

# PRESS RELEASE



## **PUBLICIS GROUPE ACQUIRES LEADING DIGITAL MARKETING AGENCY 'SYNERGIZE' IN SOUTH AFRICA**

According to Gail Curtis, Saatchi & Saatchi Group CEO, South Africa, "The integration of this Big Data powerhouse into Saatchi & Saatchi South Africa will ensure the new integrated entity is a formidable force on the African continent. Synergize is an award winning, digital marketing solutions provider with an in-depth knowledge of search engines and online marketing techniques that will increase the value we can deliver for our clients."

**Publicis Groupe [Euronext Paris: FR0000130577]** has announced the 100% acquisition of South African digital search marketing company, Synergize.

Founded in 1999, Synergize is one of only a few Google Analytics accredited agencies in Africa and the Middle East. The agency offers services in SEO, online marketing, web design, CMS development, mobile, PPC/Paid Media, analytics, copywriting and social media. Their portfolio of 100 clients varying in e-commerce, property, finance, retail and travel include those such as, Prime Meridian, a South African car insurance company, Car Magazine, Property 24 and Cash Crusaders, a popular local second-hand e-commerce site.

Synergize is the Search Marketing category winner of the 2012 and 2013 Bookmarks Awards, and a winner of 3 additional 2013 Bookmark awards, the Oscars of digital marketing in South Africa.

The agency will be integrated into Saatchi & Saatchi South Africa, further boosting its integrated communications capabilities in South Africa and across the Saatchi & Saatchi Africa network. Saatchi & Saatchi's At Play digital arm will be absorbed into the new division, which will be renamed Saatchi & Saatchi Synergize.

Shaune Jordaan, CEO of Synergize, will become CEO of Saatchi & Saatchi Synergize and Chris Corbet, the co-founder of Synergize, will become Chief Operating Officer. The Synergize staff team of 48 will integrate into the Saatchi & Saatchi offices in both Cape Town and Johannesburg to form a team of 154 professionals.

Jordaan declared, *“The combination of Saatchi & Saatchi’s creativity and Synergize’s analytical and measurement aspects will deliver results driven campaigns using extensive reporting tools, and will give Saatchi & Saatchi Synergize a strong competitive edge.”*

According to Gail Curtis, Saatchi & Saatchi Group CEO, South Africa, *“The integration of this Big Data powerhouse into Saatchi & Saatchi South Africa will ensure the new integrated entity is a formidable force on the African continent. Synergize’s in-depth knowledge of search engines and online marketing techniques that will increase the value we can deliver for our clients,”* says Curtis.

Justin Billingsley, COO of Saatchi & Saatchi EMEA, says, *“Synergize is very good at what it does, namely optimizing the digital channel so that brands can reach their audiences faster, at lower costs and convert these people to purchase.”* He continues, *“They play very well in the so-called ‘Big Data’ space that is attracting the attention and spend of our clients. When we look at potential partners it is not just about capabilities. What’s amazing about Synergize is not just that they are awesome at what they do, but their culture, under the inspirational leadership of Shaune Jordaan, is a natural fit with ours.”*

South Africa is ranked as the eighth fastest growing advertising market in the world between 2013 and 2016, driving the next wave of adspend growth.

## About Publicis Groupe

Publicis Groupe [Euronext Paris FR0000130577, CAC 40] is one of the world’s leading communications groups. We offer the full range of services and skills: digital (DigitasLBi, Razorfish, Rosetta, VivaKi), creative services (BBH, Leo Burnett, Publicis Worldwide, Saatchi & Saatchi), public affairs, corporate communications and events (MSLGROUP), media strategy, planning and buying (Starcom MediaVest Group and ZenithOptimedia) and healthcare communications, with Publicis Healthcare Communications Group (PHCG). Present in 108 countries, the Groupe employs 60,000 professionals.

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## About Saatchi & Saatchi

Part of the Publicis Groupe, the 3rd largest communications holding company worldwide, Saatchi & Saatchi’s Network clients include Diageo, Carlsberg, General Mills, HSBC, Lenovo, Mead Johnson, Mondelez International, Novartis, Procter & Gamble, T-Mobile, Toyota and Visa Europe. With 130 offices and over 6000 employees, Saatchi & Saatchi is known for its outstanding creative ideas that generate powerful emotional connections between consumers and products. This is a key element in Lovemarks, Saatchi & Saatchi’s unique methodology for elevating the status of brands by creating ‘loyalty beyond reason’ and ‘inspirational consumers’.

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