

**WPP Companies Appointed by Boots
17 October 2000**

Boots announces today a strategic global agreement with WPP to leverage the value of the Boots brand as a driver of future growth.

The appointment of a number of WPP operating companies as strategic marketing experts and service suppliers demonstrates Boots' determination to develop the full potential of the Boots brand. It is already dominant in the health and beauty markets in the UK. With this unique advantage, Boots is well placed to further expand its offer in to the rapidly expanding international market for Wellbeing products and services.

The new agreement, relating to a total spend of almost £80 million, will help improve the consistency of communications across Boots increasing range of products and services. It will simplify the management of marketing services and reduce cost and complexity. From the outset this will provide better value from Boots marketing investment.

All Boots branded consumer advertising will be handled by J Walter Thompson with MindShare responsible for all UK media planning and buying (£60m). Other WPP operating companies will supply most of Boots consumer public relations, market research and brand consultancy needs. Boots has already developed a strong working relationship with WPP through J Walter Thompson's excellent work for Boots The Chemist since 1994.

Steve Russell, chief executive of The Boots Company, said: "This is a strategic decision, signifying greater focus and increased efficiency for Boots. In choosing to manage the Boots brand in this way we are confirming its importance in our strategy for the future growth of the company and our commitment to maximising the value of our major asset. Boots is a very strong brand indeed in the UK health and beauty markets and is the most trusted brand on the high street. We are certain we can translate this success in to the global arena with the help of WPP".

He continued: "I want to thank OMD and recognise their significant contribution to our success to date. However, we are starting a new journey and need to organise our activities differently."