

# The IPO slate for 2021 gets heavy

BY

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Good morning, Term Sheet readers.

Last week was one to remember for tech companies going public: DoorDash, Airbnb, and C3.ai all more than doubled in their initial public offerings, valuing the combined companies upward of \$140 billion on an undiluted basis as of Monday. The enormous pops fanned criticism once more that IPOs were being mispriced and that money was being left on the table (and while I won't go into it now, there are some worthy reads arguing some of this criticism is overdone).

Now after seeing these extreme first-day pops, unicorns Affirm and Roblox have both reportedly pushed their listing timetable back to 2021, per the Wall Street Journal. Roblox in particular is said to be seeking a way to potentially take advantage of a pop. It hasn't helped that the Securities and Exchange Commission has been flooded with listing filings. The fintech lender and gaming company were previously set to close out the busiest December for IPOs in history.

At any rate, even without companies doing anything to tamp down and capitalize on the first-day pop, the phenomenon may curtail itself naturally if BlackRock CEO Larry Fink's predictions are anything to go by. The chief executive cautioned that "there are going to be many accidents" around the recent IPO ebullience during a fintech conference.

But for now, 2021 is looking to be another bang-up year for startups going public. Names also considering going public include Robinhood, Instacart, Nextdoor, Better.com, Marqeta, Coinbase, Coursera...the list goes on (and SoFi has reportedly considered going public via merger with a SPAC).

**A ROYAL STARTUP INVESTMENT:** There are a lot of folks you don't expect to see investing in startups. At one point it was hedge funds, then celebrities, and then TikTok stars. Oh, and now, the Duchess of Sussex, Meghan Markle, per my colleague Emma Hinchliffe. The new investor put her dollars behind Clevr Blends, a startup making instant milk lattes that has yet to take any outside funding, as part of her broader push to support gender equality. The company is led by a female CEO, Hannah Mendoza. It won't be the royal's last investment, if this story is anything to go by. Read more.

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## VENTURE DEALS

- Grove Collaborative, a San Francisco-based seller of natural home and personal care products, raised \$125 million, raising its valuation to \$1.3 billion. Investors included Counterpoint Global at Morgan Stanley, Sculptor Capital, Nextview Ventures, and G
- Huice, China-based maker of retail software, raised roughly \$100 million in Series C funding. GIC led the round and was joined by investors including Legend Capital, Hillhouse Capital, and SoftBank. Read more.
- Tink, a Swedish-based maker of open banking and API tools, raised €85 million (\$103 million). Dawn Capital and new investor Eurazeo Growth led the round.
- CG Oncology, an Irvine, Calif.-based clinical-stage biopharmaceutical company focused on the development of novel oncolytic immunotherapies, raised \$47 million in Series D funding. Kissei Pharmaceutical led the round and was joined by investors including ORI Healthcare Fund, Camford Capital, and Perseverance Capital Management.
- Indico, a Boston-based maker process automation software, raised \$22 million of Series B funding. Jump Capital and Sandbox Ventures led the round and were joined by .406 Ventures, Osage Venture Partners, Hyperplane Venture Capital, Boston Seed Capital, as well as a new investment from Nationwide's venture capital arm.
- GoFor Industries, a Canadian on-demand and same-day delivery company, raised \$20 million (\$15.7 million) in Series A funding. Builders VC led the round and was joined by investors including MetaProp, GroundBreak Ventures, Plug & Play Ventures and Panache Ventures. Lynn Capital.
- German Bionic, a German startup designing exoskeletons specifically aimed at industrial and physical application, raised \$20 million in Series A funding. Samsung Catalyst Fund and MIG AG led the round.
- Bionic, a Palo Alto, Calif.-based application monitoring company, raised \$17 million in funding. Investors include Battery Ventures and Cyberstarts.
- IRALOGIX, a Pittsburgh, Penn.-based provider of software for IRA accounts, raised \$7.5 million in Series B funding. Great North Labs led the round and was joined by investors including Trog Hawley Capital, Riverfront Ventures, and Circadian Ventures.
- Dreamdata, a Danish company sales and marketing platform using data and algorithms, raised \$4.4 million in funding. InReach Ventures and Crowberry Capital led the round and were joined by Seedcamp, Futuristic.vc, and Preseed Ventures.

