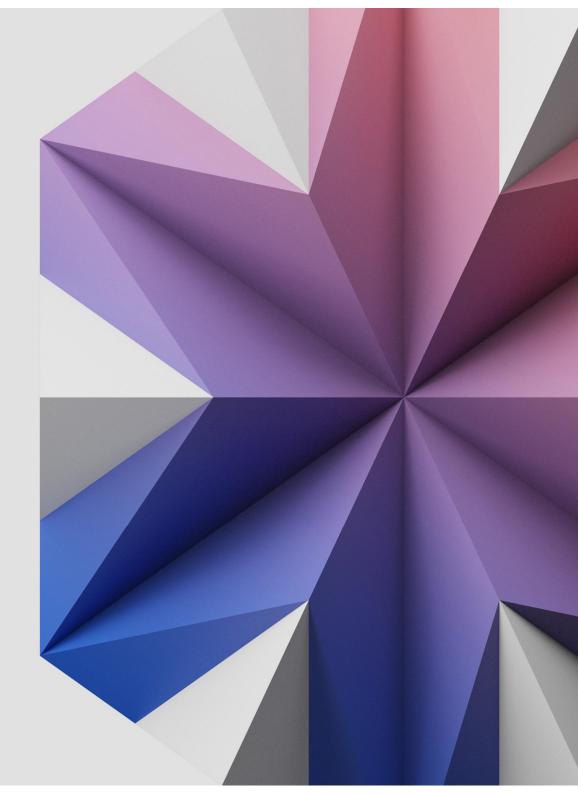
# **ASCENTIAL**

Act today, win tomorrow.

### Half Year Results

For the six months ended 30 June 2022

1 August 2022



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# Agenda

01

Results Summary
Duncan Painter

02

**Financials** Mandy Gradden

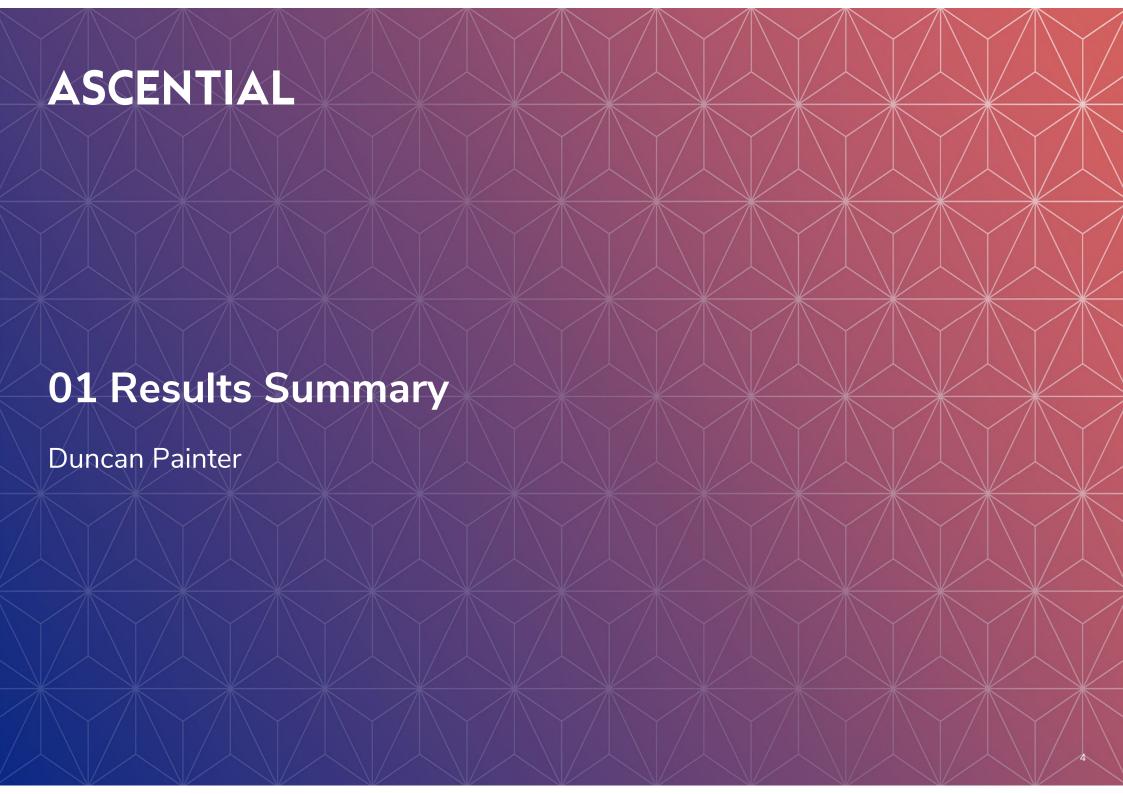
03
Outlook
Duncan Painter

04

Q&A

05

Appendix



# H122 highlights

- Continuing structural growth and bounce-back from major events.
- Digital Commerce
  - Strong revenue growth, despite global marketplace headwinds:
    - Organic: +15% (Execution: +19%)
    - Proforma: +19% (Execution +23%)
  - Further expansion of addressable market, with the acquisitions in Germany and Southeast Asia.
  - Acceleration of investment in capabilities.
- Product Design acceleration continues (revenue +14%), with strong subscription billings driven by non-fashion verticals.
- Marketing saw significant growth (revenue +88%), through return of Lions festival, with considerable delegate and sponsorship participation, bringing overall revenue in line with 2019.
- Retail & Financial Services also grew very strongly (revenue +74%), through continued resurgence of Money20/20 Europe, following return last year, comfortably exceeding 2019 revenue levels.



