



Press release

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PUBLICIS GROUPE ACQUIRES CONVONIX INDIA'S LEADING FULL SERVICE DIGITAL MARKETING AND CONSULTING AGENCY

"As the first SEO organisation in India, Convonix has continued to innovate and build the very best digital capability whilst being highly respected for its ability to recruit the best talent from universities each year, and transform them into digital advertising experts through a rigorous training program," said Laura Desmond, Global Chief Executive Officer for Starcom MediaVest Group. She continues: "combined with our existing talent in the market, this deal strengthens our offering to ensure we are the market leaders in digital."

Publicis Groupe [EURONEXT Paris: FR0000130577] today announced the acquisition of Convonix, one of India's leading, Digital Marketing Consulting firms based in Mumbai. The company will align with Starcom MediaVest Group (SMG) in India to provide Search Engine Optimization, Paid Search Marketing, Social Media Marketing and Online Reputation Management to an extensive roster of clients. This news follows a number of recent acquisitions announced by Publicis Groupe in India and fortifies its position as India's largest digital marketing operation.

Founded in 2003, Convonix was the first Search Engine Optimization organization in India, and currently employs over 200 digital advertising specialists serving clients such as Taj Hotels, Reliance Industries, Kotak Mahindra Group, Club Mahindra, Kodak, Aditya Birla Group among others. Convonix has a strong international footprint with over 60% of its business coming from overseas. Convonix has also recently developed a proprietary in-house brand monitoring and social listening platform called IrisTrack which enables clients to gather market insight on their products and competitors and also engage customers online to improve their customer service.

The three founding members; Vishal Sampat, CEO; Sarfaraz Khimani, co-COO; and Pallav Jain, co-COO, will continue to lead the agency. Convonix will sit within SMG and will operate as SMG Convonix, with two market-facing brands: SMG Digital, and Convonix.

“As the first SEO organisation in India, Convonix has continued to innovate and build the very best digital capability whilst being highly respected for its ability to recruit the best talent from universities each year, and transform them into digital advertising experts through a rigorous training program,” said Laura Desmond, Global Chief Executive Officer for Starcom MediaVest Group. She continues: *“combined with our existing talent in the market, this deal strengthens our offering to ensure we are the market leaders in digital.”*

Year on year, Convonix has increased revenues on average 66 percent since 2008. According to the latest ZenithOptimedia adspend forecast, Search Marketing continues to expand rapidly in India and is forecast to increase 35% in the region during 2013, and more than 70% in the next two years.

Vishal Sampat, CEO for Convonix comments: *“We have built our reputation by focusing on talent, training, technology and performance, and doing so has enabled us to rapidly evolve with the consumer. Aligning with SMG gives us global scale and a more powerful face to the market which we can leverage to constantly improve our offering and give our clients the best tools and solutions available.”*

The acquisition of Convonix is a testament to Publicis Groupe’s strategic commitment to expanding its operations across India, with the ambitious goal of doubling its size in India between 2010 and 2015. The Groupe has been working to increase its profile in the country, including recent acquisitions of Indigo Consulting (April 2012), Resultrix (August 2012), iStrat (December 2012) and MarketGate (December 2012).

Srikant Sastri, VivaKi Country Chair for India who is presiding over the acquisition and transition of Convonix adds: *“First Resultrix, and now Convonix. We are now clearly the digital marketing leaders in India, ahead of any other global network. We are positive that this acquisition will set the tone for our next phase of digital pre-eminence both in terms of expertise and revenue and we are continuing to explore other agencies that can help us capitalize on the outstanding potential of the digital marketplace in India.”*

About Publicis Groupe

Publicis Groupe [Euronext Paris FR0000130577, part of the CAC 40 index] is the third largest communications group in the world, offering the full range of services and skills: digital (Digitas, Razorfish, Rosetta, VivaKi, LBi), traditional advertising (BBH, Leo Burnett, Publicis Worldwide, Saatchi & Saatchi), public affairs, corporate communications and events (MSLGROUP), media buying and strategy (Starcom MediaVest Group and ZenithOptimedia) and specialized communications with PHCG (Publicis Healthcare Communications Group). Present in 104 countries, the Groupe employs 58,000 professionals.

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Viva la Difference !

About Starcom Mediavest Group (SMG)

Starcom MediaVest Group is the Human Experience Company. Our dream is to grow our clients’ business by transforming human behavior through uplifting, meaningful human experiences. These brand “experiences” are brought to life by distinct, strategic point-of-views — Truth and Design and Space for Ideas — created and owned by SMG’s two global agency brands: MediaVest and Starcom, respectively. Ranked one of the largest brand communications groups in the world, Starcom MediaVest Group (www.smggroup.com) encompasses an integrated network of human experience strategists, investment specialists, content creators and digital experts. With nearly 6,700 employees in 110 offices worldwide, SMG is the #1 ranked Global Media Agency (AdAge) and 2011 Media Network of the Year at the Global Festival of Media as well as the most celebrated global media network at the 2010 and 2009 Cannes International Advertising Festival.

About Convonix

Convonix is a 200 strong digital consulting firm that helps companies in India and overseas draw and implement digital strategies spanning search engine optimization, search engine marketing, social media marketing, online reputation management, web analytics and conversion rate improvement. Founded in 2003, Convonix has evolved from being the first pureplay SEO company in the country to offering the full range of digital advertising solution for clients ranging from Fortune 100 companies to small and medium enterprises in India, USA and Europe.

For more information on Convonix, visit www.convonix.com

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