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The impact of interest rates on stock market volatility appears to have lessened, reflected by the Volatility Index (VIX) maintaining levels below 20. In contrast to the previous year, the US IPO market is showing signs of resurgence in 2023, surpassing the activity seen in 2022. As we approach the end of August, companies eyeing the historically productive first weeks of September for their IPOs are making their final preparations. While a selection of notable names is readying for their debut, a significant portion of firms seems inclined to await the outcomes of upcoming IPOs before moving later in the year or postponing further.

NEW IPOs

In the USA, 2 IPOs and a direct listing took place on **NASDAQ**.

Sacks Parente Golf priced its IPO on August 14 at the low end of the price range and increased the number of shares at pricing having raised \$12.8 mn. Sacks Parente Golf is a technology-forward golf company, producing putting instruments, golf shafts, and golf grips in the USA. It could become the best-performing IPO with a remarkable 624% surge the next day unless the following decline erased all the gains and caused the company's shares to close significantly below its IPO price.

A toy and souvenir designer and developer, selling into the world's largest theme parks and entertainment venues, **SRM Entertainment** priced its IPO to raise \$6.3 mn.

Sezzle stock started trading on the **NASDAQ** after the direct listing of an Australian fintech company offering innovative payment

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solutions. The company's stocks are already traded on the **Australian Securities Exchange**. BNPL digital payments platform allows consumers to take control over their spending, be more responsible, and gain access to financial freedom.

Tan Delta Systems, a specialist in real-time equipment monitoring and data analysis, raised £6 mn on **AIM (LSE)**.

Pulsar Helium raised \$3 mn on the Canadian **TSX Venture Exchange**. Pulsar Helium develops its helium assets in the USA.

NEW FILINGS AND DISCLOSURES

ARM | \$60+ bn MCAP | \$8+ bn raising | NASDAQ

SoftBank Group has acquired the remaining 25% stake in UK chip designer ARM from its Vision Fund unit, valuing ARM at over \$64 bn. This move comes just ahead of September IPO and offers insight into the potential valuation range that SoftBank is seeking for ARM. The acquisition is seen as a relief for ARM's IPO, as SoftBank plans to be a long-term investor, in contrast to Vision Fund's planned stake cash-out.

Moreover, Arm has finalized a comprehensive lineup of underwriters for its forthcoming IPO, involving a total of 28 banks. The offering includes four lead banks - Barclays, Goldman Sachs Group, JPMorgan Chase, and Mizuho Financial Group, along with 10 second-tier and 14 third-tier underwriters.

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PRIMECH HOLDINGS | \$160 mn MCAP | \$14 mn raising | NASDAQ

On August 18, facilities services provider Primech Holdings cut its share offering by 39%. The Singapore-based company now plans to raise 13,7 mn. The company states that it is a technology-driven facilities services provider in the public and private sectors operating mainly in Singapore, with a small portion of operations in Malaysia. Primech provides facilities services, stewarding services, cleaning services to offices and homes, and cleaning supplies.

More pre-IPO filings and disclosures took place on **NASDAQ**.

Jyong Biotech filed its F-1 without pricing terms being disclosed and is expected to raise \$40 mn. A science-driven biotechnology company is based in Taiwan and is committed to developing and commercializing innovative and differentiated new plant-derived drugs mainly specializing in the treatment of urinary system diseases, with an initial focus on the markets of the US, the EU, and Asia.

A Singaporean developer of a proprietary ecosystem solution that automates workflow and the workforce in areas such as building maintenance, security surveillance, and janitorial services, **SIMPPLE** slightly raised the price range of its IPO to raise \$9.3 mn.

Inspire Veterinary Partners, a US veterinary hospital network, increased its IPO's size to \$8 mn.

Lafayette Energy, an early-stage oil and gas exploration company based in Denver, has withdrawn its \$7 mn IPO on **NASDAQ**.

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IPO PLANS AND RUMORS

Instacart, the largest US online grocery-delivery company, is planning an IPO on the **NASDAQ** as early as September and could file its prospectus next week. Once valued at around \$39 bn in 2021, the company subsequently adjusted its internal valuation to \$24 bn before deciding to delay its IPO due to market volatility. Subsequently, it further lowered its valuation to approximately \$13 bn and is expected to go public at around \$10 bn market capitalization. The company's employees and investors will finally sell shares after many years of waiting.

European private equity (PE) firm **CVC Capital Partners** could complete a multi-billion dollar listing in Amsterdam later this year, following news that it was pursuing listings of two portfolio companies. CVC Capital Partners is reportedly reviving its plans for a blockbuster float on **EURONEXT**, potentially before the end of 2023. This decision follows CVC's postponement of IPO plans last year due to market turbulence and uncertainty. The firm recently raised a record €26 bn for its ninth Europe and Americas PE fund, defying the broader fundraising slowdown. Headquartered in Luxembourg, CVC's substantial asset management portfolio of over €140 bn encompasses various investment strategies.

Swiss drugmaker **Novartis** has proposed a spin-off of its generic medicines division, **Sandoz**, around October 4. The company has invited shareholders to an extraordinary general meeting on September 15 to approve the proposed spin-off, where shareholders

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would receive one Sandoz share for every five Novartis shares. Novartis CEO Vas Narasimhan initiated the strategic review of Sandoz in 2021 due to pricing pressures in the off-patent drug sector. Sandoz contributed around 10% of Novartis' group core operating profit in 2022.

SPAC ACTIVITY

Vietnamese electric vehicle (EV) maker **VinFast's** shares demonstrated high volatility on its **NASDAQ** debut following a merger with a US-listed Hong Kong's SPAC, **Black Spade Acquisition**. De-SPAC deal brought a \$23 bn valuation to VinFast. However, Black Spade's SPAC had only \$14 mn left after shareholder redemptions, and VinFast's free float is less than 1%, with the founder controlling 99% of the newly listed company. Despite the volatile nature of SPAC shares, VinFast CEO emphasized that listing via SPAC was a way to get listed in the US and to access the market. VinFast is part of Vietnamese conglomerate VinGroup and received a \$2.5 bn boost for global expansion in April via debt financing. The company is building a factory in North Carolina to compete in the US EV market.

Spanish soccer club FC Barcelona has announced a \$1 bn merger deal to list its new content creation business, **Barca Media**, on **NASDAQ**. The deal involves a merger with a SPAC named **Mountain & Co. I Acquisition Corp.** The merger, subject to approval by both club members and the SPAC's shareholders, aims to bring new capital into Barca Media, which combines the digital business of

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Barca Vision with audio-visual content. Existing shareholders of Barca Media will retain an 80% stake, and the media business is expected to generate future revenue for the club. The deal is anticipated to close in 4Q 2023, pending approval from the US stock market regulator.

99 Acquisition Group Inc. priced its downsized \$75 mn SPAC IPO on **NASDAQ**. They intend to focus on business in the real estate industry with an aggregate combined enterprise value of approximately \$80-\$160 mn.

Australian **PROTONIQ Acquisition Corp.** has withdrawn its \$100 mn SPAC IPO.

This digest covers key IPO deals on European and US exchanges.

Our main focus is on companies exceeding \$100 mn in market capitalization.

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We are excited to keep you posted with news and insights on the European and US public equity capital markets. Please share with us your feedback and let us know if you would like to hear more from us about some particular subjects of your interest.

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