Total revenue

### £261m (£154m)

Reported growth	69%
Organic growth	42% 🛕



### Adjusted EBITDA

### £67m (£43m)

Reported growth	57%
Organic growth	38% 🙏

### 2022 priorities and progress



# **Expand Digital Commerce** global leadership

- Forward investment to build capacity for growth acceleration.
- Strengthening sales and marketing, leadership and capabilities to win more customers.
- Positive traction on cross sell activity.
- Edge Digital Shelf: shifting focus to top marketplaces to deliver mission and increase profits.



# Build on marketplace partnerships

- Acquisitions of Sellics and Intrepid enhancing capabilities and expanding partnerships with leading marketplaces (Shopee & Lazada).
- Strong half for new releases, partnership enhancements and the co-launch with Amazon of Stream at Cannes Lions was a seminal moment.



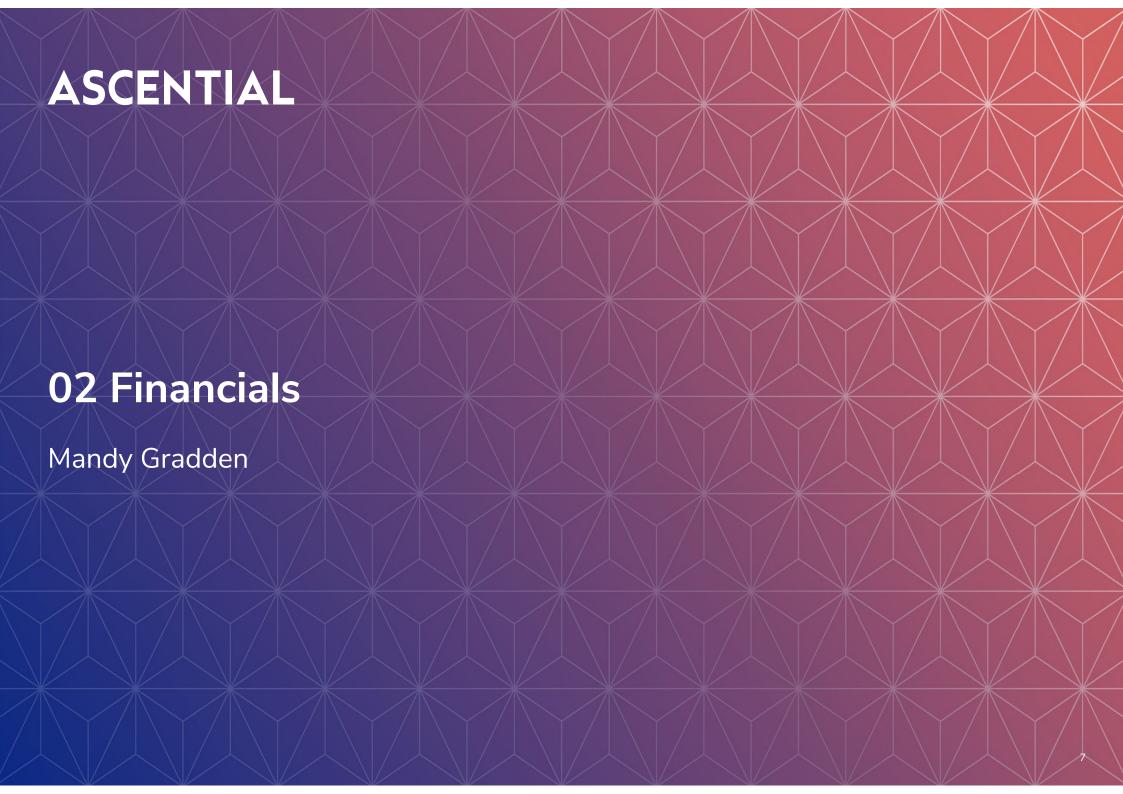
# Accelerate Product Design revenue growth

- Record revenue growth of 14% in H1 (building on 7% in 2021).
- Subscription billings up 11% (10% in 2021).
- Billings from products for new verticals up 25% and fashion product up.



# Maximise return of live events

- Lions exceeded pre-pandemic levels of revenue (+6% vs 2019).
- Money20/20 Europe exceeded prepandemic levels of revenue (+30% vs 2019).



### Headlines of the half

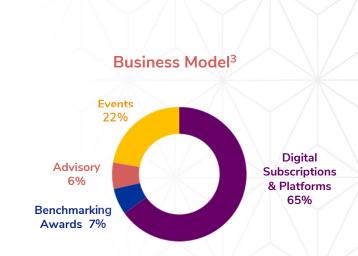
#### Adjusted results (£m)

	H122	H121*	Reported growth	Organic growth	Proforma growth
Revenue	260.7	154.3	69%	42%	40%
Operating costs	(193.5)	(111.5)	(74%)	(44%)	(49%)
EBITDA	67.2	42.8	57%	38%	20%
EBITDA margin	25.8%	27.8%			
Depreciation and amortisation	(12.6)	(9.0)			
Operating profit	54.6	33.8			
Associates	(1.0)	(0.9)			
Net finance costs	(5.2)	(9.5)			
Profit before tax	48.4	23.4			
Tax	(12.2)	-			
PAT – Continuing operations	36.2	23.4			
Minority interest	(0.9)	(0.4)			
PAT – Discontinued operations	-	5.8			
PAT – Total operations	35.3	28.8			
Diluted EPS – Continuing operations	8.0p	5.7p			

- Group results in line with expectations.
- Revenue grew by £106.4m and EBITDA grew by £24.4m - resulting in strong reported, organic and proforma growth rates.
- Effective tax rate on adjusted profits of 25.3%.
- Diluted EPS from continuing operations 8.0p.
- Good cash generation with operating cash conversion of 128%.
- Net debt of £172.7m, leverage 1.6x EBITDA.
- No interim dividend declared for 2022
  - Capital preserved for investment and acquisitions to support growth strategy
  - The Board will keep shareholder cash returns continually under review

