



PUBLICIS GROUPE

PRESS RELEASE

## **Steve King appointed Chief Executive Officer of ZenithOptimedia Group**

PARIS, March 18, 2004 – Following last week's announcement of the impending departure of John Perriss, Roger Haupt, President and COO of Publicis Groupe, announced today the appointment of Steve King as ZenithOptimedia Group chief executive officer.

*"Steve is the ideal choice to take over from John. A founding employee of Zenith Media when it made history in 1988, Steve has more than 20 years' experience in the provision of media services,"* said Haupt. *"He was also instrumental in setting up Zenith USA in 1995, and has led ZenithOptimedia in EMEA since 1997."*

John Perriss said, *"I am delighted Steve is to take on my role. As well as being highly regarded and respected throughout the ZenithOptimedia global network, with a reputation for extremely effective client service, Steve is also a very charismatic and personable leader and I know that all of those who have worked with him over the years will join with me in congratulating him on this appointment."*

*"With his solid experience and his strong commitment to the brand, Steve is the best candidate to lead one of our two powerful global media brands – ZenithOptimedia and Starcom MediaVest Group,"* said Maurice Lévy, Chairman and CEO of Paris-based Publicis Groupe.

Following a degree in Business and Marketing, King started his career in media sales, moving to the agency world in 1982 to join Bates Dorland. After two years he joined McCormicks (later acquired by Publicis) to head up the buying group on Renault. After a year, he returned to Bates Dorland as media group manager for clients such as H.J. Heinz, BT and Rover.

With the 1988 inception of Zenith Media in the UK (Bates Dorland was one of the contributing agencies), King was appointed director of TV Buying, overseeing the largest TV group of its kind in Europe. He was made deputy managing director in 1992 and managing director in 1993.

Steve moved to the U.S. , initially to evaluate the feasibility of Zenith Media in the USA. When Zenith USA began operating in February 1995 he was made general manager with principal responsibility for media operations, the management of key clients and the development of new business. In 1996 he was promoted to COO of the US business.

Steve became chief executive officer, Zenith Media Europe, Middle East and Africa, in August 1997. Following the creation of ZenithOptimedia in October 2001, he was appointed chief executive of ZenithOptimedia EMEA.



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*“We have got a fantastic team in place which helped me come to my decision to leave,” said Perriss. “Along with Rich Hamilton (CEO of The Americas), and Adrian Sayliss (Global CFO), Steve has been part of the global executive team which has been the key driver of our success. Nobody knows our business better than Steve and I have complete confidence in his ability to take the business forward.”*

*King commented, “I’m obviously delighted and eager to meet the challenges of this position. John has helped this company achieve tremendous momentum, and I share his determination to preserve and enhance ZenithOptimedia’s status as a leading global communications organisation. With the full support of Publicis Groupe, a terrific management team and an improving economic outlook, it’s an opportune time to be given this challenge.”*

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**ZenithOptimedia Group** is one of the world's leading global media services agencies with 4,000 employees across 162 offices in 59 countries.

Key clients include Alcatel, Allied Domecq, British Airways, Darden Restaurants, Electrolux, General Mills, Giorgio Armani Parfums, Hewlett-Packard, HSBC, Iberia, Kingfisher, Kraft Foods, Mars, MBNA Europe, Nestlé, L'Oréal, Procter & Gamble, Puma, MG Rover, Polo Ralph Lauren, Qantas, Salvatore Ferragamo, Sanofi-Synthelabo, S C Johnson Wax, Siemens, Thomson Multimedia, Toyota/Lexus, Verizon, Whirlpool and Wyeth.

**Publicis Groupe** (Euronext Paris: 13057, NYSE: PUB) is the world's fourth largest communications group, as well as world leader in media counsel and buying. Its activities span 109 countries on six continents.

Groupe activities cover **advertising**, through three autonomous global advertising networks: Leo Burnett Worldwide, Publicis Worldwide, Saatchi & Saatchi Worldwide, as well as through its two multi-hub networks Fallon Worldwide and Bartle Bogle Hegarty, 49%-owned ; **media counsel and buying** through two worldwide networks ZenithOptimedia and Starcom MediaVest Group; **marketing services** and specialized communications including direct marketing, public relations, corporate and financial communications, multicultural and healthcare communications.

Web sites: [www.publicis.com](http://www.publicis.com) and [www.finance.publicis.com](http://www.finance.publicis.com)

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