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**Head, Listing Compliance Department
National Stock Exchange of India Limited**
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Scrip Symbol: METROPOLIS

Scrip Code: 542650

Sub: Transcripts of Earning Call for Q3FY2022

Pursuant to Regulation 30 of the Securities and Exchange Board of India (Listing Obligations and Disclosure Requirements) Regulations 2015, please find enclosed herewith transcripts of the Earning Call held on February 11, 2022, wherein the management of the Company discussed the Financial and Operational Performance of Q3FY2022.

The same has also been uploaded on the Company's website and the same can be accessed at www.metropolisindia.com.

This is for your information and records

Thanking You,

Yours Faithfully,
For **Metropolis Healthcare Limited**

Simmi Singh Bisht
Head – Legal and Secretarial
Membership No.: ACS 23360

Encl. a/a

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Metropolis Healthcare Limited

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“Metropolis Healthcare Limited Q3 FY-22 Earnings Conference Call”

February 11, 2022



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MR. RAKESH AGARWAL, CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER.

MODERATOR: **MS. CYNDRELLA CARVALHO – CENTRUM BROKING.**



*Metropolis Healthcare Limited
February 11, 2022*

Moderator: Ladies and gentlemen, good day and welcome to the Q3 FY22 Earnings Conference Call of Metropolis Healthcare Limited hosted by Centrum Broking Limited. This conference call may contain forward-looking statements about the company which are based on the beliefs, opinions and expectations of the company as on date of this call. These statements are not the guarantees of future performance and involve risks and uncertainties that are difficult to predict. As a reminder all participant lines will be in the listen-only mode and there will be an opportunity for you to ask questions after the presentation concludes. Should you need assistance during the conference call please signal an operator by pressing “*” then “0” on your touchtone phone. Please note that this conference is being recorded. I now hand the conference over to Ms. Cyndrella Carvalho from Centum Broking. Thank you and over to you.

Cyndrella Carvalho: Thanks, Margaret. Good evening, everyone. I Cyndrella Carvalho welcome you all on behalf of Centrum Broking on the Q3 FY22 Earnings Concall of Metropolis Healthcare Limited. At the outset, I thank the management of Metropolis for giving us this opportunity to host this earnings call. From the management team today we have with us, Ms. Ameera Shah, Promoter and Managing Director; Mr. Vijender Singh, Chief Executive Officer and Mr. Rakesh Agarwal, Chief Financial Officer. I now hand over the call to the management team for their opening remarks and further insightful discussion on the quarter. Over to you Ms. Ameera Shah.

Ameera Shah: Good evening, everyone. And thank you for joining us for the Q3 FY22 Earnings Call. I hope you and everyone around you is safe and healthy. And I'm joined today by the Vijender, Rakesh and SGA Advisors. The presentation press release have been issued to the stock exchanges and uploaded on the company site, I hope everyone's had an opportunity to go through the same. Let me start by giving you our thoughts on the quarter that's just gone by.

Point number one, we embarked at FY22 with a network expansion plan with a view to deepen our presence across geographies and increase the B2C ratio of the business. Accordingly, we have added 10 labs and about 470 centers in nine months.

Point two, we have posted strong 31% growth on Y-o-Y basis in our core business which is non-COVID business excluding COVID, COVID allied and the government contract. So this is the B2C, B2B core business that we have. Our B2C revenues have also grown strongly over the last few years. In fact, nine months FY22 we have crossed the B2C revenues of FY21 and are on course to report our highest ever B2C revenue in FY22. Even in quarter three, we have grown by 25% on a year-on-year basis.

Point number three, we have successfully acquired Hitech and expects synergies to start contributing meaningfully over the next few years as we have got from our past acquisition. Happy to share that during nine months of FY22 Hitech reported 76 crores of non-COVID revenues higher than the full year of FY21. And now on course to deliver its best ever, non-COVID year.

Point four, we've continued to focus on improving collection efficiency in our business. And accordingly, we're able to bring down our debtors to 31 days a measure of a higher quality of business that Metropolis has been enjoying over the past few quarters.

And point number five, increasing coverage on our home testing business which has now covered 103 cities and the non-COVID home visits revenue is now 22% of our B2C business in Q3 FY22, which was much smaller, maybe eight quarters ago.

All the above points are a result of the sustained focus efforts we have put in building a sustainable consumer focused scientific lab. We continue to see a long runway of growth for us in the diagnostics industry. And therefore it's important for us to make the investments to further strengthen our brand scientific image, test menu, expand our leadership team and on ground servicing to increase our consumer connect. These investments have led us to dip slightly in EBITDA margins in Q3 along with the deleverage effects on account of loss of revenues due to large government contract. As we had indicated in our previous on concall, this is not unexpected and as per our guidance.

Apart from lower government business in Q3 price capping on COVID test, and unseasonal rains in a large market impacted the testing volumes. In spite of all these challenges faced we have reported healthy normalized EBITDA margins of 27.5%, that is EBITDA before CSR ESOP and one time acquisition cost. We expect some of the digital and marketing costs to remain in Q4 but expect growth in margins in Q4 on account of higher quarter-on-quarter volume growth in the government contract and the leverage benefits they're on. Hence, we expect to close FY22 at similar levels of normalized EBITDA margins that we recorded in FY21. Happy to share that we have onboard a Chief Revenue Officer in the leadership team, who shall identify ways to augment revenue from existing business segments as well as identify new growth opportunity. This is in line with our focus to strengthen our leadership team and the middle management. We will continue to make investments in strengthening our team in a bid to capture market opportunity.

Let me now share with you our growth strategy on Hitech. As we have completed the acquisition our focus now will be on time bound into the integration of Hitech within Metropolis. To extract synergies on revenue as well as on cost. On the cost fronts we expect to save on raw material procurement on the back of increase scale of business. Rationalization and infrastructure manpower, logistics and usage of Metropolis IT will lead to optimization and operating expenses. This will eventually improve EBITDA margins of Hitech by 3% to 4% points as the integration continues. On the branding front at this point, we have decided to go with a dual brand strategy in Chennai and a single brand strategy in the rest of Tamil Nadu and Karnataka, on the basis of which brand can pull maximum customers. This will lead us to minimize the cannibalization of business in Chennai and at the same time expand the addressable market size for both Metropolis and Hitech.