# Segmental overview H122

Segment	H1 22 Revenue	Revenue Mix <sup>3</sup>		venue owth <sup>1</sup>	EBITDA <sup>2</sup>	Margin
Digital Commerce	£95m	42%	<b>^</b>	15%	£2m	2%
Intelligence & Events						
Product Design	£51m	229%	<b>A</b>	14%	£24m	48%
Marketing	£81m	21%	<b>A</b>	88%	£43m	54%
Retail & Financial Services	£34m	15%	<b>A</b>	74%	£9m	26%
Total	£261m		<b>A</b>	42%	£67m	26%



<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Adjusted EBITDA (total includes Group costs of £11m) <sup>3</sup> LTM June 2022 (Continuing basis)

### **Digital Commerce**

### H1 Revenue Measurement & Benchmarking

#### 15% organic revenue growth

- Strong trajectory continues despite tough economic backdrop and H121 comparatives
- Execution up 19% organic (23% proforma)
- Measure & Benchmarking up 6%

Acquisition of Execution products Sellics and Intrepid in the period

#### **KPIs**

Execution

- Net Revenue Retention: >105% (2021: >110%)
- >200 new enterprise customers
- >1,600 new challenger brand customers



Measurement & Benchmarking



**Execution Platform** 

flywheel dz puo perpetua ASR Sellics





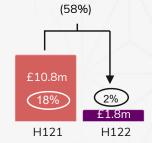




EDGE & YIMIAN III Intellibrand

Advisory **Business** model1 +15% H1 revenue and organic growth £95.1m

H1 Adjusted EBITDA, organic growth and margin



H122

£59.7m

H121

**Digital Subscriptions** 

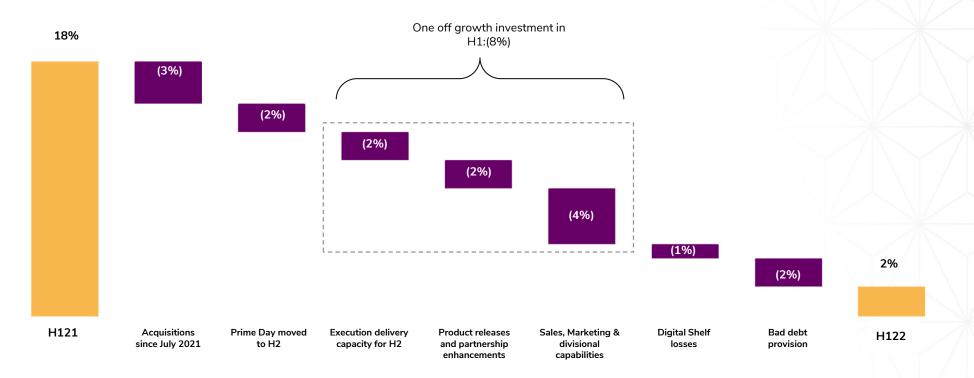
& Platforms

<sup>1</sup>LTM June 2022 Ascential | Half Year Results 2022 10

# **Digital Commerce Margin Evolution**

Investing for growth ahead of a second-half weighted revenue expectation

#### Reported EBITDA margin bridge



# **Product Design**

#### Growth driven through new verticals

- Non Fashion
  - o now 45% of subscription base
  - o growing 25%
- Fashion
  - o now 55% of subscription base
  - growing 2%

#### **KPIs**

- Subscription billings +11%
- Renewal Rate: >95%
- Maintained record NPS



Consumer Insight



**Product Trends** 

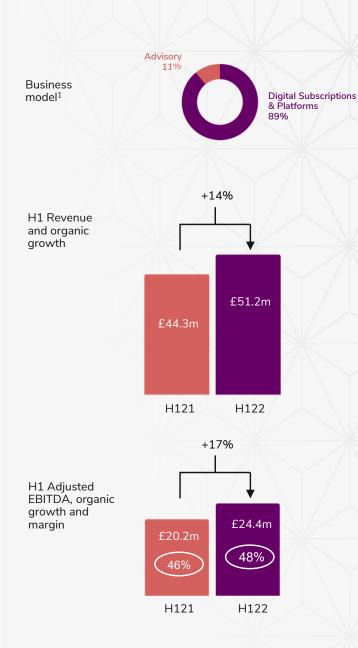


**Trading Strategy** 

**WGSN** 

coloro

START



# Marketing

Strong return of Cannes Lions physical festival

Revenue grew 6% vs 2019

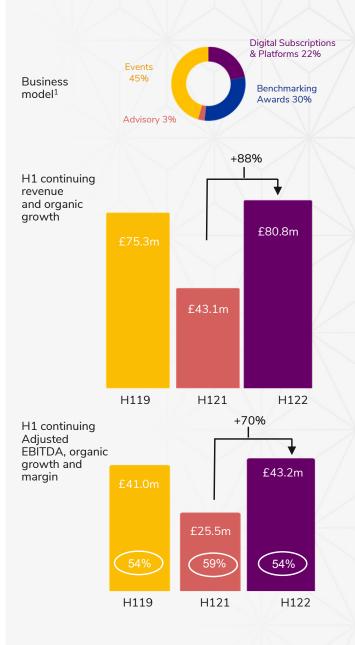
Lions' subscriptions (The Work and Membership) up >40%

WARC's strong, subscription based, growth continues, up 23%

#### **KPIs**

- Lions: 25k (2021: 29k) award entries
- Lions: attendees down 6% vs 2019 with Asian markets not yet fully returned
- WARC: retention rate >95%
- The Work: retention rate >95%





