



## Press Release

### Language Learning Website Babbel.com Receives Significant VC Funding

#### Investors endorse trend of online learning and accelerate Berlin-based company Lesson Nine's growth

**Berlin, July 28, 2008:** Today Babbel.com was backed with significant investments by Kizoo and VC Fonds Berlin. The language learning website, product of the year old Berlin company, Lesson Nine GmbH, already shows substantial growth in its user base after only six months online.

Building on its playful and intuitive style, the website will expand significantly in the coming months. Following this funding milestone, today Babbel.com is releasing a preview of new tutorial formats which are currently in closed beta testing. These will cater to an even broader range of learning styles, introducing grammar lessons ranging from basic to intermediate levels.

Users can now look forward to improvements on Babbel.com's one-of-a-kind features for social networking and innovative vocabulary building tools in French, English, Spanish, Italian and German. The new tutorials offer learning exercises like fill-in-the-blank and multiple choice in Babbel.com's dynamic interactive environment. Organized according to theme and proficiency level, they will be followed by a tool for more advanced speakers and language educators to create their own tutorials with an easy to use community course editor's program.

A showcase of these new features with descriptions and screenshots is available for viewing at <http://www.babbel.com/about/ENG/tutorials>

Until today's investment, the one year old German startup Lesson Nine GmbH was privately funded by its four founders. The enthusiastic group is comprised of technology experts, an entrepreneur, and an online marketing expert with many years of collective experience in the German software industry. The company will now add both to the in-house staff and to a core group of freelance collaborators, who as native speakers are responsible for much of Babbel.com's content and upkeep.

#### **About Lesson Nine**

Founders Thomas Holl and Toine Diepstraten have nearly two decades of collective experience in application development, IT management, community cultivation and interactive media between them. The rest of the Babbel team reflects a thoughtful balance of new-media savvy and academic foundation. Managing Director of Product Design and Finance Lorenz Heine was a co-founder and CFO of Native Instruments and has extensive entrepreneurial experience in the software industry. Markus Witte, Managing Director of Marketing and Content, has a background including not only extensive online marketing and management experience but also an academic grounding in language, cultural theory and media. Content Manager Ulrike Kerbstat holds Master's degrees in language instruction and interpreting, and is fluent in German, English and French.

### **About Babbel.com**

A playful application, Babbel (<http://www.babbel.com>) takes the tedium and inconvenience out of language learning. With a design inspired by a game console, it makes picking up new vocabulary effortless and fun. Truly multimedia, it incorporates user-generated images and human voices into the teaching of real-life vocabulary. You can practice how to shop for groceries, express your feelings, or flirt. In place of the traditional flash cards, an effective repetition system makes cementing new content easy. Meanwhile, a unique Refresher system tracks your learning progress and reminds you what to review.

### **About Kizoo AG**

Kizoo Technology Ventures <http://www.kizoo.com/en/corporate> is a development and investment company with a focus on internet services and digital communication. They invest in their own products and especially in early stage, innovative and high growth potential companies.

After the formation of the internet portal WEB.DE and the successful sale of the portal to the United Internet Holding in 2005, the focus of the company is on products in internet and investments in this field.

The Kizoo AG is a public company listed on the German Stock Exchange in Frankfurt since 2000.

### **About VC Fonds Berlin**

The IBB Beteiligungsgesellschaft mbH (<http://www.ibb-bet.de>) manages the VC Fonds Berlin since November 2004 and the VC Fonds Technologie Berlin as well as the VC Fonds Kreativwirtschaft Berlin since December 2007. The three VC Fonds are the result of a joint initiative of the Investitionsbank Berlin (IBB) and the state of Berlin and are indirectly partly financed by resources of the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF).

Since 1997 the IBB Beteiligungsgesellschaft, in consortia with partners, has placed over € 470 million at the disposal of technology firms in Berlin. Of this, an amount of € 66 million was invested by the IBB as lead, co-lead or co-investor.

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