

Public Strategies, Inc. Joins WPP

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Public Strategies, Inc., an Austin, Texas-based public affairs firm that serves a diverse clientele including some of the world's largest and best-known corporations, non-profit organizations, associations and professional firms, today joined WPP, the global communications services company.

"Public Strategies has a unique approach to public affairs, something it describes as the Fifth Seat at the table. By engaging with clients at the highest levels, Public Strategies ensures consideration of public opinion and the media in important corporate decisions," said Sir Martin Sorrell, CEO of WPP. "In addition, Public Strategies has the depth and breadth of talent to deliver on its promises."

"We're pleased to become part of the WPP family of companies," said Public Strategies Chairman Jack Martin. "Over the last several years, we have been approached repeatedly by companies offering to buy Public Strategies. WPP's offer was the right one because it met our three core criteria: It allows our firm to maintain its independence, provides our clients with additional resources and our employees with extensive professional opportunities."

Public Strategies, established in 1988 by Martin, now has nearly 175 employees in 15 U.S. cities and two offices in London and Mexico City. Much of its practice involves managing high-stakes campaigns for corporate clients, anticipating and responding to crises. It helps forward-thinking companies assess public opinion and risk, and develops strategies that affect perception and systems for managing uncertainty. Public Strategies' clients often seek its help in building organizational capabilities. It handles the outsourcing of entire functions such as government relations, corporate and employee communications and places senior executives in interim leadership roles directly in client offices.

Martin developed the Fifth Seat® practice when he recognized that traditionally, CEOs and their boards routinely ask for advice from their general counsels, accountants, investment bankers and management consultants but that there was a missing piece. "While those advisors offer sound advice, they are not traditionally responsible for paying attention to the public," said Martin. "And when the public is ignored in the corporate decision-making process, the consequences become evident — consumer backlash, shareholder turbulence, damaging headlines and government policy that runs contrary to business interests. That's the important role we play."

"WPP acquires companies to help them succeed and grow stronger rather than to manage them," said Howard Paster, WPP's executive vice president. "We are very excited about the future of Public Strategies as a member of WPP."

New York-based investment banking firm AdMedia Partners acted as financial advisor to Public Strategies in the transaction (www.admediapartners.com). WPP (NASDAQ: WPPGY) is one of the world's leading communications services groups, providing national, multinational and global clients with advertising; media investment management; information, insight & consultancy; public relations & public affairs; branding & identity, healthcare and specialist communications.

WPP's worldwide companies include JWT, Ogilvy & Mather Worldwide, Y&R, Grey Worldwide, The Voluntarily United Group of Creative Agencies, MindShare, Mediaedge:cia, MediaCom, Millward Brown, Research International, KMR Group, OgilvyOne Worldwide, Wunderman, 141 Worldwide, Grey Direct, Hill & Knowlton, Ogilvy Public Relations Worldwide, Burson-Marsteller, Cohn & Wolfe, GCI, CommonHealth, Sudler & Hennessey, Ogilvy Healthworld, Grey Healthcare Group, Enterprise IG, Landor, Fitch and G2 Worldwide among others.

WPP companies provide communications services to clients worldwide including more than 300 of the Fortune Global 500; over one-half of the NASDAQ 100 and over 30 of the Fortune e-50.

Our companies work with over 330 clients in three or more disciplines; more than 230 clients in four disciplines and nearly 200 clients in six or more countries.

Collectively, WPP employs 92,000 people in over 2,000 offices in 106 countries.