### **Retail & Financial Services**

Money20/20 Europe returns successfully

Revenue +30% vs 2019 Europe edition

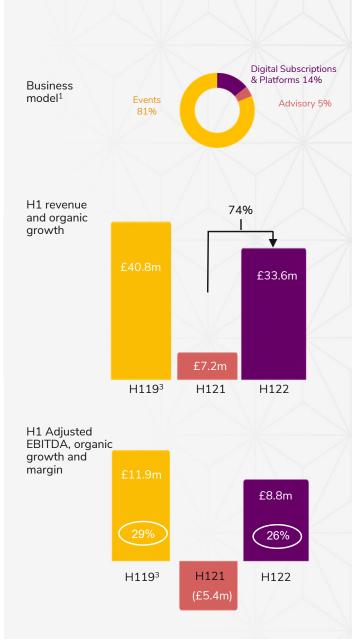
All Retail events ran in H1 (World Retail Congress, Retail Week Awards and Retail Week Live) **KPIs** 

Money20/20 Europe

Attendees: >7,500

– Meetings: >14,500





<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Includes Money20/20 Asia (£6.7m revenue/£2.7m EBITDA)

### Adjusting items

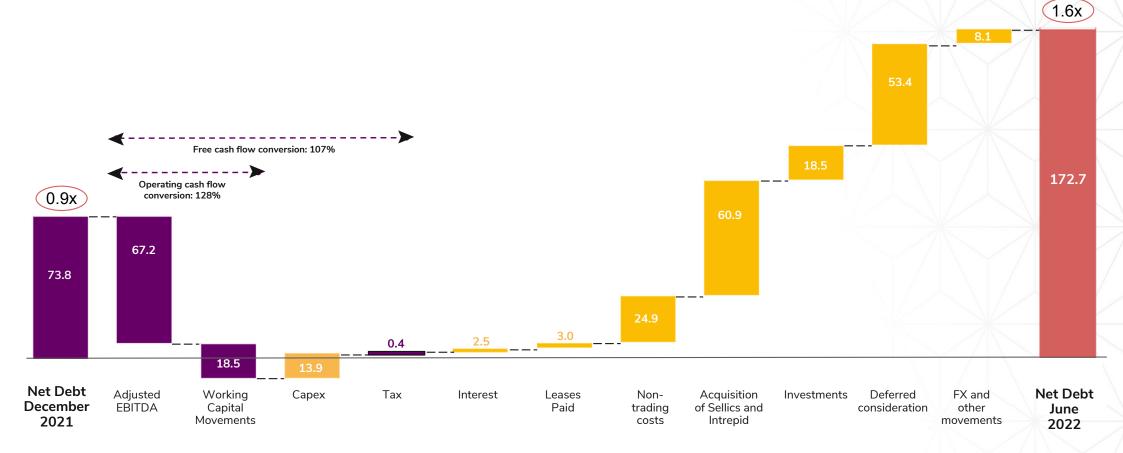
£m	H122	H121
Impairment of intangibles	31.4	-
Deferred consideration	7.6	9.7
Transaction and integration costs	12.8	2.7
ERP implementation costs	6.4	3.9
Salesforce implementation costs	6.9	2.5
Reversal of property impairments and onerous contracts	(0.5)	-
Total non-trading items	64.6	18.8
Amortisation of acquired intangibles	17.5	14.7
Share-based payments	7.6	2.7
Total adjusting items	89.7	36.2

#### Non-trading costs include:

- £31.4m non-cash impairment charge driven by the Edge Digital Shelf.
- £7.6m of deferred consideration\* relating mainly to WhyteSpyder, OneSpace, 4K Miles, DZ and Perpetua.
- £12.8m of transaction and integration costs comprise professional fees, advisory services and integration costs, including those of the review process evaluating the merits of a managed separation of certain assets of the Group referred to in our announcement of April 2022.
- £13.3m relates to the implementation costs of the new Salesforce and ERP systems (that can no longer be capitalised under the 2021 IFRIC interpretation of IAS 38).

<sup>\*</sup>Deferred consideration relates to (a) the revaluation of earnouts and (b) consideration contingent on continued employment.

# Net debt bridge



# Capital allocation consideration

1

### **Organic investment**

- Capex investment at 5-6% of revenue.
- £13.9m of capex in H1 2022 chiefly on product development in Digital Commerce.

