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Claranova Hold

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France | IT services & software

Target Price:EUR2.00Current Price:EUR1.52Up/downside:31.8%

Market data: 08 November 2023

MCap: EUR69.8m

Bloomberg: CLA FP
Free float
Avg. daily volume (EURm)
YTD abs performance
52-week high/low (EUR)
Reuters: AVQ.PA
71%
0.1
2.97/1.30

Q1 sales: first read

Key points:

- Claranova published Q1 sales (July-September) of EUR91m (-5% YOY, flat LFL), 7% below our EUR98m estimate.
- Avanquest (EUR29m, +6% YOY, +14% LFL) and myDevices (EUR1.5m, +50% YOY, +61% LFL) perform in line with expectations, but PlanetArt (EUR60m, -11% YOY, -7% LFL) disappointed at the topline level. This could be explained by the group's focus on profitability rather than growth, and notably low client acquisition costs. Positively, the EBITDA of the division is said to be up YOY in Q1.
- Guidance for the year and beyond was confirmed, i.e. a 10% adj. EBITDA margin in FY 2023/24, with a revenue target of EUR700m in the coming years (no precise date, including M&A). We continue to have concerns about the group's guidance for the current year, particularly in light of worsening macroeconomic conditions. Additionally, we expect M&A activities to be subdued in the coming months due to limited financial flexibility and a focus on the OCEANE bonds refinancing.

Q1 sales, 7% below expectations due to PlanetArt subdued topline and adverse FX, but profitability said to be up

- Claranova published its Q1 2022/23 sales (July-September) yesterday evening (9 November). Sales totalled EUR91m (-5% YOY, flat LFL, -5% FX), 7% below our EUR98m estimate.
- Avanquest (EUR29m, +6% YOY, +14% LFL) and myDevices (EUR1.5m, +50% YOY, +61% LFL) perform in line with expectations, but PlanetArt (EUR60m, -11% YOY, -7% LFL) disappointed.
- In more detail, Avanquest continued to be fuelled by its proprietary SaaS software (Soda PDF, Adaware and InPixio), now accounting for c. 87% of the segment's revenue. myDevices, on its side, albeit still marginal in the group's mix, continued to gain momentum with more partners (213 as of end-September) and ARR up 21% YOY in Q1.
- Yet, PlanetArt, still by far the first contributor of the group (75% of sales last year), landed below our forecasts. This could be explained by a focus on profitability rather than growth, and notably low acquisition costs. According to management, the EBITDA's division was up YOY in Q1.

Table 1: 2022/23 Q1 revenue overview (July-September)								
EURm	Q1 2023/24	Q1 2022/23	% YOY	% ссу	% constant perimeter	% LFL	KECH	A vs. E
PlanetArt	60	68	-11%	-7%	11%	-7%	68	-12%
Avanquest	29	27	6%	15%	5%	14%	28	4%
myDevices	2	1.5	50%	61%	50%	61%	2	0%
Total Group revenue	91	96	-5%	0%	-6%	0%	98	-7%
							Sources: Claranova, Ke	pler Cheuvreux

No change in outlook, for both FY 2023/24 and beyond

- Claranova confirmed its outlook for this year, and the mid-term.
- Recall that management is aiming for a 10% adj. EBITDA margin this year, with a revenue target of EUR700m in the coming years (no precise date, including M&A).
- We continue to find the FY 2023/24 guidance overly ambitious amid a deteriorating macroeconomic climate. Plus, limited financing options may restrict short-term upside from M&A, given the ongoing negative equity situation as of June 2023, and with the OCEANE bonds refinancing taking precedence. Moreover, hitting the 10% margin target in FY 2023/24 hinges on implementing price increases at PlanetArt, which poses a significant challenge in our view due to the group's value-oriented positioning and current strain on household purchasing power.
- That said, we acknowledge that the recent completion of sale of Avanquest's non-core activities in Europe will have a positive effect on adj. EBITDA margin.

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Appendix 1: Research framework

Investment case

- Claranova's share price has taken several hits over the past few quarters amid changes in Apple's App Tracking Transparency, Covid normalisation, a dilutive capital increase, governance issues, and poor market conditions.
- While we would have expected a clear recovery in the current year, we have increasing doubts about consumption trends. We see the FY 2023/24 guidance as too ambitious in the worsening macro environment.
- With worrying messages from online retailers and software players, we prefer to take a more cautious stance, especially in a context in which the group needs to rebuild investor confidence.

Catalysts

- (-) Guidance miss on too ambitious targets and tough macro.
- (+) Improvement at PlanetArt (scalability, profitability).
- (+) Confirmed momentum at Avanquest, sale of the non-core businesses, and/or M&A.