On the business front, we are planning to launch 100 centers in FY23 for Hitech. Further our efforts are to increase the wellness contribution of the business, which currently is low for Hitech and has room to expand to the level that Metropolis has of 8%. On the Hitech performance, we are pleased to share that the revenue is 95 crores in nine months of FY22 and surpassed non-COVID revenues of FY21. This trajectory gives us the confidence that Hitech will close FY22 at its best possible. Let me quickly touch base upon our thoughts with regards to digital and marketing efforts. We are investing in a new tech stack behind the scenes to ensure that the entire ecosystem which engages with Metropolis is optimized. This should result in better control over operations, faster turnaround time, higher consumer engagement, thereby strengthening the brand profile of Metropolis. We are not only working on automation and digitization of consumer connect, but also our suppliers, business partners, including doctors, franchisees and the third party patient service network. This will require us to make some upfront investments which has happened in Q3, and partly in Q4, and we remain confident of the sustained returns over a long period of time.

Look at it like this, the efforts in terms of on ground coverage brand building initiatives and technology spends on backend we engaged in FY16 to 19 period yield in benefits in the tough period of 20 and 21 not only were able to run operations, but we were able to penetrate faster in terms of home visits services and new tests in a period which was extremely challenging in terms of pricing, intensity of different variants, higher than normal volumes and availability of skilled technicians and management team. The investments of Q3 and Q4 are somewhat similar to creating that backbone for the next level of growth that we envisage in the business.

To summarize, our near term objectives will be as follows, number one, execute a time bound integration of Hitech into Metropolis to extract maximum revenue and cost synergies. Number two, continue the network expansion as per the plan of 90 labs in 30 months and 1800 centers to penetrate newer geographies as well as strengthen our brand in existing geographies. Invest in digital and marketing initiatives and expand the homeless coverage it should eventually drive our B2C growth and deepen the leadership and middle management talent to focus more on priority areas. Before concluding my part of the speech, I'm pleased to share that the Board of Directors have declared an interim dividend of Rs.8 per share. That's all from my side Vijender now will take you through some of the operational parameters.

Vijender Singh:

Thank you Ameera and good evening, everyone. Let me talk about the key performance metrics which we track for our progress. The first is the revenue share of B2C business, B2C business has been one of the core focus areas of Metropolis and we have steadily made progress on that front. As also mentioned by Ameera we posted 25% year-on-year growth in B2C non-COVID business in quarter three FY22. Our revenue share of B2C business in focus **cities** for non-COVID business stood at 59% in nine months, FY22. Our near term target is to reach 65% contribution. Our investments in digital marketing and scaling of home visit services are with a view to achieve this target. Hitech being a focus B2C player will also aid Metropolis to increase the B2C business especially in the focus cities of Chennai and Bangalore.

Number two specialty test contribution. Metropolis has always adopted the science first approach in the business which has led us to become to go to brand for doctors when it comes to recommending specialized tests to patients. Specialized test earn higher realization enhances profitability and creates a differentiating factor for the company. Our specialized test volume and revenue contribution, however has fallen in quarter three FY22 year-on-year due to lower volume from the government contract. This has been indicated is a one off event and as volumes return we normalize in quarter four. Going ahead, we will continue to focus on research and development to introduce newer specialized tests in order to provide value to our customers. For the home visit testing business, home visit testing is one of the key growth verticals for Metropolis. FY21 has been an extraordinary year for the home visit business as people opted for home visits considering the safety and convenience for COVID as well as non-COVID.

In FY22 we see growth continued from home testing as well from the centers as lockdown restrictions were relaxed. Overall revenue from home visit dropped in quarter three FY22 due to COVID pricing capping. However, the home testing for non-COVID business remained firm in nine months FY22. Home visit revenue for non-COVID stood at Rs.74 crore as against Rs.80 crore in the whole of FY21. At current run rate, we shall post strong growth in home visits revenue for non-COVID in FY22. We believe the growth will come from centers as well as home visits for us, and hence our Omni channel strategy we believe is the right way to move ahead. Our home visit coverage has now been extended to 103 locations in December 2021 as compared to 89 in September 21.

On digital initiative, we have ramped up the digital initiatives at Metropolis to make us future ready and create an all-round digital ecosystem for all our customers, partners as well as doctors. Let me highlight few of the initiatives we have taken, number one, we have launched e-commerce capabilities on a web platform that will allow Metropolis the capability to connect with other e-tech players. Number two, we have built a multi-channel interaction capabilities across websites, applications, WhatsApp and chat for our customers. Number three, for our partners we have built a roadmap to scale up the home visit business. Number four, we are digitizing operational processes to improve efficiency and turnaround time. Number five, we are providing enhanced capabilities to retail customers like appointment booking, sample tracking, et cetera. As a result of these efforts, about Rs.76 crores of revenue came through lead generated via digital medium, which is about 8% of nine month FY22 top line. Our target is to reach double digit revenue contribution through digital leads by end of FY22 and increase it significantly over the next three years.

Let me now come to operational numbers. I'm pleased to share that we recorded strong 22% growth in patient volumes to 3.3 million for quarter three FY22 while number of tests increased by 24% year-on-year to 6.3 million in quarter three FY22. However, the revenue per patient for non-COVID business dropped by 5% year-on-year to Rs.911 and revenue per test for non-COVID business dropped by 9% year-on-year to Rs.423. This was primary on account of consolidation with Hitech which has lower revenue per patient and revenue per test as compared to Metropolis. As they cater to the value end of the market. Lower volumes from government

contracts also had a negative impact on this which is expected to reverse in quarter four. Including COVID revenue per patient has decreased by 13% on year-on-year basis to Rs.898 and revenue per test has decreased by 14% on year-on-year basis to Rs.462. As COVID test prices were much higher last year and were cap downwards towards during the year. Our revenue profile among focus reading and other cities stood as follows. Focused cities five cities including the city and peripheral area around Metropolis region contributed 64% to the total revenue in quarter three of FY22. Seeding cities eight cities including the city and peripheral area around the region contributed 18% to the total revenue in quarter three of FY22. Rest of the other cities contributed 19% of the revenue in quarter three FY22. With respect to geographic distribution revenue contribution from West region was 56%, South contributed 25%, North contributed 7% while rest was contributed from East and international locations.