2



#### M&A

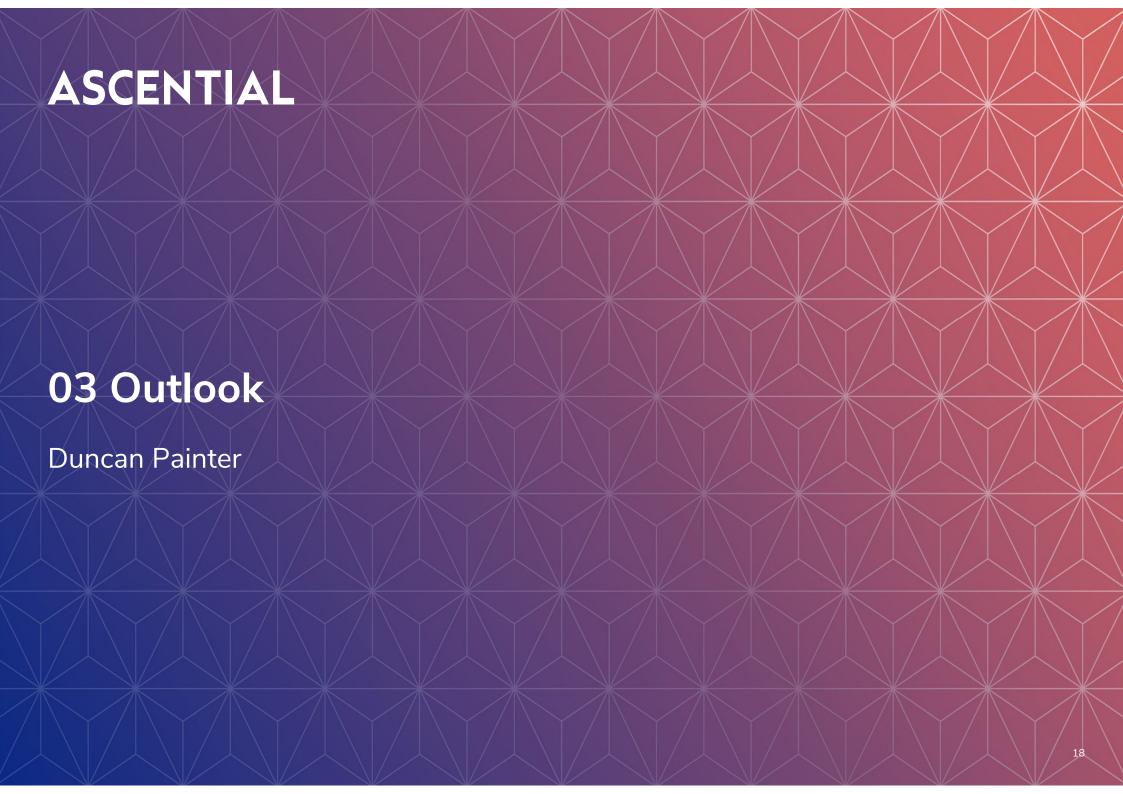
- £133m invested in H1 2022:
  - £60.9m for new acquisitions of Sellics and Intrepid.
  - £18.5m paid for investments, chiefly in Hudson.
  - £53.4m paid for deferred consideration.
- Future deferred consideration estimated at c.£150m (over 2023-2026) of which £80.7m is recorded as a liability at June 2021.

3



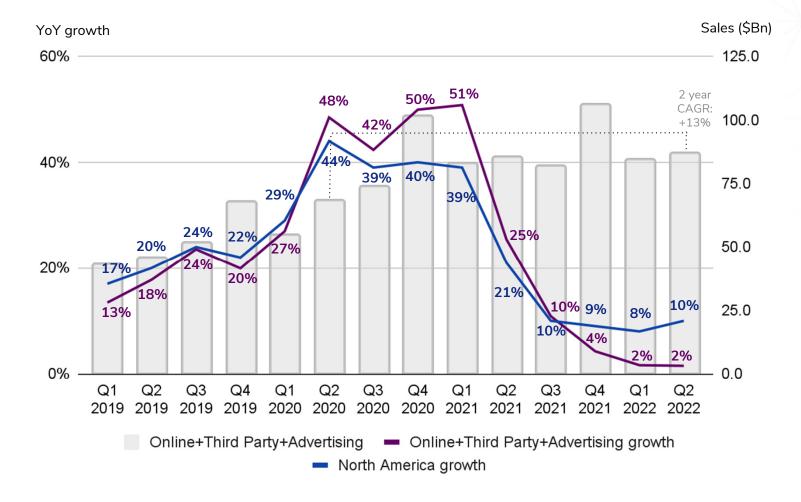
#### Shareholder returns

- Cash prioritised for investment and M&A opportunities:
  - o no dividend declared for H1 2022.
- The Board will keep capital allocation priorities, including shareholder cash returns, continually under review.



### Marketplace performance

### **Amazon**



North America, powerhouse for Amazon and us, returned to growth (10% growth vs 5% expectation\*) even with Prime Day move.

Amazon Q3 guidance is for 13-17% revenue growth.

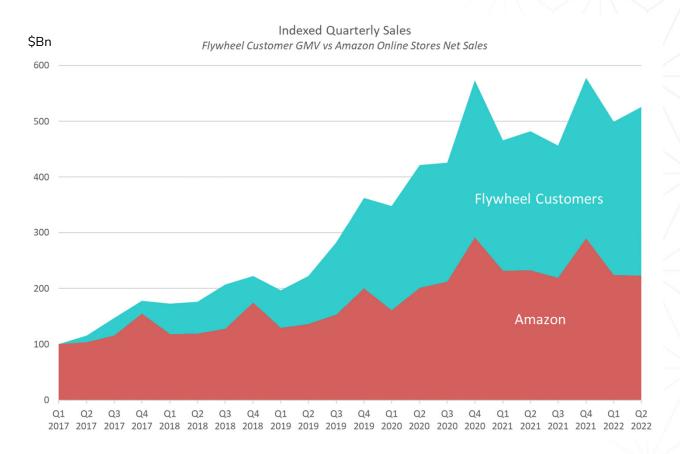
All of the key hypotheses and drivers of May 2021 shareholder letter already proven or remain firmly intact.

19

Ascential | Half Year Results 2022 Source: Edgewater (July 2022)

# Our Digital Commerce platform means our customers win

- Flywheel customers' sales are up 5x since Q1 2017 compared to an Amazon average of 2x.
- In Q2 2022, Flywheel customer global sales grew 9.1% YoY while Amazon global online store sales were flat.
- Across the board we achieve 2x better performance for our customers but in our core categories this exceeds 3x.
- Our strategy is clear. We shall fully leverage our group product mix to enable us to gain competitive advantage and execute faster.



