Huawei mobile devices to bind UnionPay cards issued by Gazprombank and Rosselkhozbank to the Huawei Pay mobile payment app. In fact, this venture marks the introduction of the Huawei Pay service to the international market following its launch in mainland China in 2016 and plans are afoot to introduce it soon to Hong Kong.

UnionPay has also rolled out its 'QuickPass' mobile payment service in the South Pacific region following a successful trial in Papua New Guinea. Specifically, it has begun cooperating with ANZ, an Australia-based bank, to launch 'QuickPass' in Fiji and other island nations including the Cook Islands, Kiribati, Samoa, the Solomon Islands, Tonga and Vanuatu. As a result, UnionPay's cardholders visiting these countries can now make contactless mobile payments. UnionPay cites the move as being driven by the emerging

importance of island countries in the South Pacific as trading partners and export markets for China. In addition, it understands that about 150,000 Chinese tourists visited the island countries in 2017. Unionpay's growing reach in this geography is illustrated by the fact that its cards are now accepted at over 80% ATM and POS terminals in Fiji.

Meanwhile, in Bangladesh, UnionPay has reached agreements for mobile payments with City Bank and the Mutual Trust Bank (MTB). City Bank is enabling its online merchants to accept UnionPay's online payment service during the first half of 2019 and MTB is working with UnionPay to develop the country's first e-wallet product. Moreover, both partnerships also entail the banks issuing UnionPay's cards. For instance, MTB will issue the first UnionPay-branded international debit card in the country. UnionPay estimates that its cards can be used at approximately 70% of ATMs in Bangladesh.

Wirecard makes mobile payment solution available to Google Pay users in France...

In France, Wirecard has made its mobile payment solution 'boon' available to download, coinciding with the launch of Google Pay in the country. It estimates that more than 38 mil-

lion Android users in the country will benefit from boon which will allow them to make contactless payments via their phones while shopping.

... facilitates use of Alipay at outlets of Venue Retail Group...

Furthermore, in Sweden, Wirecard has announced a tie with Cimple Marketing, a provider of marketing and payment services targeted at Chinese consumers, to offer Alipay at stores operated by Venue Retail Group, a clothing and accessories retailer that currently operates 124 stores across the Nordic region.

... and enables customers of Singtel to use Apple Pay

Turning to Singapore, Wirecard has reaffirmed an existing partnership with telecoms group Singtel to enable Apple Pay for the latter's customers using its digital wallet, Singtel Dash. Specifically, customers using Singtel Dash can now make payments using Apple Pay at millions of participating online and offline merchants worldwide.

Sberbank pioneers biometric-driven payments across supermarket chain

In Russia, Sberbank has announced that its customers are now able to use their fingerprints, in conjunction with a

password, to make purchases across 20 outlets belonging to the Azbuka Vkusa supermarket chain. In the context of this initiative, Sberbank has clarified that its customers' biometric data will not be stored anywhere and that all scanned fingerprints will be transformed into a unique set of numerical codes instead, which will be triggered each time a purchase is made.

Barclaycard and Costa Coffee unveil coffee cup with embedded contactless payment technology

In a parallel development relating to 'smart' payment devices, in the UK, Barclaycard and Costa Coffee have unveiled what they believe to be the country's first reusable cup incorporating contactless payment technology. The 'Clever Cup' allows users to make purchases with it, to top up their balance and to track payments online or via a dedicated app available on iPhone and Android devices. The 'Clever Cup' has been available in Costa Coffee stores since November 2018 as part of its reusable cup range and the technology in it can be used wherever customers see the contactless payment symbol. It is priced at GBP 14.99, with GBP 1 from every sale going to The Costa Foundation, an independent charity that aims to alleviate poverty in coffee-growing communities.

AIB allows customers to integrate their payment cards with FitBit app

Also in the field of smart payment devices, AIB has announced that its customers in Ireland can use FitBit devices to make payments in retail outlets across the country. To activate this service, customers need only to load the details associated with their AIB-branded debit or credit cards onto their FitBit app.

Natixis promotes e-commerce payments via partnerships with Cdiscount.com and SNCF

In France, Natixis has introduced two new initiatives to advance the use of its 'S-money' e-payment option. First, customers of Cdiscount.com, an online retailer, can now use 'S-money' to make payments. They can also choose to pay in cash or in several instalments, and benefit from cashback on their purchases. In a comparable deal, SNCF, the state-owned national railway operator, has chosen the 'S-money' platform to handle digital payments for its new 'e-Voyageurs SNCF' service. In particular, 'S-money' is being integrated with the SNCF's personal mobility app which will enable users to research, book and confirm their travel plans across multiple transport systems.

Banco do Brasil facilitates cash withdrawals through WhatsApp

In Brazil, Banco do Brasil has begun allowing customers to make withdrawals through WhatsApp, without the need for a card or password to complete the transaction. In fact, the bank's customers are able to use WhatsApp to make bank transfers and cash withdrawals, to undertake balance inquiries, and to manage their savings and investments with more than 220,000 transactions reportedly having been made since introduction of the facility.

