

**EMBARGO: 8.00 AM GMT, 19<sup>th</sup> March**

## **ZenithOptimedia launches new global media network**

**Blue 449 takes innovative, 'Open Source' approach to communications**

ZenithOptimedia has launched a new global media network to drive business growth and further develop new and innovative approaches to communications. Called Blue 449, the new network has its headquarters in London at the offices of Walker Media, which has rebranded to become the founding office of ZenithOptimedia's new global agency.

Blue 449 will have 17 city hubs by the end of this year and will operate collaboratively with the other ZenithOptimedia brands: Zenith, Optimedia, Performics, Newcast, Moxie, and Ninah. The new network will also benefit from access to the extensive range of services within the Publicis Groupe and VivaKi, in a new framework for clients called 'Open Source'. Collaborative, Open Source behaviours will also inform Blue 449's relationships with media, technology and creative partners. They will also influence the network's planning approach and its response to the new digital economy.

Blue 449 will be led by Global Chairman, Sebastien Danet, and Global Managing Director, James Shoreland. Sebastien Danet is a Global Managing Partner at ZenithOptimedia and Chairman VivaKi France. James Shoreland has been promoted from EVP, Director Corporate Development, ZenithOptimedia US to the new MD position at Blue 449. Sebastien and James will be joined by Phil Georgiadis, UK Chairman, Blue 449, and other members of the ZenithOptimedia Worldwide Executive in the leadership of the new network.

The roll out of the 17 hubs will start with EMEA and North America, followed soon after by Asia-Pacific and LATAM. However, Blue 449 will be able to offer solutions to clients in all markets around the world by calling on the resources of the ZenithOptimedia network.

The launch of Blue 449 follows the acquisition of Walker Media in 2014 by Publicis Groupe. Formed in 1989, Walker Media was the largest independent media agency in the UK. The name Blue 449 references the wavelength of the colour between the blue of ZenithOptimedia and the purple of the former Walker Media brand.

Steve King, Worldwide CEO, ZenithOptimedia, said: “The world doesn’t need yet another global media agency. What it needs is a new force of energy for clients looking to break with traditions. Blue 449 is a realisation of visionary attitudes and thinking set to disrupt the market.”

Sebastien Danet, Global Chairman, Blue 449, said: “This is a truly exciting development in media communications. Blue 449 will be a dynamic, multi-hub network, benefitting from all the resources of ZenithOptimedia and Publicis Groupe and pioneering an Open Source, collaborative approach.”

**For further information, please contact:**

**Tim Collison**

*Global Communications Director*

Tel: +44 20 7961 1126

E-mail: [tim.collison@zenithoptimedia.com](mailto:tim.collison@zenithoptimedia.com)

**About ZenithOptimedia**

ZenithOptimedia - [www.zenithoptimedia.com](http://www.zenithoptimedia.com) - is a leading global media services network with over 7,400 people working in 262 offices across 74 countries. We are part of Publicis Groupe, the world’s third largest communications group, and the world’s second largest media counsel and buying group. As the first agency to apply a rigorous and objective approach to improving the effectiveness of marketing spend, ZenithOptimedia delivers to clients the best possible return on their communications investment. This philosophy is supported by a unique approach to strategy development and implementation across the full spectrum of paid, owned and earned contact points – the Live ROI planning process. The ZenithOptimedia Group of companies equips our clients

with a full range of integrated skills across communications planning, value optimisation, performance media and content creation. Our key clients include Armani Group, ASUS, Aviva, BBC Worldwide, Bacardi-Martini, Electrolux, General Mills, Lactalis, LVMH, Nestlé, News Corporation, L'Oréal, Oracle, Puma, Qantas, Reckitt Benckiser, Richemont Group, Royal Bank of Scotland, Sanofi, SCA, Toyota/Lexus, Verizon and Whirlpool.