To conclude from my end, our focus going ahead will continue on ramping up the B2C business on the back of investments in digitalization, marketing and expanding the home visit services location along with the plan network expansion. On the acquisition front our efforts will be focused towards the smooth and quick integration of Hitech operation with Metropolis to drive the synergies. That's all from my side. I will now ask Rakesh to take you through the financials. Thank you.

Rakesh Agarwal:

Hi, thank you, good evening to everyone on the call. Let me give you a snapshot of our financial performance. As mentioned earlier, the Hitech numbers are consolidated with Metropolis with effect from 22nd October, the day the acquisition was completed. Quarter three financial year 22 revenue stood at Rs.293.1 crore as compared to Rs.274.7 crore in quarter three financial year 21 by 7% year-on-year. Hitech contribution stood at Rs.19.6 crore in quarter three financial year 22 revenue. Non-COVID business contributed 83% of the revenue while COVID RT PCR contributed the rest 17% of the revenue during quarter three.

Non-COVID revenue stood at Rs.244 crore in quarter three financial year 22 as compared to Rs.224 crore in quarter three financial year 21 up by 9% Y-o-Y%. COVID RT PCR revenue stood at Rs.49 crore in Q3 financial year 22 as compared to Rs.51 crore in quarter three financial year 21. As COVID test prices are significantly lower this time as compared to last year same period even though COVID volume grew significantly in the same period. EBITDA before CSR ESOP and one time acquisition cost stood at Rs.80.5 crore in quarter three financial year 22 as compared to Rs.90.2 crore in quarter three financial year 21. EBITDA margins for the same stood at 27.5% in quarter three financial year 22 as compared to 32.8% in quarter three financial year 21. The EBITDA margin drop was led by investment of approximately 17 crore in the following.

Number one, investment in digital initiative which impacted margin by 2.9%. Investment in network expansion which impacted margin by 0.5%. COVID led pricing drop impacted margin by 0.1% and upfront investment in manpower at corporate and front end considering the growth aspiration of the company impacted margin by 0.9%. Accordingly reported PAT stood at Rs.41.2 crore in quarter three financial year 22 as compared to Rs.58.6 crore in quarter three financial

year 21. The PAT was also impacted on account of higher financial cost due to high tech acquisition which has increased from Rs.1.7 crore in quarter three financial year 21 to Rs.5.8 crore in quarter three financial year 22.

Coming to our working capital ratios, our debtor days has significantly improved from 41 days in March 21 to 31 days in December 21. Overall working capital days has increased by four days in March 21 to 13 days in December 21 on early payment to creditors. OFC to EBITDA stood at healthy 77% for nine months financial year 22. Cash and cash equivalent stood at Rs.231 crore as of December 21. This includes payment of 336 crore for Hitech acquisition. Total debt drawn for the acquisition of Hitech was Rs.300 crore of which we have already repaid 15 crore hence current debt stood at Rs.285 crore, we expect to pay the external debt for acquisition within three year timeframe. That's all from my side, we now leave the floor open for Q&A. Thank you.

Moderator: Thank you very much. We will now begin the question-and-answer session. The first question is from the line of Rahul Agarwal from Incred Capital. Please go ahead.

Rahul Agarwal: First question essentially Ameera was, if could help me understand the non-COVID patient volume growth. So, I'm looking at a number of 2.42 million which is basically the patient volume for 3Q FY20. So, any analysis on a two year CAGR basis, excluding Hitech and excluding all COVID allied any like-to-like number, could you help us understand what is the CAGR growth we are looking at on non-COVID please, that's my first question.

Ameera Shah: Rakesh you want to address that?

Rakesh Agarwal: You can go ahead with your second question we'll just quickly come back on that. Can you ask the second question?

Rahul Agarwal: Okay, so second essentially is on bookkeeping. Could you help us understand some balance sheet headline numbers for Hitech. Just before this consolidation happened from 22nd October, like networth, net block, cash and goodwill recognize in Metropolis that's my second question.

Rakesh Agarwal: Sorry, I was looking at the numbers so can you repeat please. So, from a volume point of view what you asked is we are growing around 11% CAGR currently.

Rahul Agarwal: Okay, this is like-to-like excluding Hitech, excluding COVID?

Rakesh Agarwal: It's everything, this is absolute like-to-like.

Rahul Agarwal: Okay, cool thank you so much for this and on the headline number for Hitech, networth, net block, cash and goodwill recognized?

Rakesh Agarwal: So, basically at quarter three we are not publishing our balance sheet. So, this number have been formed out and we are in the process of closing these numbers with our internal, external auditors. So, this number will get firmed up somewhere in this month and in quarter four results

when we publish we will give you all the stake up of the cost which has been incurred, and the items where it is going.

Rahul Agarwal: Okay. Specifically, I was looking for, if you would help me just one number on depreciation amortization, whatever goodwill has been created in Metropolis books, the number was charged to the P&L in Q3, is that possible to share?

Rakesh Agarwal: So, basically there is a small amount which will be charged to the P&L because the goodwill as per the regulatory requirement is not subject to any depreciation. So, that one information I can give you but, in quarter four you will get further information about it, but the amount to which has to depreciate will be very small amount.

Rahul Agarwal: Cool, thank you so much. And just one last request, not a question that essentially there was very little time gap to analyze a presentation when it's uploaded to stock exchanges and within this call, if you could just have like an hour of gap between these two things, it will help us better to analyze and take on meaningful questions. Thank you so much.

Rakesh Agarwal: Fairly point taken.

Moderator: Thank you. The next question is from the line of Praveen Sahay from Edelweiss Financial. Please go ahead.

Praveen Sahay: My first question is the revenue, we can see there is a dip specially in this seeding city revenue, it is largely to do with COVID number or non-COVID volume has also impacted their revenue?

Ameera Shah: So there's a break up of multiple things. The most important thing is number one, which is that Q3 is always the weakest quarter of the year. So actually, if you go back and look at the history of the industry, not only Metropolis usually we find Q3 as the weakest quarter, even pre-COVID, volume drop because as festivals are there Diwali, Dussehra and other festivals, we always see the less number of patients. So that's number one. Number two, we had actually guided in our previous concall, that we are expecting lumpiness in our government contracts in Q3 and that there will be a sharp decline in volumes in Q3 in government contracts, only because it's a quarter-to-quarter thing nothing else. And therefore, that has obviously impacted in Q3 in terms of volumes and in revenue, otherwise the revenues would have been significantly more. The third piece is the COVID allied test, which obviously as COVID comes down the COVID allied test come down. But overall if you see on the non-COVID piece there is still a positive movement.