El Corte Inglés allows customers to withdraw money via mobile phone app developed by ING

In Spain, department store chain El Corte Inglés has begun allowing its customers to withdraw money through Twyp, a mobile phone app developed by ING, regardless of which bank a customer uses. The facility is valid across 270 of the retail group's outlets, after an initial launch at Supercor, its supermarket brand, in September 2018. Specifically, customers of El Corte Inglés can pay for their shopping with the app and can withdraw cash at values of between EUR 20 and EUR 150. El Corte Inglés has claimed that type of facility is common in other countries but in Spain it is available only

through Twyp.

Chinese football fans to be able to pay using Alipay at Euro 2020 and Euro 2024

Alipay has revealed that it has begun working with UEFA, the governing body for European football, for payment acceptance wherever UEFA-sanctioned men's national team events take place, including the Euro 2020 and Euro 2024 football championships, with games played at selected venues across multiple countries in the former case and in Germany alone in the latter. At the time that the deal was announced, it was only available to Chinese bank account holders and would primarily benefit only Chinese tourists heading to UEFA football tournaments.

UniCredit paves way for usage of Alipay in Hungary

In another initiative involving Alipay, UniCredit has begun offering it as a payment option for its Chinese customers in Hungary. The move marks Alipay's entry into the Hungarian payments market and is in part motivated by the increasing number of Chinese tourists visiting the country which reportedly grew by around 35% in 2017 to reach 227,000.

Carrefour boosts Italian mobile payments through partnership with e-payment service provider

In Italy, shoppers at any of Carrefour's stores can now check out their purchases using the 'Jiffy' mobile payment service, which has been developed jointly by SIA, an e-payment service provider that works mostly with banks and other financial institutions, and Intesa Sanpaolo. Through 'Jiffy', customers can pay at self-service or manned cash desks using their fingerprints or facial recognition to confirm the transaction.

PAYMENT CARD ISSUANCE AND ACCEPTANCE

Discover Financial expands acceptance of its cards through trio of new partnerships

As in previous quarters, Discover Financial has concluded deals across multiple countries to expand acceptance of its cards.

For instance, it has reached an agreement to work with 3C Payment, a global payment network that primarily serves merchants in the hospitality and food industries, to extend acceptance for Discover, Diners Club, PULSE and affiliate network cards across Europe and the

Middle East. In addition, Discover has also negotiated a similar partnership with PXP, an international provider of payment solutions, to expand acceptance of Diners Club cards across the cruise, retail and travel sectors.

Moreover, in Brazil, it has added the Diners Club brand to the portfolio of Elo, an issuer of debit and credit cards owned by Banco do Brasil, Bradesco and Caixa Econômica Federal. The two companies have worked together since 2015, when they announced that Elo cards would be able to run on the Discover network, thus allowing Elo's cardholders international acceptance while traveling abroad.

Finally, in Cambodia, Discover has signed a franchise agreement with PPC Bank that will enable the bank to issue Diners Club cards to its customers in the country.

UnionPay seals ties to distribute cards for the first time in two new territories

UnionPay has signed deals with two banking partners to issue cards bearing its marque. In Ukraine, it is marketing cards in conjunction with PROSTIR, a local payment network that has more than 50 member institutions. Likewise, in Sri Lanka, it has tied with the Commercial Bank of Ceylon to issue various a range of different credit card

Global Affinity *Finance Club*

products. Both partnerships mark the first time that Union-Pay cards have been issued in the countries in question.

JCB concludes agreement with Bank of Georgia for card acceptance

In Georgia, JCB has announced that Bank of Georgia has begun to accept its cards across its merchant network, which comprises around 13,000 POS terminals, as well as at its network of ATMs located mainly at around 280 branches. The deal marks the first time that JCB cards have been accepted in Georgia.

RETAILER CARDS AND FINANCE

Swedish supermarket chain switches credit card program from captive to EnterCard

In Sweden, EnterCard has unveiled the launch of a new suite of credit cards in partnership with Coop, a supermarket chain. This agreement will supersede Coop's previous credit card agreement with MedMera Bank, its captive, and will come into effect from March 2019. The cards will have the same basic functionality as the previous cards, albeit EnterCard has announced that it will introduce several new features and services, including contactless pay-

ment and an e-invoice option.

Synchrony Financial instigates card partnership with sports merchandise retailer

Finally, in the US, Synchrony Financial has started working with Fanatics, a specialist retailer of licensed sports merchandise, to introduce a new credit card that provides the latter's customers with a new customised payment means. The Fanatics credit card is expected to be available in the summer of 2019 and cardholders will receive special offers to unique sports experiences as well as being a part of the Fanatics 'FanCash' loyalty program. Through the program, fans are rewarded with cashback plus additional benefits in line with their acquisition of merchandise. Moreover, the partners have pledged to jointly leverage their technology and analytics platforms to deliver hyper-personalised shopping experiences that they hope will enhance the loyalty of customers.

Recently published reports

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Global Trends in Insurance Distribution: Perspectives across 14 Countries

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Insurance and Assistance linked to Payment Cards and Bank Accounts in Australia

Insurance and Assistance linked to Payment Cards and Bank Accounts in Brazil

Road Assistance in China

Retailer Consumer Finance and Payment Cards in Europe

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