Last model update: 13 October 2023

Valuation Methodology

- We value Claranova with a SOP.
- PlanetArt's valuation is based on a DCF (WACC 15.2%, 2% g), Avanquest's on a DCF (WACC 15.2%, 2% g), and myDevices' on transaction multiples (2023E EV/sales).
- We derive a fair value/share of EUR2.

Risk to our rating

- (+) Guidance reached in FY 2023/24, gradually restoring investor confidence.
- (-) Macroeconomic risks (decrease in consumer purchasing power, high input costs, high beta stock).
- (-) Failure to compensate for a large part of Apple's stricter confidentiality policy, meaning slower volume and potentially hit on profitability.

Appendix 2: Company description

Claranova is a France-based technology firm that manages majority interests in the main technology markets (Internet, Mobile, IoT). While French, the group is a global company, deriving 95% of its sales abroad. Since 2013, it has been totally restructured under CEO Cesarini and its strategy redefined towards value creation. Today, it focuses on three businesses: 1) PlanetArt (personalised e-commerce, 75% of sales), 2) Avanquest (B2C SaaS software publishing, 23%), and 3) myDevices (IoT, 2%).



Ownership Free float: 70.80% | Pierre Cesarini: 4.48% | LIH: 15.89% | Minority shareholders

concert: 7.17%

Appendix 3: share price perf.



Appendix 4: SWOT analysis

Strengths

- Leader in mobile-to-print apps.
- International focus (mostly the US, UK).
- Low customer acquisition costs.
- Improved financial situation.

Opportunities

- Increased penetration in the personalised e-commerce market.
- Diversification of mobile-to-print offers.
- Promising connected devices segment (myDevices).
- Spin-off of PlanetArt and/or Avanquest to unlock value.

Weaknesses

- Presence in highly competitive markets.
- Weak track record, and governance issues.
- High beta stock, high volatility.
- Few institutional investors in the capital.

Threats

- Failure to effectivily bypass new Apple Privacy Policy.
- Decrease in consumers' purchasing power due to poor macro.
- Low barriers to entry in the mobile app segment.
- Competition with free PC software.