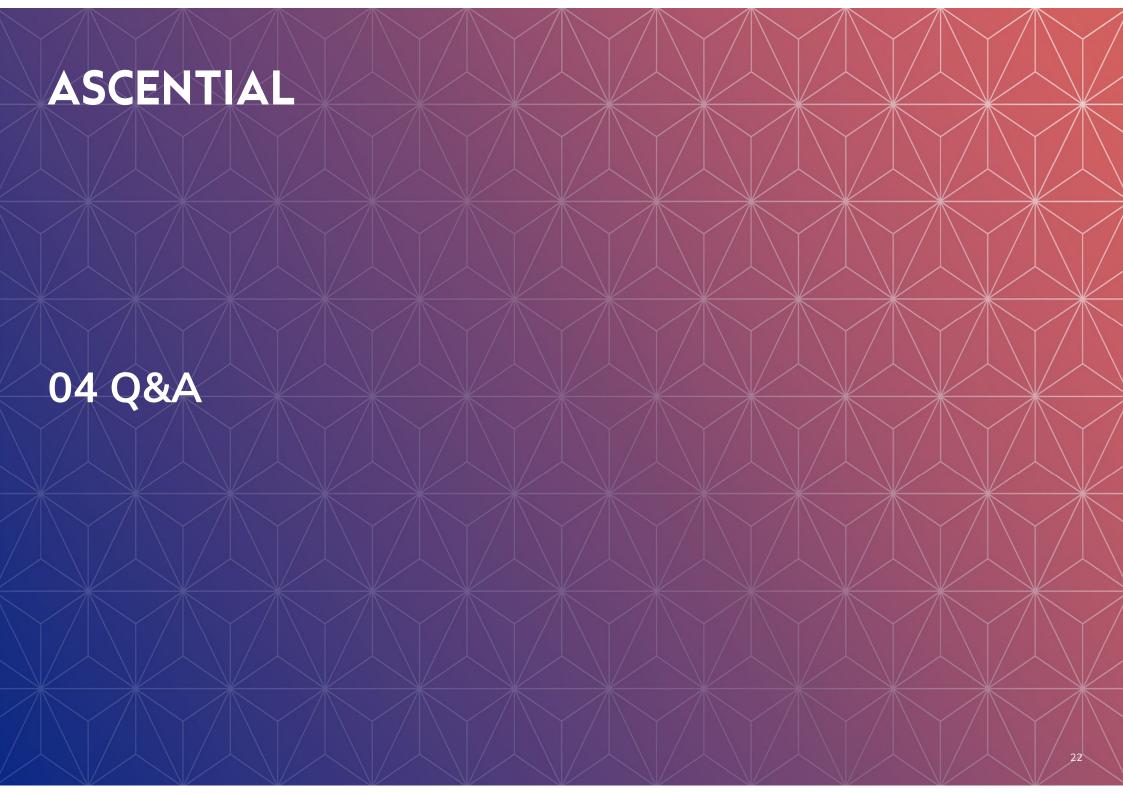
# Outlook and current trading

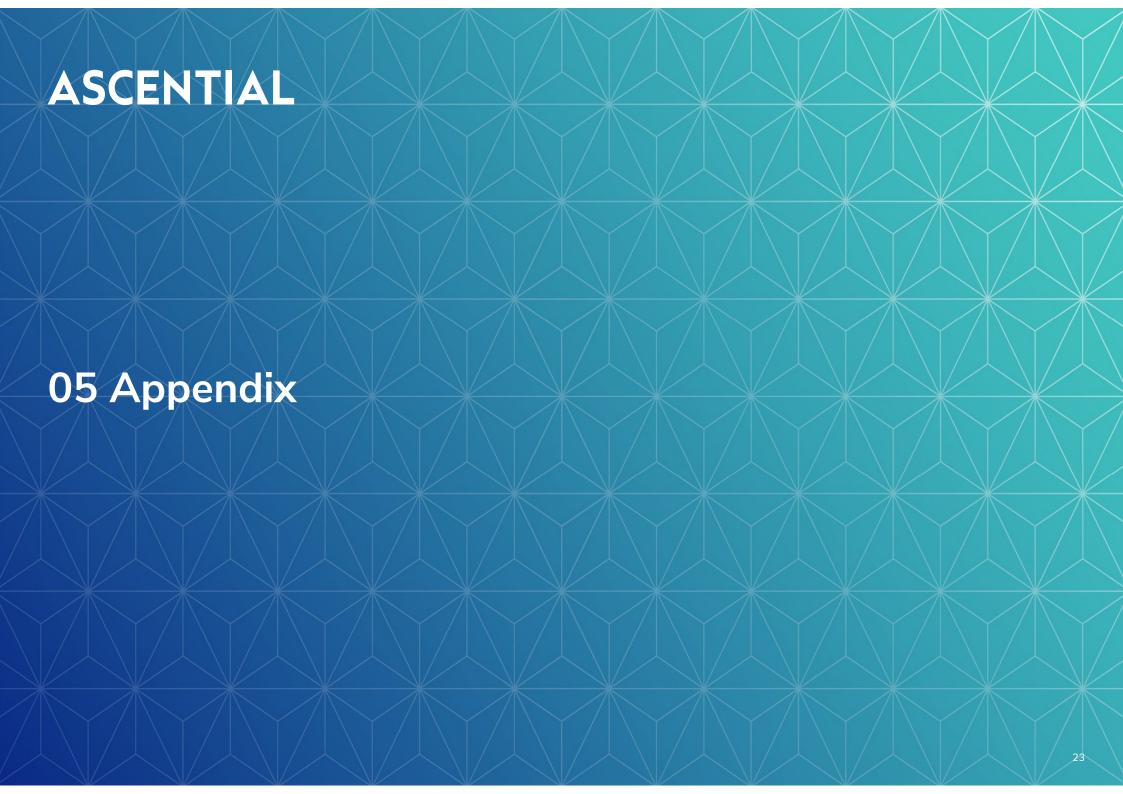
"Digital Commerce and Product Design remain set to deliver strong levels of growth for the full year.

For Marketing and Retail & Financial Services we expect to see continued recovery as we navigate beyond the pandemic.

Despite the risks associated with the current economic environment, our businesses remain well set for the year, underpinned by high levels of digital and subscription revenues and multiple growth levers.