Praveen Sahay: So it is specific to the seeding city versus your focus and other city because there is a growth disparity between the three different geographies. So, I am asking if this like this government contract is largely in the seeding cities?

Ameera Shah: No, the government contracts usually span the whole country, but usually tend to be in smaller markets. So actually, you will probably find a bigger difference in the other cities. So usually

this comes with a large amount in the seeding and the other cities and therefore you may see some change of contribution in those two geographies.

Praveen Sahay: Okay, thank you. And next question is, revenue per patient as in the presentation you had mentioned for the Metropolis excluding Hitech it's a Rs.930. So in that sense, the revenue per patient for Hitech is much lesser than the Metropolis and if it's the case, what's the plan to improve those?

Ameera Shah: Each business has it has it's own positives and negative so, yes number one the Hitech revenue per patient is lower than Metropolis because Hitech is more of a lab and there is more routine testing. And Metropolis, as we know has a large amount of specialized testing. Now, this creates the opportunity that we are able to go back to Hitech customers and actually now be able to educate them on specialized tests and be able to increase the amount of specialized tests from those customers as well. It also gives us the ability to be able to drive wellness packages more in that market. And both these actions could result in a higher revenue per patient and time. But obviously, that will not happen immediately in the next one or two quarters. But, over the next few years, we will definitely see we believe that we should be able to see the revenue per patient moving.

Praveen Sahay: Correct me if I am wrong, is it in the range of around Rs.550 to Rs.600, for Hitech?

Rakesh Agarwal: Hitech revenue per patient is approximately 700 in Q3, whereas the revenue per patient for MHL is around 932. So overall, the revenue per patient is coming to 911 including Hitech. So if we look at MHL, we are de-growing by 3% year-on-year on revenue by patient, basically because of the government contract, revenue being subdued in this quarter.

Praveen Sahay: Okay. And the last question is related to the employee expenses, which have been increased for the quarter, is it because of Hitech?

Rakesh Agarwal: Basically, the employee cost increase from a percentage point of view one contribution is because of the revenue going a bit down this quarter that is one reason. And obviously, as we mentioned in our presentation, and also in our speech that we are investing a bit on the front end and the leadership team so that cost is coming upfront, but obviously we'll see benefit of it coming in the next quarters and time to come.

Moderator: Thank you. Next question is from the line of Shyam Srinivasan from Goldman Sachs. Please go ahead.

Shyam Srinivasan: Just first, I'm looking at slide #25, Hitech strategic initiatives. So, in the opening remarks it is mentioned we are doing the dual brand strategy but slightly different with a single brand in Tamil Nadu and Karnataka exception is Chennai. So what's the thought process here, how do we manage this kind of integration and also, October 22nd to now how was your experience been when you look at Hitech, how it's been performing related to your expectations while you're doing your due diligence?

Ameera Shah:

Thanks for the question Shyam. So let me start by answering the second question first. Probably been about three months now and obviously, we've been busy in not only in closing formalities and also the basics of when you do an acquisition in terms of making sure that your compliances, your billing, all of your bank statements, all of those things are getting completely aligned. So all of that has been done, we have also initiated some of our synergy plans on the cost side, in the first three months and those are well on track, we had already made a very detailed integration plan, pre-acquisition of planning what we will do in the first three months, six months, nine months, et cetera. And as of now, for the first three months, we are on track with our plan, there have not been any surprises at this point of time or anything, we have discovered post entry because our diligence and spend time on the understanding of the business was fairly good. So that's on that piece.

On the second piece, which is on the question around the strategy and the brand around it. The idea is that majority of the business of Hitech is in Chennai. And as we all had already mentioned, Metropolis is the number one player in Chennai and Hitech is the number two player in Chennai. And the idea is that there is a different positioning that both these brands have in terms of pricing, in terms of the kind of testing they do, and what are the strengths in the mind of the consumer and the doctor. And the idea is not at this point is to put everything together, but the idea is to leverage the strength of each brand in the market of Chennai. So together, we continue to have the leading market share in Chennai, which is close to now about 25% to 30%. So the idea is to expand both, and that's what we will be doing for the next few years. On the backend however, we are looking at opportunities to say how do we not duplicate cost and how do we not duplicate capabilities in both brands and Chennai. So while on the backend we are working at synergizing, on the front end we are continuing to expand both as independent brands. As far as rest of Tamil Nadu and Karnataka, in both these markets, we have found rest to Tamil Nadu especially we found a good overlapping of cities as well and we felt that in neither of these markets do we have enough of a volume in either brand to just continue to brand and it made more sense to actually bring the two together and have one brand strategy that we go ahead with. And we found that the positioning and the pricing was not very different either and therefore it would be easier to do. So in Karnataka and in ROTN we are going with a single brand strategy while in Chennai, for the time being we are going with the dual brand strategy.

Shyam Srinivasan:

Got it, very helpful just in the 95 crore nine month Hitech. How much is coming from Chennai?

Ameera Shah:

I don't have an exact number for you. But majority would be for coming from Chennai, maybe about 70%, 75%, 80%.

Rakesh Agarwal:

Yes, absolutely, between 70% to 75%.

Shyam Srinivasan:

Got it. Last point on this particular thing, margins expected to grow by 3%, 4% for Hitech. So is it the combination of things that you just said, or is there more on the cost that we can do in terms of synergies or can you help us explain how we improve margins, and what is current margins for Hitech?

Ameera Shah: So, traditionally Hitech has had sort of pre-acquisition, the margins were close to Metropolis margin around the same 28% approximately, so similar margin profiles, what we often find in these acquisitions of smaller players or regional players, we have obviously not invested as effectively in technology in quality of team in processes and systems. And therefore, usually when an acquisition is done, the buyer does need to make certain investments and making sure that not only compliances. But also processes and system are invested into to handle scale. On the flip side, there are some cost savings efficiencies and lever which can be pulled, in a short timeframe, that also gives some cost savings. So we have to look at the net, net of this when we are talking about sort of margin expansion. And the third part is obviously as we continue to expand when we hire teams, and we hire and we build centers and all of that, initially it will be investment rather than immediate revenue. And therefore that will also play out and which is why we said that we believe that there is a margin expansion. But we don't want to at this point, push ourselves to try and achieve that margin expansion in the next quarter. Because the focus at this point should be more about putting the right processes systems and the revenue and growth rather than just saving cost. And so we believe that we can get to these margin numbers soon and that's the goal.

