



**CALCIOSHOP**

**PRESS RELEASE**

**EPI ACQUIRES 100% OF CALCIOSHOP TO SHAPE  
A PRIME HUB FOR SPORTS E-COMMERCE AND RETAIL**

**EPI, the Italian leader in online and store-based sports merchandise, has bought Free Time Management Group, the helm to Calcioshop – the portal specialized in soccer kits, equipment and apparel**

*Milan, 12 November 2021*

**EPI, the 'brick & click' leader in online and retail sports merchandising sales, today finalized its acquisition of 100% of Free Time Management Group S.r.l., the Italian company owning Calcioshop, an e-shop specialized in the sale of football equipment and clothing.**

The transaction stands as **the fifth investment by Industry 4.0 Fund, the private equity fund supported and managed by Quadrivio Group** to invest in technological innovation and the digital transition for Italian SMEs; EPI has already featured in the Fund's portfolio since 2020.

Founded in Barzago (near Lecco) in 1985, **Free Time Management Group has been supplying team-sport apparel and equipment for over 35 years, and for the last 16 has been heading Calcioshop, Italy's most visited e-commerce site pivoting on the soccer world. Today Calcioshop is a trusted partner and authorized dealer for names such as Nike, Adidas and Puma and offers a selection of the best international brands, so that it stands as a point of reference for fans and enthusiasts as well as for amateur and professional footballers. The portal now has a customer base of over 300,000 registered and profiled users and manages 3 Calcioshop stores, in Milan, Bergamo and Barzago.**

**Calcioshop's focus is distinctly complementary to EPI's core business. In fact, EPI intends to use this operation as a vehicle to strengthen its market leadership in sports merchandising, to create a large group that is internationally active, both in e-commerce and through sports retail stores.**

**EPI closed its accounts in June 2021 with a turnover of 28 million euros and growth 30% up on the previous year.** Today its other figures include 150 employees, over 700,000 orders dispatched annually and 8 shops, also thanks to the store recently opened inside San Siro Stadium in Milan.

The Calcioshop takeover will also encourage new partnerships and the launch of a new brand, to be presented in February 2022. The company's investment policy backing technology, marketing and logistics while also bolstering the management structure means that **EPI can realistically aim to soon reach a yearly turnover of 50 million euros.**

*"Its Calcioshop acquisition further boosts growth for EPI in its aim to expand the range of products it offers, to cater to all those people with a passion for sports: fans, teams and amateur and professional players alike. Setting out from the soccer world, this transaction is the first step along a path resulting in creation of a great*

*European competitor in the realm of sports e-commerce and retail stores,"* stated **Lorenzo Forte, founder and CEO of EPI.**

**Giorgio Despota and Mauro Sala, both Partners at Free Time Management,** also showed their keenness for the deal: *“We’re very happy and enthusiastic to be part of the EPI group, since we feel certain it will bring significant impetus to the internationalization drive that today’s market requires, also of companies consolidated on a national level, such as ours. The demand for products connected with the football world is constantly on the rise and the need to create a single reference brand to cater to fans, players and soccer enthusiasts is becoming ever more evident.”*

For **Pietro Paparoni, Investment Director at Quadrivio Group,** *“The Calcioshop acquisition is an operation fully in line with the business plan by EPI, a company that has taken its turnover into double figures, overcoming the many difficulties of these two years of Covid and the restrictions limiting play and spectator participation in the world of soccer. This transaction takes the Quadrivio team to confirm its ability to encourage dialogue and interaction between enterprisers and SMEs, contributing to the creation of leading entities on niche markets and boosting the digitalization of its portfolio companies.”*

**Roberto Crapelli, Managing Partner at Industry 4.0 Fund,** commented on the acquisition: *“Standing before EPI and Calcioshop is an opportunity for growth thanks to the use of digital technologies on a market worth 500 million euros in Italy and 800 million in Germany. Industry 4.0 Fund once again confirms its investment strategy, which will speed up growth in value through the use of new technologies.”*

Transaction advisor to EPI in operation structuring and negotiation was **T8P Consulting (Cataldo Tedone)**; financial and tax due diligence was provided by **Mac Lab (Marco Spingardi)**, and employment law due diligence by **Geco & Associati (Nicola Pezone)**; the legal aspects were managed by the law office **Andersen in Italy (Francesco Inturri)**.

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#### **Quadrivio Group | Industry 4.0 Fund**

Quadrivio Group is a company active in the alternative investments realm. The group has been operating in private equity for over 20 years. Managed and promoted in co-partnership with Roberto Crapelli, Industry 4.0 Fund invests in digitalizing SMEs, supporting them for international growth and in adopting 4.0 technologies. The management team is made up of Alessandro Binello, Walter Ricciotti, Roberto Crapelli and Pietro Paparoni, with assistance from a highly specialized senior advisory board. As of today, Industry 4.0 Fund has invested in: F&DE Group, a leading entity in services to hotel catering (fedegroup.it); Rototech, an Italian company that designs and produces plastic parts for the industrial, construction and farming sectors (rototech.it); EPI, a ‘brick and click’ enterprise that manages the official physical and online stores for top Italian football clubs and other prominent international brands (episrl.it); and Texbond, one of the main European manufacturers of polypropylene nonwoven fabrics for special uses (texbondspa.com).

Info: [www.quadriviogroup.com](http://www.quadriviogroup.com) | [www.industry4zerofund.com](http://www.industry4zerofund.com)

#### **EPI**

EPI is a ‘brick and click’ company that manages the official physical and online stores for top Italian football clubs and other prominent international brands. The company is also the official licensee for customizable products. Founded in 1996, EPI began operating in sports merchandising by mail order. It set out from Formula 1 and then expanded into the soccer world in 2002, the year when its first official online channels focusing on the individual football clubs were launched, with complete in-house management. The firm handles the entire sales process: from purchase planning through to delivery to the end consumer.

[www.episrl.it](http://www.episrl.it)

#### **CALCIOSHOP**

Calcioshop is an e-commerce enterprise specialized in retailing soccer kit, equipment and apparel. It is helmed by Free Time Management Group, which has been supplying team-sport products for over 35 years.

Info: [www.calcioshop.it](http://www.calcioshop.it)

