

**Award for Best Financial Information**

**2009**

**Press release**

**27 October 2009**

**(embargo till 19h30)**

## **Introduction**

For the 49<sup>th</sup> time, the Belgian Association of Financial Analysts has granted its annual *Award for Best Financial Information*. The award aims to reward the Belgian listed companies that stand out in terms of communication policy, transparency and investor relations.

Over the past few months, 37 financial analysts and 5 fund managers have analysed how the Belgian listed companies communicate with the financial markets and how they make financial information available to the investors community. It has to be stressed that the Award still gets tremendous support from the vast majority of the Belgian analysts and several other financial specialists. Their help is a key feature of the Award and the Belgian Association of Financial Analysts would sincerely like to thank all that have participated in the process this year.

Hans Buysse, President of ABAF/BVFA: “Good financial communication remains a necessity despite the difficult times the markets have been going through. That said, we did not have the impression that the companies scaled back their efforts in terms of financial communication or investor relations. On the contrary, we are particularly pleased with the progress that a number of small- and midcaps keep making. For these smaller companies in particular, financial communication remains a necessity in order to attract the attention of national en international, small and larger investors.”

Over the past few weeks, 50 companies were screened and ranked. Almost 90.0% of the companies were analysed by at least 3 analysts. The equity houses that participated in the process were the following: Bank Degroof, Bank Delen, BNP Paribas Fortis Bank, De Belegger, Delta Lloyd Bank, ING, KBC Securities, SG Private Banking, ING and Value Square. The work was completed by fund managers from BNP Paribas Fortis, Dexia AM, KBC AM, Petercam and Quest Management.

## **Results**

The main prize is the overall *Award for Best Financial Information*.

The companies that have won the Award over the past three years are not eligible for the Award this year. This means that Delhaize (Award 2008), Solvay (2007) and KBC (2006) could not win the Award in 2009.

The Association also grants 4 sub-awards:

- ❖ Best Annual Report
- ❖ Best Press Releases
- ❖ Best Investor Relations
- ❖ Best Website

The 2009 winners for this year's Award for Best Financial Information are the following:

### **Best Annual Report**

<b>1.</b>	<b>Bekaert</b>	<b>83.8 / 100</b>
2.	Recticel	82.5 / 100
3.	AB-InBev	80.0 / 100
4	Solvay	78.8 / 100
5.	NPM/CNP	77.5 / 100

Bekaert is not publishing its annual report anymore the way the group used to do. The annual report is now an "online report". That did not mean that the new annual report was not highly applauded. On the contrary, Bekaert's annual report came out on top. The in-depth description of the business and the clear-cut strategic information on what the group tries to achieve was highly appreciated. Last year's winner Recticel came in second thereby confirming its exemplary role as a small cap.

### Best Press Releases

1.	<b>AB-InBev</b>	<b>85.0 / 100</b>
2.	Mobistar	83.0 / 100
3.	Cofinimmo	80.0 / 100
3.	Solvay	80.0 / 100
5.	Agfa-Gevaert	77.5 / 100

Last year's winner AB-InBev came out first again. The detailed information with regard to the different markets the group is active in, its market shares and the volumes that are produced remain very convincing.

### Best Investor Relations

1.	<b>Umicore</b>	<b>156.3 / 100</b>
2.	Bekaert	151.1 / 100
3.	Solvay	150.7 / 100
4.	Delhaize	149.6 / 100
5.	Hansen	148.0 / 100

The scores given by the equity analysts for "Investor Relations" were completed with the scores from a number of fund managers, namely from BNP Paribas Fortis, Dexia, KBC, Petercam and Quest Management.

Umicore came out on top again as the group did last year. We would nonetheless like to draw the attention to the fact that both Hansen (5<sup>th</sup> place) and Thrombogenics (6<sup>th</sup>) also got a very good score despite their small and midcap status. It again shows that smaller companies can also communicate in a good manner with the financial markets.

**Best website**

<b>1.</b>	<b>KBC</b>	<b>87.7 / 100</b>
2.	GIMV	86.6 / 100
3.	Hansen	85.0 / 100
4.	NPM/CNP	84.5 / 100
5.	Umicore	84.3 / 100
5.	Bekaert	84.3 / 100

KBC Groep scored well for each of the five sub-criteria screened.

**The Award for Best Financial Information****2009**

<b>1.</b>	<b>Bekaert</b>	<b>379.1 / 500</b>
<b>2.</b>	<b>Hansen</b>	<b>369.7 / 500</b>
<b>3.</b>	<b>Umicore</b>	<b>364.3 / 500</b>
<b>4.</b>	<b>AB-InBev</b>	<b>364.3 / 500</b>
<b>5.</b>	<b>Recticel</b>	<b>353.7 / 500</b>

Adding all up leads to the highest score for Solvay with a total of 393 points on a theoretical maximum of 500 points. However, having won the Award two years ago, Solvay was not eligible this year and the overall Award therefore goes to Bekaert.

Luc Van der Elst, Vice President of the Association: “Bekaert is a worthy winner given the commitment shown by the group for years and years now to keep investing in good financial communication and good investor relations. That said, we also like to applaud the performance of the two smaller companies. Hansen that came out second and Recticel that came out fifth.”

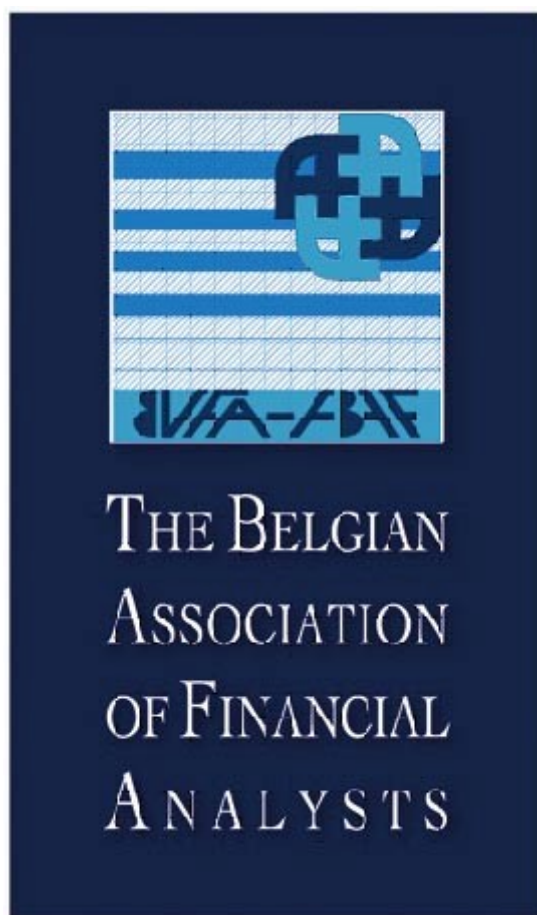
Hans Buysse, President of ABAF/BVFA: “We would again like to thank everybody who supported the 2009 Award for Best Financial Information. Not only the participating analysts for their commitment but also the companies that continue to invest in financial communication.”

The complete set of results will be made available on the website of our Association ([www.abaf-bvfa.be](http://www.abaf-bvfa.be)) as soon as possible.

For more information regarding the Award for Best Financial Information, please contact:

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