Moderator: Thank you. The next question is from the line of Pooja Bhatia from Morgan Stanley. Please go ahead.

Pooja Bhatia: So my first question is on network expansion Ameera 30 labs and 600 centers for this year, looks like a lot of the deals in the pipeline have been bunched up to Q4. So, is it only due to COVID or are there any changes and negotiations in the terms?

Ameera Shah: So actually we only announced the strategy Pooja, in July sometime. So really, it's been only six months of energy and effort by the team. And very surprisingly, we've already managed to do about, eight, nine centers in this last six months, and there are another, if not mistaken about 10 centers planned for Q4, which are already in progress and getting launched as we speak. So this year, we should be able to do about 20 labs, and the estimation of about 500, 600 centers collection centers. And next year, the idea would be to do about 30 labs, and similarly around 600 centers. And then the balance, in the third year period, we are very much on track as far as our plan, because obviously we built a new team to execute this. So we never expected that we will do 30 labs in the first year, we always planned that we would do about 20 because we only had nine months of the year to actually execute.

Pooja Bhatia: Understood. And how are the terms of the agreement generally, revenue share, profit share?

Ameera Shah: These are a combination of green fields and what we call is lab on lease. The green fields obviously just our own lab, so we are paying rent and starting labs in these locations. So there's really no revenue share or profit share. In the lab on lease model these are all long term agreements, where there is a revenue share on the existing business that they hand over plus a lesser revenue share on the new business that's generated. But all these are obviously long term contracts.

Pooja Bhatia: That's helpful. On Q4 generally, seasonally it is a better quarter so this time, it could be different given that there is the Omicron outbreak. So how is the core business done so far in the first few days of this Q4, both on the acute and the chronic side, routine and centralized?

Ameera Shah: As you rightly said, obviously during the wave obviously the non-COVID business does get temporarily impacted. And that's obviously what has happened in January. But, this time Omicron being obviously a very easily transmissible but not a very severe disease, I don't think it's been as sort of deeper shock as it was a couple of waves before. And therefore, quarter four should still be a fair quarter, it's still a bit early to sort of comment on whether it will be very good or not, it would be too presumptuous to mention that at this point. I don't know Rakesh, Vijender if you want to add anything to that?

Rakesh Agarwal: So generally obviously we have seen it's more or less normal and as January was also impacted by COVID third wave. So we have seen some fluctuation in the numbers. And obviously, it's again too early as rightly said by Ameera that we need to really get more deep into February to understand the whole quarter. So, that's how I will put it.

Pooja Bhatia: Okay. And last one from my side on the digital front, is the cash burn 40 to 50 million a quarter, is this number correct and how does this go going forward?

Ameera Shah: Rakesh, do you have a specific comment on that?

Rakesh Agarwal: Yes. So, basically this is actually not cash burn, because we are investing this money into our digital initiatives. So, we have invested some 4, Rs.4.5 crore extra in quarter three and which are giving us good result as we are getting more leads. And on that basis, we will see more conversion happening in future and obviously revenue increasing not on a paid marketing but on our organic marketing. So, that is how we are looking for future that we are investing this now to bring people on board and then maybe these people will then hook to us and then keep coming to us again and again. So that is how we are looking at it so from an investment point of view, we have done this 4.5 crore extra investment in marketing. And this will continue to some extent as also guided by in the earning call that we will keep investing some amount every quarter so that we can get more-and-more leads and more-and-more customer into our digital platform.

Ameera Shah: And some of this is while of course a lot of it is marketing, but some of it is also just in building the platform, the cost associated with doing digital in general. So whether some of it goes into the cost of technology, some of it is the cost of the people, cost of setting up new processes, et cetera. And of course a lot of it is in digital market.

Pooja Bhatia: Operationally, how is the website views been in the last quarter any update on that, is it grown on?

- Ameera Shah:** We've put a slide actually in the presentation on the traffic, et cetera. And we are seeing definitely a growth quarter-to-quarter as far as the website traffic as well as the increase in digital.
- Rakesh Agarwal:** You can just see this nine month update we have already given so this is 276% increase in digital users. So we've increased our digital users coming to our website is increased by 276% and there is a 297% increase on the website views nine month. So this is the kind of increase we are seeing in the numbers of visitors in the website.
- Pooja Bhatia:** And this imply double shift contribution revenue front by Q4?
- Rakesh Agarwal:** Yes, so we are looking seeing an 8%, 8.5% of contribution to the top line from digital which is increasing every quarter. So we are expecting that this should go to the double digit by the end of this year and maybe we are higher, we will step up the number of gain much higher in the next year.
- Moderator:** Thank you. The next question is from the line of Tushar Manudhane from Motilal Oswal Financial Services. Please go ahead.
- Tushar Manudhane:** Just again on the margin front by considering the initiatives on the digital fronts plus considering the aggressive addition of labs as well as addition of the manpower. How do you see the margin profile and plus, at the same time we have the Hitech synergy as well, parallely going on. So how do you see the margin profile for let's say, next couple of years?
- Ameera Shah:** If you look at pre COVID, our margin was approximately 27% odd and it was during COVID, of the year of FY21, and 22, where it of course increased more significantly, largely because of the additional volumes that are coming in through COVID into the existing infrastructure. Also the other reason was that we worked on a lot of cost efficiency on the back end. And we also managed to save a lot of cost which are very sustainable in nature. So overall, the actions that we took in 21, and 22 have been very helpful to expand the margin. And we are now using those same savings to actually really reinvest in the business to expand for the next growth, because at the end of the day, in business, there's always going to be a choice to say that look, should I focus on revenue at this point of time, should I focus on margins at this point of time. And while we focus on margins the last couple of years, we think it's time now to refocus on revenue without really compromising margins significantly. So like, what are the things there is obviously also a lot of competition in the sector. And therefore, it's important that we build out the digital space, it's important that we, continuously keep advancing our services towards excellence, we make things easier for the consumer, and at the same time expand our footprint all across. So, generally that's the direction we are going in, and the profit margin of 2021 and 22, as he had always said was an elevated the profit margin, but we think going forward, it will be at a more normalized level, as we have seen on a more conceptual basis.