Appendix 5: Key financials

Last model update: 13 October 2023 Market data date: 08 November 2023

FY to 30/06 (EUR)	06/16	06/17	06/18	06/19	06/20	06/21	06/22	06/23E	06/24E	06/25E
11 10 30/00 (2011)	00/10	00/11	00/10	00/13	00/20	00/22	00/22	00/232	00/242	00/232
Income Statement (EURm)										
Sales	117.4	130.2	161.5	262.3	409.1	471.9	473.6	507.0	522.9	545.5
% Change	26.1%	10.9%	24.0%	62.4%	56.0%	15.4%	0.4%	7.1%	3.1%	4.3%
EBITDA adjusted EBITDA adj. margin (%)	-11.2 -9.5%	-5.0 -3.8%	3.8 2.4%	16.0 6.1%	17.5 4.3%	34.2 7.2%	25.5 5.4%	32.5 6.4%	36.0 6.9%	43.8 8.0%
EBIT adjusted	-16.1	-10.6	-3.8	14.3	13.4	29.2	18.7	25.0	26.6	35.1
EBIT adj. margin (%)	-13.7%	-8.1%	-2.4%	5.5%	3.3%	6.2%	3.9%	4.9%	5.1%	6.4%
Net financial items & associates	-0.1	0.0	0.0	-48.3	-3.2	-4.1	-6.1	-7.0	-8.5	-8.5
Others	-1.6	-0.9	-0.3	-0.8	-1.3	-2.7	-16.2	-21.0	-10.0	-5.0
Tax	-0.8	-0.4	-1.8	-3.7	-2.1	-3.8	-5.8	-2.0	-0.8	-4.4
Net profit from continuing operations	-28.6	-11.4	-8.3	-41.4	1.2	14.2	-10.1	-11.0	6.2	16.2
Net profit from discontinuing activities	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Net profit before minorities	-28.6	-11.4	-8.3	-41.4	1.2	14.2	-10.1	-11.0	6.2	16.2
Net profit reported	-28.6	-11.0	-8.1	-40.8	0.5	10.5	-10.6	-11.0	6.2	15.8
Net profit adjusted	-18.6	-6.7	1.4	9.0	5.9	15.4	-10.1	-5.0	7.2	16.8
Cash Flow Statement (EURm)										
Levered post tax CF before capex	-11.4	-0.4	5.0	7.1	29.4	18.8	16.1	9.4	16.8	26.6
Capex	-0.9	-0.2	-0.1	-2.5	-1.2	-3.8	-2.2	-2.5	-3.7	-5.5
Free cash flow Acquisitions & divestments	-12.4 -0.3	-0.5 3.6	4.9	4.6	28.2 -31.9	15.0 -3.8	13.9 -73.4	6.9	13.2	21.1
Dividend paid	2.0	0.0	14.2 0.0	-13.3 0.0	-31.9	0.0	0.0	-30.0 0.0	0.0 0.0	0.0
Others	-3.4	3.2	2.4	-5.2	-6.0	0.3	-37.1	-10.0	17.3	0.0
Change in net financial debt	14.1	-6.3	-21.5	13.9	9.7	-11.5	96.6	33.1	-30.5	-21.1
Balance Sheet (EURm)										
Intangible assets	1.5	0.9	0.5	69.9	70.5	77.5	96.6	112.6	108.7	106.4
Tangible assets	0.5	0.3	0.2	1.4	15.7	12.2	18.2	24.7	22.9	21.9
Financial & other non-current assets	1.1	0.7	0.6	3.9	7.6	6.7	8.5	12.5	12.5	12.5
Total shareholders' equity	2.1	1.3	14.3	63.6	62.3	83.2	1.9	-9.1	10.2	22.0
Pension provisions	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Liabilities and provisions	26.4	28.7	66.2	112.5	147.7	141.7	268.2	274.4	262.1	266.0
Net debt	-9.8	-15.9	-37.4	-23.1	-3.4	-15.6	86.3	119.4	93.1	76.3
Net financial debt	-9.8	-16.0	-37.5	-23.6	-13.9	-25.4	71.1	104.2	77.9	61.1
IFRS 16 debt	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	10.2	7.6	13.2	13.2	13.2	13.2
Net working capital	-10.2	-15.9	-23.6	-32.3	-32.1	-26.5	-33.5	-37.9	-39.1	-40.8
Invested capital	-8.2	-14.7	-22.9	39.0	54.1	63.2	81.3	99.4	92.5	87.5
Per share data (EUR)										
EPS adjusted	-0.05	-0.02	0.00	0.23	0.15	0.39	-0.24	-0.11	0.14	0.30
EPS adj and fully diluted	-0.05	-0.02	0.00	0.23	0.15	0.39	-0.22	-0.10	0.13	0.28
% Change	+chg	+chg	+chg	6610.2%	-34.4%	162.0%	-chg	+chg	+chg	112.3%
EPS reported Cash flow per share	-0.08 -0.03	-0.03 0.00	-0.02 0.01	-1.04 0.18	0.01 0.75	0.27 0.48	-0.25 0.38	-0.24 0.21	0.12 0.33	0.28 0.47
Book value per share	0.01	0.00	0.01	1.34	1.29	1.70	-0.03	-0.27	0.13	0.32
Dividend per share	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Number of shares, YE (m)	375.32	375.32	393.61	39.44	39.44	39.73	45.99	45.99	57.21	57.21
Ratios										
ROE (%)	-118.6%	-408.1%	20.4%	27.6%	11.4%	26.2%	-30.8%	na	na	133.9%
ROIC (%)	na	na	na	195.1%	10.5%	39.3%	61.6%	33.8%	19.7%	28.5%
ND(F+IFRS16) / EBITDA (x)	0.9	3.2	-9.9	-1.5	-0.2	-0.5	3.3	3.6	2.5	1.7
Gearing (%)	-466.7%	-1,230.8%	-262.2%	-37.1%	-22.3%	-30.5%	na	na	760.8%	277.3%
Valuation										
P/E adjusted	na	na	na	34.4	45.3	17.0	na	na	10.8	5.1
P/E adjusted and fully diluted	na	na	na	35.0	46.1	17.2	na	na	11.7	5.5
P/BV	na	na	na	5.9	5.3	3.9	na	na	11.3	4.7
P/CF	na	na	na	43.6	9.1	14.0	13.6	7.3	4.6	3.2
Dividend yield (%)	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Dividend yield preference shares (%)	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	65.9%
FCF yield (%)	-3.4%	-0.1%	0.2%	1.5%	10.5%	5.7%	5.9%	9.9%	15.1%	24.3%
EV/Sales EV/EBITDA adj.	3.0	6.9	16.7	1.1 18.6	0.7 15.8	0.6 7.7	0.7 12.7	0.4 5.8	0.3 5.0	0.3 3.7
EV/EBITDA adj. EV/EBIT adj.	na na	na na	na na	20.8	20.6	9.0	17.3	5.8 7.6	6.8	4.7
EV/EDIT daj.	110	iia	IIa	20.0	20.0	3.0	11.3	1.0	0.0	7.1

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Reduce	8%	6%
Not Rated/Under Review/Accept Offer	2%	5%
Total	100%	100%

Source: Kepler Cheuvreux

A: % of all research recommendations

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Claranova (EUR)	17/07/2023 06:29	Equity Research	Buy	3.50	1.76
	13/10/2023 05:30	Equity Research	Hold	2.00	1.59

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