

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**AVENIR GLOBAL acquires the top 10 independent public relations
and communication company Padilla**

Montreal-based holding and management company of PR and communication firms
now a key player in the U.S.

MONTREAL and MINNEAPOLIS, MN., August 1, 2018 – AVENIR GLOBAL, a Montreal-based holding and management company of public relations and communication firms, today announced that it has acquired U.S.-based Padilla.

This is a pursued U.S. expansion for AVENIR GLOBAL, having already marked its presence with the opening of U.S. operations for healthcare specialists AXON Communications in the Hudson Valley in 2010 and the acquisition of the integrated data-driven communications agency SHIFT Communications in 2016.

“We are delighted to welcome Padilla to the AVENIR GLOBAL family,” **said Jean-Pierre Vasseur, president and CEO of AVENIR GLOBAL.** “Padilla’s reputation and footprint, not to mention its specialized industry expertise and client roster, solidify our current operations and, when added to our SHIFT and AXON brands, position us as a key player in the U.S. marketplace. AVENIR GLOBAL brands’ clients can now rely on 330 experts in 8 cities across the United States [Boston; Richmond, VA; Washington D.C; New York; Chicago; Minneapolis; Austin; and San Francisco] to connect them to the people who matter most, with the right message, at the right time.”

Founded in 1961, Padilla has annual revenue of US\$40 million and 210 employees in six offices across the United States. Padilla offers public relations, advertising, digital and social marketing, investor relations, crisis management and brand strategy services with specialized expertise in Food and Beverage, Agribusiness, Health, Manufacturing, Technology, and Consumer Products and Services. Padilla includes brand consultancy Joe Smith, FoodMinds food and nutrition affairs and SMS Research Advisors.

Coinciding with the purchase by AVENIR GLOBAL, Padilla will conclude a planned leadership transition from Lynn Casey, its chair and CEO, to Matt Kucharski, who will lead Padilla as its president. Casey will become chair, and both Kucharski and Casey will report to AVENIR GLOBAL president and CEO Vasseur.

“Joining AVENIR GLOBAL was a perfect fit for Padilla”, **said Casey.** “Both companies share a great deal in common in terms of history, values and management philosophy, along with complementary vertical expertise. We now have access to a diverse set of capabilities and resources that will propel our client offering and growth, along with exciting new opportunities for our next-generation leadership and all Padilla employees.”

AVENIR GLOBAL’s long-term growth strategy is focused on diversifying its geographic reach, deepening its talent pool and expanding its service offering. With today’s announcement, AVENIR GLOBAL solidifies its global leadership position in the industry, moving from 26th to 22nd in worldwide PR agency ranking.

Bank of Montreal provided the cross border acquisition financing for the transaction. Rick Gould, managing partner, Gould+Partners facilitated the introduction of the parties.

About AVENIR GLOBAL

AVENIR GLOBAL is a Montreal-based holding and management company with an active operations mindset and a hands-on approach to all its investments. With 760 staff and offices in 21 locations across Canada, the U.S. and in Europe, it is the 22nd most important public relations firm in the world. In Canada, AVENIR GLOBAL owns **NATIONAL Public Relations**, the country's leading public relations firm, servicing clients across a wide range of sectors, and **NATIONAL Equicom**, the industry's foremost investor relations and financial services practice. In the United States, AVENIR GLOBAL owns **SHIFT Communications**, a data-driven integrated communications agency; and the public relations and communication company **Padilla**, which includes the brand consultancy **Joe Smith**, the food and nutrition experts at **FoodMinds** and the research authorities at **SMS Research Advisors**. The AVENIR GLOBAL network also includes healthcare specialists **AXON Communications**, with offices in Toronto, the U.S, the U.K. and Europe and **Madano**, a strategic communications consultancy based in London.

AVENIR GLOBAL is owned by **RES PUBLICA Consulting Group**.

About Padilla

Padilla is a top 10 independent public relations and communication company comprised of 210 employees. Padilla builds, grows and protects brands and reputations worldwide by creating purposeful connections with the people who matter most through public relations, advertising, digital and social marketing, investor relations and brand strategy. Padilla includes the brand consultancy of **Joe Smith**, the food and nutrition experts at **FoodMinds** and the research authorities at **SMS Research Advisors**. Clients include 3M, Barnes & Noble College, Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Minnesota, Cargill Animal Nutrition, Hass Avocado Board, Mayo Clinic, Prosciutto di Parma, Rockwell Automation, Sanofi Pasteur, U.S. Highbush Blueberry Council, and the Virginia Lottery. Padilla is an AVENIR GLOBAL company.

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