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PRESS RELEASE



PUBLICIS GROUPE MAKES MAJOR LEAP IN SOUTH AFRICA WITH ACQUISITION OF THE CREATIVE COUNSEL GROUP

Publicis Groupe [Euronext Paris: FR0000130577, CAC40] has announced the acquisition of The Creative Counsel Group (TCC), the largest integrated below-the-line group of agencies in South-Africa, providing marketing and activation solutions to local and international clients.

Founded in 2001 by co-founders and joint CEOs Ran Neu-Ner and Gil Oved, The Creative Counsel Group boasts over 1,500 talented employees and works with top national and international clients such as Unilever, Clover, Vodacom, Microsoft, Brandhouse and Tiger Brands.

This acquisition will do more than simply boost Publicis Groupe's presence in South Africa; it will propel the Groupe far ahead of the competition in terms of the breadth and depth of its service offering in this market, across the entire value chain. TCC offers holistic services including creative, strategy and execution of go-to market strategies and activations, large-scale conferencing and events, mass-market insights and strategies, loyalty partnerships, merchandising and retail shopper marketing.

Furthermore, the addition of TCC will specifically strengthen and complement Publicis Worldwide, offering more transformative experiences to clients and their brands through promotional and experiential capabilities at scale, essential to client business development. Complementing the existing structure and expertise of Publicis Groupe's multi-door operation in Africa, Publicis Africa Group, which now counts agencies across 35 countries, TCC bridges existing digital and traditional disciplines, enabling clients' brands to reach their consumers wherever they may be.

The Creative Counsel Group will come under the remit of Publicis Groupe's agency network – Publicis Worldwide - headed by global CEO, Arthur Sadoun. Ran Neu-Ner and Gil Oved will report to Kevin Tromp, CEO of Publicis Africa Group.

Arthur Sadoun, CEO of Publicis Worldwide, commented: *"With the addition of The Creative Counsel, our clients will have access to the most innovative ways to promote, engage and educate their target markets about their products and services. This strategic move positions Publicis Worldwide as the leading creative network in Africa, a key continent for our future development."*

Kevin Tromp observed, *“The combination of TCC’s scale, massively entrepreneurial culture, and intimate understanding of the African consumer at every level, is an excellent complement to Publicis’ global communication sophistication, deep digital orientation and multi-national mentality. This union creates the most powerful activation and experiential entity on the continent, focused on bringing brands to life in a culturally relevant fashion, for our clients and their consumers.”*

Ran Neu-Ner and Gil Oved, co-founders and joint CEOs of The Creative Counsel Group, said: *“The focus is shifting away from the brand and towards the consumer. We’re about touching the heart and mind on a very real level, in a personalized manner, be it on-the-ground, digitally or any other way that results in consumers changing the way they act or transact. The fun part is that this ‘non-traditional’ form of advertising is ever evolving and ultra-dynamic. We wake up every day wondering what are we going to do differently today versus yesterday. Becoming part of Publicis Worldwide enables us to scale our offering and unique blend of conceptual and executional abilities on a global scale. Publicis Worldwide are the masters of merging digital, creative, strategy and new age thinking and therefore, for us, they are the bigger brother we always wish we had.”*

This acquisition follows several others by Publicis Groupe in Africa, including Epic Communications in February 2015, as well as AG Partners, Prima, Owenkessel, MACHINE, Brandsrock, Liquorice and Lighthouse Digital in 2014. According to ZenithOptimedia, South Africa is the world’s 8th fastest growing advertising market between 2013 and 2016. Overall, ad expenditure rose by 4.0% last year and further growth of 7.7% is predicted this year.

About Publicis Groupe

Publicis Groupe [Euronext Paris FR0000130577, CAC 40] is a global leader in marketing, communication, and business transformation. In a world marked by increased convergence and consumer empowerment, Publicis Groupe offers a full range of services and skills: digital, technology & consulting with Publicis.Sapient (SapientNitro, Sapient Global Markets, Sapient Government Services, Razorfish Global, DigitasLBI, Rosetta) - the world’s largest most forward-thinking digitally centered platform focused exclusively on digital transformation in an always-on world - as well as creative networks such as BBH, Leo Burnett, Publicis Worldwide, Saatchi & Saatchi, public affairs, corporate communications and events with MSLGROUP, ad tech solutions with VivaKi, media strategy, planning and buying through Starcom MediaVest Group and ZenithOptimedia, healthcare communications, with Publicis Healthcare Communications Group (PHCG), and finally, brand asset production with Prodigious. Present in 108 countries, the Groupe employs more than 76,000 professionals.

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About Publicis Africa Group

The Publicis Africa Group (PAG) is an integrated network of some of the most capable communication professional communication agencies in Africa. Beginning as a handful of agencies in 2011, the Group now spans 35 countries, and encompasses 51 agencies, ranging across multiple disciplines, with equity relationships in more than thirty of the agencies. Driven by a mantra of “Outstanding alone, Remarkable together” the Group has been designed from the outset to work closely together to ensure consistency of quality and approach.

About Publicis Worldwide

Publicis Worldwide is a global creative agency, with 89 years’ experience providing change leadership for its clients. We believe that this era demands a combination of strategic, creative and digital ideas that help clients to Lead The Change in their own digital transformation. With over 13,000 employees in 84 countries, clients include Axa, BNP Paribas, Carrefour, Cartier, Citi, Coca-Cola, Haier, Hilton Honors, HP, l’Oréal, LG, Luxottica, Nestlé, Orange, P&G, Paypal, Pernod Ricard, RATP, Renault, Sanofi, Seb, Siemens, Telefonica, Total, and UBS. Publicis Worldwide is a part of Publicis Groupe.

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