

**Press release**

**Brussels,**

**23-05-2025**

# **European Marketer of the Year 2025**

## **Zsófia Bánhegyi**

**The European Marketing Confederation has announced the winner of the European Marketer of the Year 2025, awarding the title to Zsófia Bánhegyi, Chief Commercial Officer of Szerencsejáték Zrt. , from Hungary, at the MII Awards Ceremony held in Dublin last night.**

Marketing associations across Europe nominated their National Marketing Champions, and eight finalists emerged (see enclosed). The second and third places, respectively, went to Rafael Fernández de Alarcón (Spain) and Giuseppe Fiordispina (Germany).

Our deepest gratitude goes to the independent, professional jury (see enclosed) who undertook the significant task of interviewing and evaluating each shortlisted candidate, ensuring the integrity and consistency of the process.

**Dr. Ralf Strauss**, EMC Chairman, stated: “The underlying purpose of organizing this event is clear: marketing is a vital and constantly evolving profession across all economies. By showcasing top marketing leaders, EMC aims to inspire the next generation of marketers, highlighting the dynamic career paths available and encouraging young professionals to pursue their ambitions with confidence.”

“The competition was incredibly fierce, as each candidate had already distinguished themselves as a winner in their own country. However, the jury reached a unanimous decision in selecting Zsófia Bánhegyi, (see enclosed for her bio), impressed by her exceptional leadership qualities, her substantial contributions to the marketing profession, and the remarkable business achievements that showcased her marketing expertise,” said Chairman of the Jury, **Martin Huisman**













EMC is proud to organize this prestigious annual competition, celebrating the very best marketers in Europe and the critical contributions they make to their companies, the European economy, and society at large. With participation from twelve member countries, the competition provides an inspiring platform to recognize the outstanding impact of marketing professionals across the region.

**Zsófia Bánhegyi** added: “I’m deeply honoured to receive this award. Today, the role of senior marketers is more vital than ever — bringing the voice of the consumer into the boardroom, guiding and inspiring our businesses within their operating environments, and harnessing the power of our brands and storytelling to positively shape society.”

## About EMC:

EMC is Europe's largest marketing organization, representing over 100.000 marketeers across twelve national associations in Europe, and our members are jointly reaching 1 million social-media followers and over 5 million unique visitors on their websites. As a non-profit organization, EMC works with its member associations to promote Education, Social guidance, and Value creation to marketing associations and the marketing profession all over Europe.

## Member Countries of EMC:

 <b>EUROPEAN MARKETING CONFEDERATION</b>		
<b>UNITED KINGDOM</b>  <b>CIM</b> The Chartered Institute of Marketing	<b>GERMANY</b>  <b>BUNDESVERBAND MARKETING CLUBS</b>	<b>LITHUANIA</b>  <b>LiMA</b>
<b>HUNGARY</b>  <b>HUNGARIAN MARKETING ASSOCIATION</b>	<b>SWITZERLAND</b> <b>SWISS MARKETING</b>	<b>NETHERLANDS</b>  <b>nima</b>
<b>UKRAINE</b>  <b>Українська Асоціація Маркетингу</b>	<b>AUSTRIA</b>  <b>AUSTRIAN MARKETING CONFEDERATION</b>	<b>PORTUGAL</b>  <b>APPM<sup>KT</sup></b> <small>Associação Portuguesa dos Profissionais de Marketing</small>
<b>IRELAND</b>  <b>MARKETING INSTITUTE IRELAND</b>	<b>SPAIN</b>  <b>Asociación de Marketing de España</b>	<b>SWEDEN</b>  <b>Sveriges Marknadsförbund</b> <small>Swedish Marketing Federation</small>

## Corporate Member of EMC:



## Appendix 1:

### **FINALISTS EUROPEAN MARKETER OF THE YEAR 2025**

Finalists (in random order):

- Saskia von Moos – Intelligentfood Schweiz AG (Switzerland)
- Zsófia Bánhegyi – Szerencsejáték Zrt (Hungary)
- Helena Gouveia – IKEA Sweden (Sweden)
- Günter Thumser – ÖAMTC (Austria)
- Azuolas Zubkonis – Swedbank (Lithuania)
- Brenda Smith – AS Watson Group (Netherlands)
- Giuseppe Fiordispina – SEAT Deutschland GmbH (Germany)
- Rafael Fernández de Alarcón – Telefónica S.A. (Spain)

## Appendix 2:

### **JURY EUROPEAN MARKETER OF THE YEAR 2025**

Jury members (In random order):

- Árpád Papp-Váry (Hungary)
- Ralf Strauss (EMC)
- Giedrė Vilké (Lithuania)
- Christoph Teller (Austria)
- Catarina Castro (Portugal)
- Stephanie Lohmann (Salesforce)
- Grainne Wafer (Diageo)
- Bouke Lukkien (Lukkien)
- Peter Brawand (BVMC)
- Fleur Fetherstone Porter (McKinsey)
- Martin Huisman RM (EMC)

## Appendix 3:

### About Zsófia Bánhegyi

Zsófia Bánhegyi is a leading figure in Hungary's marketing landscape. With 24 years of experience in marketing and communications at top multinational and Hungarian corporations, she has been a senior executive for 15 years. Currently, she serves as Chief Commercial Officer at Szerencsejáték Zrt., overseeing the country's largest retail network and a customer base of five million.

Named Hungary's CMO of the Year in 2024, Bánhegyi has played a pivotal role in shaping the industry. Her recognizable contribution in the marketing field includes leading the creation of the Marketing Trendbook with 147 colleagues over nearly 10 months. It aimed to provide insights into the workings of the local industry and global marketing trends and to highlight the added economic value of marketing.

Recognized as one of the "Brand Heavies" by SBC Magazine, Zsófia is a driving force in the leadership of the business industry. Zsófia's latest significant business contribution is the complete modernization of the national lottery company, Szerencsejáték Zrt. The company's rebrand strategy led to 98% brand awareness by introducing a modern, player-insight-driven marketing strategy instead of the monopolistic, old-fashioned approach. Zsófia and her team launched the **Optimus Program**, a four-year marketing technology development initiative aimed at increasing the identified player base through personalized, data-driven services and the use of predictive AI models. The program was recognized at the European Lotteries' Innovation Competition in 2024.

Zsófia has been deeply engaged in helping society, specifically with issues related to people with disabilities. She is at her current workplace, driving initiatives that positively impact the Hungarian disabled community affected by integration problems. The most tangible contribution is the construction of 32 inclusive playgrounds across the country over the past five years, funded from the revenue of the company's yearly Christmas scratch cards.

Finally, Zsófia is an inspirational leader who fosters *responsible approaches* within the marketing industry. Specifically, in the gambling industry, she feels a prioritization must be implemented where strict responsible gambling guidelines are a top subject over profit. This year, she broke traditional views and introduced *Hungary's strictest 40-page advertising ethics code* in marketing.