Our ability to execute our strategy, combined with structural growth in our end markets and the success of our marquee events, underpins the Board's continued confidence in our prospects for future success."





# Reported results

£m		H122			H121	
	Adjusted results	Adjusting items	Statutory results	Adjusted results	Adjusting items	Statutory results
Revenue	260.7	-	260.7	154.3	-	154.3
Adjusted EBITDA	67.2	-	67.2	42.8	-	42.8
Adjusted EBITDA Margin	25.8%	-	25.8%	27.8%	-	27.8%
Depreciation	(12.6)	-	(12.6)	(9.0)	-//\\\	(9.0)
Amortisation	-	(17.5)	(17.5)	-	(14.7)	(14.7)
Share-based payments	-	(7.6)	(7.6)	- 1	(2.7)	(2.7)
Non-trading items	-	(64.6)	(64.6)	-	(18.8)	(18.8)
Operating profit	54.6	(89.7)	(35.1)	33.8	(36.2)	(2.4)
Associates and JVs	(1.0)	(0.3)	(1.3)	(0.9)		(0.9)
Net finance costs	(5.2)	-	(5.2)	(9.5)	(0.8)	(10.3)
Profit before tax	48.4	(90.0)	(41.6)	23.4	(37.0)	(13.6)
Tax	(12.2)	15.8	3.6	-	2.6	2.6
Effective tax rate	25.3%	17.5%	8.5%	-	7.0%	19.1%
Profit after tax – continuing operations	36.2	(74.2)	(38.0)	23.4	(34.4)	(11.0)
Profit after tax - discontinued operations	-	(0.4)	(0.4)	5.8	222.0	227.8
Profit after tax - total operations	36.2	(74.6)	(38.4)	29.2	187.6	216.8
Minority interest	0.9	(1.1)	(0.2)	0.4	-7	0.4
Diluted EPS – continuing operations	8.0p	(16.6p)	(8.6p)	5.7p	(8.6p)	(2.9p)

# Segmental results

£m	Revenue Adjusted EBITDA		Revenue		Adjusted EBITDA margin				
	H122	H221	H121	H122	H221	H121	H122	H221	H121
Digital Commerce	95.1	87.6	59.7	1.8	20.3	10.8	2%	23%	18%
Product Design	51.2	47.0	44.3	24.4	21.1	20.2	48%	45%	46%
Marketing Segment	80.8	13.4	43.1	43.2	0.1	25.5	54%	1%	59%
Retail & Financial Services	33.6	47.0	7.2	8.8	16.3	(5.4)	26%	35%	nm
Corporate Costs	-	-	-	(11.0)	(11.7)	(8.3)	-	-	-
Total continuing operations	260.7	195.0	154.3	67.2	46.1	42.8	25.8%	23.5%	27.8%
Discontinued operations - MediaLink	-	23.2	20.8	ı	7.6	5.6	-	33%	27%
Discontinued operations - BEP	-	-	4.8	-	-	2.4	-	-	50%
Total operations	260.7	218.2	179.9	67.2	53.7	50.8	25.8%	24.6%	28.5%

### **Deferred consideration**

£m	H122	2021
Balance sheet liability at start of the period	102.9	136.2
Additions	12.9	49.7
Acquisition—related employment costs accrued in the period	12.2	29.9
Revaluation of liability	(5.6)	5.2
Cash paid	(53.4)	(127.0)
Unwind of discount on deferred consideration	4.2	9.0
FX	7.5	(0.1)
Balance sheet liability at end of period	80.7	102.9

Expected future cash payable	c.150	c.150
- in 2022	-	c.55
- in 2023	c.50	c.45
- in 2024	c.40	c.30
- 2025 and thereafter	c.60	c.20

- Additions in the half relate to
  - Sellics
  - Intrepid
- Expected future earnouts payable amount to c.£150m over the next four years
  - based on current performance expectations of acquired businesses,
  - of which £80.7m is recorded as a liability at June 2022.

Note: In 2021 we acquired 51% of ASR and have the option to purchase the remaining two 24.5% stakes between July 2022 and June 2025 on a predetermined multiple of trailing EBITDA. This is an option and is therefore not treated as deferred consideration.

### Adjusted net finance costs

£m	H122	H121
Interest expense	(3.1)	(4.6)
Interest receivable	0.9	1.7
Amortisation of arrangement fees	(0.4)	(0.4)
Derivative financial instruments	1.9	-
Foreign exchange	0.1	(0.2)
Unwind of discount on:		
- deferred consideration	(4.1)	(5.5)
- lease liabilities	(0.5)	(0.4)
- property provisions	-	(0.1)
Net finance costs	(5.2)	(9.5)

- Effective annual interest rate on borrowings in H122: 2.1% (H121: 2.8%).
- Reduction in interest expense due to lower leverage vs H1 2021
- Gain on derivative financial instruments relates to Euro and Dollar interest rate caps.
- Discount unwind on deferred consideration is lower as older earnout agreements are settled, partly offset by new acquisitions.

### **Debt facilities**

	Jun 20	Jun 2022		Dec 2021		
	£m	Interest margin	£m	Interest margin		
Sterling borrowings	-	-	-	-		
Dollar borrowings	(186.4)	2.5%	(68.1)	2.0%		
Euro borrowings	(78.8)	1.2%	(92.4)	2.0%		
Total debt drawn	(265.2)	2.1%	(160.5)	2.0%		
Unamortised arrangement fees	2.0		2.4			
Derivatives	2.1		0.2			
Cash	88.4		84.1			
Net debt	(172.7)		(73.8)			
Total facilities	450.0		450.0			
Less total debt	(265.2)		(160.5)			
Cash	88.4		84.1			
Available liquidity	273.2		373.6			

- In January 2020 we entered into a £450m multi-currency RCF with a 5-year maturity.
- Leverage covenant of 3.25x (with acquisition spikes).
- Interest cover covenant of 3.00x.
- As at June 2022 the interest margin was
   1.2% over LIBOR, (expected to rise to
   1.6% as leverage has increased).
- Derivative balance relates to interest rate caps.

