



PUBLICIS GROUPE

PRESS RELEASE

## **PUBLICIS GROUPE ACQUIRES LONDON-BASED AIRLOCK IN ITS LATEST UK DIGITAL OPERATION**

**Paris, March 10, 2011** – Publicis Groupe announced today that it has acquired Airlock, a leading London-based digital engagement agency, specializing in multi-platform interactive solutions. The Airlock brand will become part of the Leo Burnett Group in the UK.

Airlock provides clients with the full spectrum of digital and interactive communications services including creative development, digital brand strategy, web design, online advertising, social media, digital outdoor, metrics & reporting, content management systems (CMS), e-commerce solutions, as well as platform & application development.

Founded in 2001, Airlock is an Emmy, Webby, BIMA and IAB award-winning agency with clients that include the BBC, NBC Universal, Channel 4 and Wrangler. The agency's team of 16 digital specialists strengthens Leo Burnett's rapidly-expanding digital capabilities, bringing the number of digital specialists in the UK Leo Burnett Group to more than 85.

The agency will continue to be headed by its current leadership: Will Lebens, Managing Director; Charlie Martin, Creative Director, Joseph Denne, Technical Director; Chris Mair, Strategy Director. They will report into the Group Chief Digital Officer, Marc Giusti.

Airlock is the second digital acquisition for Leo Burnett in 2011, and follows last month's announcement concerning the agency Holler. For Publicis Groupe, the acquisition of Airlock is the latest in a series of UK-based digital agencies, which includes Chemistry and Kitcatt in addition to Holler. This trend further illustrates the Groupe's determination to bolster digital assets throughout its various networks in the United Kingdom.

According to ZenithOptimedia forecasts (December 2010), internet adspend in the United Kingdom is predicted to increase by 7.3% in 2011, reaching USD 5,144 million. Digital is one of the two growth drivers at the heart of Publicis Groupe's targeted acquisition strategy and today accounts for 28% of the Groupe's revenue. Over the next three years, Publicis Groupe aims to increase the percentage of revenue derived from digital to 35%.

Andrew Edwards, Group Chairman and CEO Leo Burnett (UK): *Leo Burnett UK digital operations have been gaining a very nice momentum over the past months. Today's acquisition of Airlock not only further strengthens our offer, but more importantly, it represents an important investment in creativity and innovation for our clients.*

Will Lebens, Managing Director of Airlock, added *"We've been approached by agencies many times before but the chemistry never felt right. As soon as we met the team at Leo Burnett, it was clear from the start that we shared a common outlook and a vision for the future. This move gives our people access to an amazing array of clients, to deliver creativity, innovation and technology on a much larger scale."*

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#### **Airlock**

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#### **About Publicis Groupe**

Publicis Groupe [listed on the Euronext Paris Exchange - FR0000130577 - and part of the CAC 40 index] is the world's third largest communications group. With activities spanning 104 countries on five continents, Publicis Groupe employs approximately 49,000 professionals and offers local and international clients a complete range of advertising services through three global networks: Leo Burnett, Publicis, Saatchi & Saatchi, and numerous agencies including Fallon, 49%-owned Bartle Bogle Hegarty, and Kaplan Thaler Group. VivaKi combines digital and media expertise, allowing clients to connect with consumers in a holistic way, with Starcom MediaVest Group and ZenithOptimedia worldwide media networks; and interactive and digital marketing led by Digitas and Razorfish networks. VivaKi develops new services, tools, and next generation digital platforms. Publicis Groupe offers healthcare communications with Publicis Healthcare Communications Group (PHCG, the first global network in healthcare communications). And with MSLGROUP, one of the world's top five PR and Events networks, also provides expertise in corporate and financial communications, public affairs, branding, and social media marketing.

Website: [www.publicisgroupe.com](http://www.publicisgroupe.com) | Twitter: [@PublicisGroupe](https://twitter.com/PublicisGroupe) | Facebook: [www.facebook.com/publicisgroupe](https://www.facebook.com/publicisgroupe)

#### **About Leo Burnett Group UK:**

The Leo Burnett Group, comprising of Leo Burnett (Advertising) and brand activation partners, Arc (shopper/retail marketing), Lime (experiential) and LeoSports (sponsorship activation) provides one of the most innovative multi-platform cultures and structures found in any contemporary Creative Agency. For 2011, the Big Won Report has ranked Leo Burnett as the 3rd most creatively awarded agency in the UK and 5th most innovative agency in the World. Leo Burnett agencies are among the most awarded in the world (one of only 3 UK agencies in the Top 20) and were recognized for creating one of the Top 10 Most Innovative campaigns with the 'House of Cards' integrated campaign for Shelter.

Leo Burnett Group partners with clients such as Coca-Cola, Homebase, Kellogg, Littlewoods, McDonald's, Miller Brands UK, Procter & Gamble, Dept for Transport (Drug Drive, Drink Drive, Teen & Child Road Safety) and Tesco. Website: [www.leoburnett.co.uk](http://www.leoburnett.co.uk)

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### **Airlock**

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