Tushar Manudhane: Got it and secondly on this e-commerce side, while we have our own digital platform, but are we also thinking of providing as a portfolio or as a package of service on the websites in terms as a marketplace per se?

Ameera Shah: Absolutely we are already tied up or tying up with players in the health ecosystem and participating in the digital growth on the phone. So that is a part of the journey as well on the digital side. It's not only about what consumers come to us, but it's about how we can partner with others in the health ecosystem, and if we are generating consumers how we can support them from a pathology and diagnostics system.

Moderator: Thank you. The next question is from the line of Madanagopal Ramu from Sundaram Alternates. Please go ahead.

Madanagopal Ramu: If I look at the non-COVID business for the current quarter, and if we remove, you mentioned that digital contributed 10%. So probably it would have come year-on-year basis, the base business seems to have been flat almost. Is there any loss of market share due to the new age companies coming in and competing with us, because at any point we would have expected at least a mid-teen or low teens sort of a growth in the base business to continue?

Ameera Shah: There are two, three things happening in the industry right. Firstly, digital and offline are all obviously going to feed off each other. Because finally usually anytime you see the industry has come together it's never going to be completely additional, it's the same patient who's now also exploring digital as a means to, so when we say we are acquiring a consumer through digital, all it doesn't mean that it has degraded our offline days, because it's all the same, today if somebody wants to do anything go into a store or go to a lab, the first thing they do is Google it and say okay, what's the closest location to me, and I'll go and click there. And book an appointment online, and I'll walk in. Now, we would count that as a digital acquisition because it's come from our website, but it could have been already a patient which has already been coming to us offline so we don't see these worlds are separate. These are worlds that are all going to get completely infiltrated. So, we are not internally separating them and saying that, this is the offline business slash and online business is growing. So we would urge you to also look at them as a more integrated model because that's how it's going to be in the future. And that's how our lives are today actually. So, overall therefore we don't track them really separately. The only reason that we are even talking about the KPI of acquisition through digital channels is just for our own distance to say that we are investing into digital to make life easier for the consumer. And are we getting increased traffic volume through the digital channels as well. And of course, as we understand that, the more we are able to move through the digital channel, actually in many ways it reduces the administrative cost, that it goes into catering to a patient on certain things you can reduce your call center, you can reduce your other administrative costs if people are digitally engaging with you. So, the tracking is more for that reason, rather than separating them from a revenue perspective.

Madanagopal Ramu: No, actually the question was that, like with these digital initiatives and our investments into them, and we were seeing also traffic coming through. But that is not leading to any superior growth, then what we would have probably seen in the business, that's what is worrying. That's what we wanted to ask.

Ameera Shah: Look, the question is, what is the benchmark in the mind and the benchmark clearly cannot be digital first company, because they follow a very different form of acquisition of customer. So if tomorrow for example we had unlimited funding and no worries about losses, it will be very easy to scale up the business, because you can go and buy revenue. But if you want to do it in a manner where you're still making profit, and you still are getting a customer who's sticky, then obviously the growth is never going to be at 50%, 70% number. So, really the question is about choosing strategically the choices of saying that even though we are on a digital platform, we want to acquire customers that are sticky, that are willing to pay, and they are not just coming to you because you're throwing freebies at them. And so that's not the strategy that we're following. And therefore we don't expect to see crazy growth, just because of the digital channel. Because your way of attracting the customer is still disciplined and good quality.

Madanagopal Ramu: Sure. The second question is on the Hitech, I don't know whether you mentioned this, what is the current utilization level for the existing labs?

Ameera Shah: I don't think we have that number today. But if the question is more around, does it need a lot of CAPEX or does it need a lot of expansion and capacity the answer is no.

Madanagopal Ramu: But my question is more about, is there a larger scope for utilization you mentioned it better lab utilization. So just wanted to judge like how much of capacity is available.

Ameera Shah: We don't have the test wise capacity utilization, that comment comes more from the fact that the variety of tests done in Hitech is quite good. But the volume of tests is not proportionate across the different test. So there are certain tests in which the volumes are very high. And there are many tests in which the volumes are very low. And so therefore, there will be different levels of capacity utilization for each test. But we don't have a test by test today.

Madanagopal Ramu: Okay. In the same slide we have mentioned, margins are expected to grow 3% to 4% this is for Hitech, is what the target is right?

Ameera Shah: That's right.

Madanagopal Ramu: So, the benefits of adding new centers and the labs that we are doing probably, as another caller also asked you probably it happened more towards the second half of the calendar year, we will see those benefits coming through over the next say one year, because I understand these labs are not immediately going to throw big volumes, it takes time.

Ameera Shah: The labs that we had setup this year will give obviously some benefit next year. But like you rightly said this is more about setting you're feeding a market, and that will help you over the

next sort of three to five years or 10 years. And because you're entering the new markets completely, so there will be obviously some revenue kicker, but considering the volume will be small, even after 20 new labs, it may not impact your overall numbers in a drastic way. So, as we do 90 labs over this next three year period in 1800 centers together, when that infrastructure is completely built, it will obviously add a good revenue kicker for the next few years. But obviously, just the 20 labs and 600 centers may not give you that overall big kicker, because the volume will not be significant.

Madanagopal Ramu: So, finally we should start sticking any benefit of those from a FY24 probably to other meaningful numbers if at all?

Ameera Shah: Yes, the benefits will obviously come from year one. But the question is on what the assumptions in each year are. So, maybe we can come back to you guys with what are sort of the broader historic trends that we are seeing, one thing which we are clearly seeing is that, we're doing this in a very focused manner, we are able to see a faster breakeven than we used to see in the past. So in the past when we used to start a Greenfield lab, one we had maximum done on the five, six labs ever in the history of Metropolis in a year. And we've already done obviously, like we said in the last six months, we've already done eight, nine, and there's another 10 coming. So that would be the fastest escalation and opening of labs, but more importantly, the way they are being done, the compliance quality, standardization and the breakeven, is expected to be achieved much faster.

Moderator: Thank you. The next question is from the line of Rahul Jain from IIFL Securities. Please go ahead.

Rahul Jain: Can you please quantify the impact which the lower government business had on our overall volumes during the quarter. So we indicated that our non-COVID volumes on a like to like basis have grown 11% on a two year CAGR basis. So what this number could have been, if all government business was not impacted?

