



PUBLICIS GROUPE

PRESS RELEASE

## **Publicis Groupe Acquires Kekst and Company, Incorporated World's Premier Strategic and Financial Public Relations Firm**

**Paris and New York**, July 2, 2008 – Publicis Groupe [Euronext Paris : FR0000130577] announced today that it has acquired Kekst and Company, Incorporated, a leading strategic and financial public relations firm based in New York. Kekst and Company, Incorporated, which was privately held, will operate autonomously under its name as a member of Publicis Groupe's Specialized Agencies and Marketing Services, and will continue to be led by founder and Chief Executive Officer Gershon Kekst.

Maurice Lévy, Chairman and CEO of Publicis Groupe, said, *"Kekst and Company is the premier strategic and financial public relations firm in the world with a client base that is second to none. Its well-earned reputation reflects the cumulative judgment and experience of professionals who have been at the center of many of the most high-profile, complex business communications challenges over the past three and a half decades. Whether advising clients on how to handle a crisis or how to maximize an opportunity, there simply is no other financial communications firm in the world like Kekst and Company."*

*"We are investing in Kekst and Company today because of the depth of its professional capability and its future growth potential. I am very pleased that Kekst and Company will continue to be led by my good friend and trusted advisor, Gershon Kekst, as well as the senior leadership that has built Kekst since its founding. We view this as an extremely important addition to our Groupe's capabilities and its strategy to provide clients around the world with the highest-quality communications services possible,"* said Maurice Lévy.

Gershon Kekst said, *"I have known Maurice for 20 years and have enormous admiration for his unique success in making Publicis Groupe the global leader it is today. We have high expectations for this combination as it will preserve the best characteristics of our firm and its culture, while offering us opportunities to grow with the support of a well respected global communications partner."*



#### **About Kekst and Company, Incorporated**

**Kekst and Company, Incorporated** is a leading strategic and financial public relations firm headquartered in New York. It was founded in 1970 and has approximately 70 employees. Kekst serves a broad array of publicly traded and private enterprises in virtually every business sector around the world. Its practice areas of focus include: investor and media relations; crisis communications; bankruptcy/restructuring; litigation support; reputation management; board and corporate governance issues; and investor activism/proxy fights. Additionally, mergers & acquisitions, domestic and cross border, has long been a core specialty of the firm. Over the past two decades Kekst has advised on more mergers and acquisitions in the U.S. marketplace than any other public relations agency in the world as reported by *Corporate Control Alert*. Moreover, for each of the past five years, Kekst has been ranked as the #1 public relations agency by *mergermarket* in terms of the number of M&A transactions it has advised on in North America. Kekst has also been named *Financial PR Agency of the Year* and *Strategic Agency of the Year* three times each by *The Holmes Report*.

**Web Site:** [www.kekst.com](http://www.kekst.com)

#### **About Publicis Groupe**

**Publicis Groupe** [Euronext Paris: FR0000130577] is the world's fourth largest communications group. In addition, it is ranked as the world's second largest media counsel and buying group, and is a global leader in digital and healthcare communications. With activities spanning 104 countries on five continents, the Groupe employs approximately 44,000 professionals.

The Groupe offers local and international clients a complete range of communication services, from advertising through three autonomous global advertising networks, Leo Burnett, Publicis, Saatchi & Saatchi and two multi-hub networks, Fallon and 49%-owned Bartle Bogle Hegarty; to media consultancy and buying, through two worldwide networks, Starcom MediaVest Group and ZenithOptimedia; interactive and digital marketing led by Digitas; Specialized Agencies and Marketing Services offering healthcare communications, corporate and financial communications, sustainability communications, shopper marketing, public relations, CRM and direct marketing, event and sports marketing, and multicultural communications.

**Web Site:** [www.publicisgroupe.com](http://www.publicisgroupe.com)

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