- PLNAR, an Austin-based company using A.I. and V.R. in home insurance and inspections, raised \$3.5 million in Series A funding. Investors included Dallas Venture Capital.
- Cledara, a London-based purchase and management platform, raised \$3.4 million in funding. Nauta Capital led the round and was joined by Anthemis.
- IntellectoKids, a London-based maker of educational apps for children, raised \$3 million in Series A funding. Allrise Capital led the round and was joined by investors including Genesis Investments.
- Homebuyer, a Cincinnati, Oh.-based maker of software for digital mortgages to first-time home buyers, raised \$1.4 million in seed funding. Investors included BetterLife Group, Techstars, and Saturn Five.

## **PRIVATE EQUITY**

- Vista Equity Partners agreed to acquire Pluralsight, (NASDAQ: PS) a Silicon Slopes, Ut.-based maker of IT education for workforces, for about \$3.5 billion.
- A group of investors including Blackrock, Mubadala Investment, and Goldman Sachs Group plan to take Calisen, a U.K.-based smart metering company, private in a deal valuing it at about 1.43 billion pounds (\$1.9 billion).
- Apollo Global Management agreed to refinance Alorica, an Irvine, Calif.-based customer service company. Apollo invested \$750 million via equity and debt.
- NEOGOV, backed by Warburg Pincus, acquired PowerDMS, an Orlando, Fla.-based provider of cloud-based compliance software. Financial terms weren't disclosed.

## **EXITS**

- The German government agreed to acquire a 25.1% stake in Hensoldt (ETR: HAG), a German defense supplier, from KKR for 464 million euros (\$562 million), per Reuters.
- Carlyle Group is weighing a potential spinoff for the industrial arm of Nouryon, an Amsterdam-based specialty chemicals firm. A deal could value the arm at \$3 billion or more, per Bloomberg.
- Liberty Hall Capital Partners acquired Comply365, a Beloit, Wis.-based provider of operational content and compliance management for aerospace and rail industries, from Luminate Capital Partners. Financial terms weren't disclosed.

## **OTHER**

- AstraZeneca (LON: AZN) agreed to acquire Alexion Pharmaceuticals (Nasdaq: ALXN), a U.S.-based maker of rare drugs, for \$39 billion.

- Huntington Bancshares (Nasdaq: HBAN) and TCF Financial (Nasdaq: TCF), two U.S.-based regional banks headquartered out of Ohio and Michigan respectively, agreed to merge in an all-stock deal valuing the duo at \$22 billion.
- Electronic Arts (NASDAQ: EA) will acquire Codemasters, the U.K.-based game developer and publisher, valuing the latter at about \$1.2 billion.
- MSP Sports Capital agreed to take a significant minority stake in McLaren Racing, a U.K.-based Formula One team, in a deal valuing the latter around \$750.5 million.
- Roblox, agreed to Loom.ai, a company specializing in real-time facial animation technology for 3D avatars. Financial terms weren't disclosed.
- State Street, the New York-based investment services firm, is exploring a potential merger of its asset management business with that of a rival's, per Bloomberg.

## **SPAC**

- Senior Connect Acquisition I, formed by the founder of UnitedHealth Richard Burke, raised \$360 million.
- Motive Capital, formed by Motive Partners, raised \$360 million.
- Gores Holdings VI, formed by The Gores Group, raised \$300 million.

## **PEOPLE**

- Benchmark named Miles Grimshaw as its newest and fifth general partner. Grimshaw was previously at Thrive Capital.
- Oak HC/FT promoted Andy Smith to vice president.