Ameera Shah: We are not giving the breakup of all this business at this point of time, for competitive and confidentiality reasons. So as we mentioned, the core business if you keep aside all the other pieces, we're still doing well, and it grew to 25% year-on-year.

Rahul Jain: Sure, ma'am and with respect to the government business, do you expect this business to normalize fully in fourth quarter or would it take us a few quarters before the business stabilizes?

Ameera Shah: Yes, it has normalized, the end of January.

Rahul Jain: Okay. And with respect to some of these initiatives, or investments on the digital and the leadership team, do you think or what quantum of these investments could sustain going into next year FY23. And you have guided that the company at this point in time is prioritizing revenue growth over profitability. So going forward, can we see, because of these initiatives, as

well as the organic network expansion plans, which we have our revenue growth for going forward could be higher than the mid-teens, which we have delivered in the past?

Ameera Shah:

I don't think we had a point to be able to give guidance at this point of time on revenue and profit, what I can tell you is two, three things. One thing is as we said that the market in general, is obviously getting more competitive, it has been for the last couple of years. So, with COVID, a lot of new entrants, a lot of new players on the tech side, as well as on the offline side. And therefore it's very important that as leaders in incumbent we continue to up the game, not only from a talent perspective, from a services perspective to make sure that the moat around the business is really strong. So we are doing that, because that's what needed to do from the business perspective, in the short term, and in the medium and long term.

Second of all, the point I made about margins was only about saying that FY21 and 22. Were normally, a very high margin because of all the main things we had mentioned before. And these margins are obviously not going to be sustainable going forward. But our attempt is going to be to make sure that our pre-COVID margins which were also extremely healthy, is what we try to sort of sustain and continue to maintain. So, the idea is not to really compromise margins in any very significant way. But the focus is to say, how do we continue to make customers delighted, happy, excited, in the short and medium term and how do we put the ingredients in place to drive the revenue. Difficult to comment at this point of time as to what the revenue will come out to be because there are a lot of moving parts also in the industry.

Rahul Jain:

Okay, but on the margin side you are saying that despite these incremental investments, we should sustain our pre-COVID margins?

Ameera Shah:

Yes, that's what we are attempting to do.

Rahul Jain:

And do you think that this 300 to 400 basis points of margin improvement, which we are targeting from Hitech, that can help us to improve our overall margin profile, despite these incremental investments?

Ameera Shah:

Well, 300 and 400 basis points on Hitech will obviously not give a huge increment on MHL overall, because Hitech itself is not a very large percentage of Metropolis so overall, net, net we have taken the benefits expected from certain areas and the certain from costs and investments and therefore we said that keeping in mind the balance of certain things and where we have to invest the benefits and the cost, we think that the goal will be to try and sustain pre COVID margin.

Moderator:

Thank you. The next question is from the line of Sayantan Maji from Credit Suisse. Please go ahead.

Sayantan Maji:

So, I have one question. So, when we say that we plan to launch 100 centers in FY23 for Hitech, so this is quite a fast expansion. So, where are these centers coming up so, will it be in Chennai

or will it be in the other markets and secondly, will it help in increasing the growth trajectory of Hitech which has been at a high single digit, if you look at on a three or four year basis?

- Ameera Shah:** Vijender you want to take that?
- Vijender Singh:** First of all, these 100 centers could be across Tamil Nadu, this includes Chennai, peripheral markets and rest of Tamil Nadu.
- Moderator:** Thank you. The next question is from the line of Anubhav Agarwal from Credit Suisse. Please go ahead.
- Anubhav Agarwal:** Sorry, for two of us asking questions. Just a clarity, I joined call a little late, but clearly employee cost which increased by 10 crore per quarter. How much of it would have come from Hitech integration can you talk about that?
- Rakesh Agarwal:** So, we will give you a bifurcation right now, out of 10 crore almost 40% increase is because of the Hitech piece around 4 crore and rest of the increase has come from MHL.
- Anubhav Agarwal:** Okay. And this 4 to 4.5 crore that you are spending on digital, first of all very basic question so far for as a CAPEX, how much you invested for this digital initiative so far. So how much is the CAPEX so far and how much is the impact on the P&L from a digital initiative can you talk about both the number?
- Rakesh Agarwal:** So CAPEX number we are still work in progress a lot of things is happening. So we will firm up our number and in quarter four, we will give you the exact number of CAPEX what we invested in IT, digital, infrastructure and all. So, just wait for the quarter to sum up, let us sum up the whole number, and then we'll give you the perspective, from OPEX point of view, as we rightly said we have spent some 4, 4.5 crore in the quarter that includes basically the cost on some consultancy, which we have taken for the digital part that also involve the digital marketing cost which we are incurring and that also involves some manpower cost which will incur for digital piece.
- Anubhav Agarwal:** Can you just talk about the digital marketing that you guys are seeing, honestly as a customer, when I go for test, I haven't seen too many ads from Metropolis on the digital division?
- Rakesh Agarwal:** So, we are basically more investing into the website where we are getting share of the Google and other sites, which probably is when you search the search engine, and then you get to know about the Metropolis coming in the first place, we are more getting into that space of search engine.
- Anubhav Agarwal:** Okay. And when you talk about additional front end staff, sorry I have joined the call a little late. You mentioned about Chief Revenue Officer, et cetera. So what kind of additions have you talked about, have you done in the team, other than Chief Revenue Officer, any more important position that you want to enumerate over there.