### **Taxation**

£m		H122			H121 restated		
	Adjusted results	Adjusting items	Statutory results	Adjusted results	Adjusting items	Statutory results	
Continuing operation	ıs						
PBT	48.4	(90.0)	(41.6)	23.4	(37.0)	(13.6)	
Tax	(12.2)	15.8	3.6	-	2.6	2.6	
Effective tax rate	25.3%	17.5%	8.5%	-	7.0%	19.1%	
Total operations							
Tax refunded/(paid)			0.4			(3.5)	

#### Tax charge

Adjusted H1 effective tax rate of 25.3%.

- Higher levels of profits arising in US, compared with UK increases the ETR. (US profits taxed at 26% vs UK profits at 19%).
- Expect the ETR to be approximately 25-27% in the medium term with potential to increase if US federal tax rates are increased above 21%.
- H121 is restated for the disposal of MediaLink. The nil tax on Adjusted results comprises:
  - o a charge of £4.3m on Adjusted profits, net of
  - o a tax credit from discrete items of £4.3m (as reported at the previous half).

#### Tax paid

- Cash tax was a net refund of £0.4m (H121: £3.5m payment).
- Cash tax will continue to benefit from the utilisation of UK and US losses and other deferred tax assets of £84.6m (H121 £77.7m) over more than 10 years (but with the majority expected to be recovered in the next four years).

### **Currency sensitivity and rates**

### Sensitivity to a 1% movement in exchange rates

		Revenue	Costs	EBITDA
H122	USD	£1.0m	(£0.7m)	£0.3m
	Euro	£1.1m	(£0.2m)	£0.9m
2021	USD	£1.9m	(£1.0m)	£0.9m
	Euro	£0.6m	(£0.1m)	£0.5m
H121	USD	£0.9m	(£0.5m)	£0.4m
	Euro	£0.4m	(£0.1m)	£0.3m

### Exchange rates

	Weighted average	Year end
		7
	USD	USD
	1.32	
H122		
	Euro	Euro
	1.17	1.16
	USD	USD
	1.37	1.35
2021		
	Euro 1.17	Euro 1.19
	1.17	1.19
	USD	USD
11404	1.39	1.38
H121	Euro	Furo
	1.17	Euro 1.16
	1.17	

### Geographical exposure

Revenue by location of customer



# **Cash flow**

Continuing operations £m	H122	H121
Adjusted EBITDA	67.2	42.8
Working capital movements – media reimbursables	6.7	20.1
Working capital movements – other	11.8	13.6
Operating cash flow	85.7	76.5
% Operating cash flow conversion	128%	179%
Capex	(13.9)	(8.8)
Tax	0.4	(3.5)
Free cash flow	72.2	64.2
% Free cash flow conversion	107%	150%

Discontinued operations £m	H122	H121
Adjusted EBITDA	-	8.0
Working capital movements	-	1.5
Operating cash flow	-	9.5
% Operating cash flow conversion	-	119%
Free cash flow	-	9.5
% Free cash flow conversion	-	119%

Total operations £m	H122	H121
Free cash flow	72.2	73.7
Non-trading costs paid	(24.9)	(9.0)
Acquisition of investments	(18.5)	(28.7)
Acquisition consideration paid (including earnouts)	(114.3)	(172.5)
Disposal (costs)/proceeds received	(0.4)	216.8
Cash flow before financing activities	(85.9)	80.3
Dividends paid to non-controlling interest	(1.2)	(0.6)
Interest	(2.5)	(4.8)
Lease liabilities paid	(3.0)	(3.6)
Shares issued, sold or repurchased	-	0.3
Debt drawn/(repaid)	91.8	(70.0)
Net cash flow	(0.8)	1.6
Opening cash balance	84.1	80.2
FX	5.1	(0.7)
Closing cash balance	88.4	81.1
Unamortised fees and derivatives	4.1	2.9
Debt	(265.2)	(236.6)
Net debt	(172.7)	(152.6)

### **Balance sheet**

£m	Jun 2022	Jun 2021	Dec 2021
Assets			
Non-current assets			
Intangible assets	979.7	735.1	878.9
Property, plant and equipment	5.1	4.4	5.4
Lease assets (IFRS 16)	22.3	13.3	21.8
Investments	92.8	59.1	82.2
Investment property	0.6	0.9	0.6
Deferred tax assets	63.2	59.0	57.7
Other receivables	2.1	32.0	
Total non-current assets	1,165.8	903.8	1,046.6
Current assets			
Inventories	3.5	1.5	1.9
Trade and other receivables <sup>1</sup>	302.9	186.2	272.6
Current tax asset	-	1.4	_
Cash	88.4	81.1	84.1
Total current assets	394.8	270.2	358.6

	Jun 2022	Jun 2021	Dec 2021
Liabilities			
Trade and other payables <sup>2</sup>	218.9	142.9	198.4
Deferred income	121.9	106.5	101.0
Deferred and contingent consideration	80.7	64.4	102.9
Lease liabilities (IFRS 16)	26.4	17.3	25.2
Current tax liabilities	5.9	-	3.6
Borrowings	263.2	233.8	158.1
Deferred tax liabilities	14.1	7.0	6.5
Provisions	3.0	6.2	3.9
Total liabilities	734.1	578.1	599.6
		•	

 $<sup>^1</sup>$  Includes £123m (Dec 2021: £138m) of media reimbursable receivables.  $^2$  Includes £116m (Dec 2021: £124m) of media reimbursable payables.

# ASCENTIAL

# Thank you