- Rakesh Agarwal:** Yes, so apart from Chief Revenue Officer, we have added some more people into our digital space, two or three people have joined in digital space in this quarter. Obviously, we have guided that we have added a lot of people in the front end because we want to strengthen our sales force in the front end team. So mainly the investments are going into digital space and obviously the leadership team we have added CRO and the lab obviously we are also strengthening our lab operations. So, these are the three areas where we are building up our teams.
- Anubhav Agarwal:** And what's the timeline, you will be rolling out your app, the new app?
- Ameera Shah:** The new app is already ready actually; we are just waiting for approval of the App Store to put it on. They have come up with some new regulations in the past two months. Otherwise, everything is ready so hopefully it's a matter of weeks.
- Moderator:** Thank you. The next question is from the line of Akshay Jain from Jain Capital. Please go ahead.
- Akshay Jain:** I just had one question. How do you look at FY23 in terms of growth?
- Ameera Shah:** How do we look at it in terms of growth. Well, we will continue to expand the geographical expansion as we discussed, we'll continue to do all the engagement with consumers, continue to you know build the product line. All the activities that we mentioned we are going to do and the growth revenue, growth will always be an outcome obviously of that.
- Akshay Jain:** Any number that you'd like to put to that?
- Ameera Shah:** No, giving a guidance on revenue at this point or ever it doesn't make sense, frankly. So, we should go more by sort of looking at what are the inputs and how historically Metropolis has performed and we will stick with that.
- Akshay Jain:** Just another question. What is the estimated CAPEX for next two years, a ballpark number would also be fine?
- Rakesh Agarwal:** So in last two years, if you look at we have spent some around 25 crore to 30 crore of CAPEX, and as we said that this year we have intensified a bit of our network expansions, we have also invested some in digital, we have also invested some money in the infrastructure up gradation. So overall, we are looking at around 30%, 40% increase in our CAPEX, which was happening earlier in last two years. And that is how the run rate should continue in next one or two years.
- Moderator:** Thank you. The next question is from the line of Prashant Nair from Ambit Capital. Please go ahead.
- Prashant Nair:** Just one question on the digital expenses that you mentioned. So, is this kind of a new normal in terms of expenses or do you think some of these will go away after the initial spending?

Rakesh Agarwal: Yes, so basically as I said, that we are just trying to invest into the digital space to have more and more clicks in to our website and get more consumers into our fold. So we will continue investing this maybe whatever we have invested in Q3, maybe Q4 will see a bit of a lesser investment overall. But this investment is something which will go on for some quarters before we get into a situation where we feel that organically, we are now growing really well, because of this investment. So, this is a matter of two, three, four quarters where we keep investing, into this digital space and then reap the benefit in the coming future.

Moderator: Thank you. The next question is from the line of Rahul Agarwal from Incred Capital. Please go ahead.

Rahul Agarwal: Ameera, just one question on Hitech. So on as a basis, I assume that Hitech was a very well run and a mature lab. And, if network utilization at pretty fair levels the expansion, the growth we're talking about, as analysts we should look at growth purely from a top line angle for high tech going forward purely because you guys are putting up new center. And that I think is more Metropolis driven, rather than Hitech driven or should I look at margin improvements more coming because of cost synergies because you don't need to replicate lot of stuff which they were doing because they're two separate entities. So could you help me understand this thing please. Thank you.

Ameera Shah: When you say it is already a mature entity, it was mature from the perspective that the centers that they had started many, many years ago, will obviously now not give superior growths in terms of same store so those would have matured from an aging perspective and therefore building new infrastructure, new centers is necessary to give sort of say additional growth and that's what the goal is, is that okay, while you may have certain level of basic stable growth coming from the existing center, how do you ramp it up and you build new infrastructure to do that. And still at that obviously, build new collection centers to do that, and still continue to feed it with your existing lab infrastructure which still has capacity to sustain us. In terms of the margin expansion, it will come from the areas that we will make investments, we will make investment in technology, we will make investment in manpower because usually these regional labs do not operate at a mature management level. They operate as single operators by the pathologist who earlier run them, so they have no management teams, et cetera. So you have to build the talent to now scale it. So there will be investment and management, there'll be investment in technology. There'll be investment in upping services and in quality of infrastructure, the front end services, for example, for patients, and obviously to make sure that everything is compliant, and as per system and process of Metropolis and governance.

On the positive side in terms of the cost savings, the cost savings for large amount will come from material costs, because obviously we get economies of scale in terms of purchasing and negotiation cost of Metropolis which can be also applied there. And some benefits which will come by integrating the backend facility. So that's what we are saying that the margin expansion will come through a combination of these factors.

Rahul Agarwal: Right. So essentially that means that the current infrastructure and the patient network essentially was organically also underutilized apart from the old age lab or collection centers, maybe even the staff would have opened our last three, four years. It's still not to the market, and hence, that is where we can actually come in and get it to par. Is that understanding correct?

Ameera Shah: When you say not up to the mark, you mean revenue wise, or you mean infrastructure?

Rahul Agarwal: No, infrastructure wise. So, as in terms of you said tech investment, manpower, upping quality of infra, more compliance, and hence you get more scale from the same lab. So, basically trying to ramp up the SSSG for stuff which will open like last three, four years that's what I mean.

Ameera Shah: No, so see last three, four years, for example Hitech has not opened much anything the total number of centers they have is approximately 40 center of which majority of them would be much earlier. So it's not like there was a big network built in the last three, four years, every year, they were opening maybe two centers or three centers. So therefore, it's not that there is a very young network, which can be now leveraged by amping up the front end, we have to build network. So that's what we are saying is that we'll build the network and then amp up the sales compared to what they were able to do on their own before, by one building the network and hopefully improving the way the sales is done in terms of sales. So, the revenue benefits will definitely accrue to us. But obviously, there is a gestation period in building the network and accelerating the sales excellence, to be able to get.

Moderator: Thank you. Ladies and gentlemen, due to time constraints that was the last question for today. I now hand the conference over to the management for closing comments.

Ameera Shah: Thank you everybody for joining us today. As we talked about there are a lot of exciting things happening in the company, not only with us transforming ourselves with new technology, new ways of operating through new channels, and also our expansion network. Overall, we feel as an organization that going through a big transformation and obviously, as we go through a big transformation, there will be huge number of opportunities, and investments that we will have to do to make sure that we are able to really transform ourselves to become the organization of the future. So at this point of time, as we said while we continue to be very hopeful and work very hard on making sure that we maintain margins as pre COVID. The goal will be to try and see how do we really compete, not only from a short term or long term, how do we continue to focus on revenue and how do we continue to build a good quality business, which is sticky, and which really stays with Metropolis and is worthy of the brand that we are building over the times to come. It's very easy sometimes to go into markets and throw money at consumers and customers and get quick business. But we believe that's not really the right strategy to grow. And the right strategy to grow is to do it in a disciplined, sustainable manner that truly gives us long term value. And make sure that we get the customer who values the brand and therefore is willing to pay the price for getting the best quality of report available in the country. I'll leave you with that and thank you, all of you for attending today.



*Metropolis Healthcare Limited
February 11, 2022*

Moderator:

Thank you members of the management. On behalf of Centrum Broking Limited that concludes the conference call. Thank you for joining us. And you may now disconnect your lines.