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## KETCHUM ACQUIRES MAJORITY STAKE IN INDIA'S SAMPARK PR

### *Firm Continues to Grow Geographic Footprint to Better Service Expanding Global Client Base*

**NEW YORK and MUMBAI, April 12, 2011** – Ketchum, one of the world's largest global public relations consultancies, today announced it has acquired a majority stake in a leading agency in India, Sampark PR. This move, which follows recent acquisitions in [Greater China](#) and [Russia](#), further expands the agency's global reach and advances its client service offering in markets with rapidly growing demand for communications services. Sampark PR, which is currently [nominated](#) as Indian Consultancy of the Year by the *Holmes Report*<sup>1</sup>, was founded in 1994 by Bela Rajan and N.S. Rajan, who, as director and managing director, will continue to lead the India business and will retain a significant holding in the agency going forward. It will operate as Ketchum Sampark.

Sampark PR, one of the leading PR networks in India, has broad national reach with offices located in Mumbai, New Delhi, Kolkata, Chennai, Bangalore, Pune and Hyderabad and a network of 80 associate offices that extends throughout the country's 25 states, providing greater inroads into India for Ketchum's roster of international client businesses and global brands. In turn, Ketchum will provide greater access to international markets for blue-chip and burgeoning Indian companies and brands, many of which are turning to communications to help build and support their reputations. In fact, a [recent study](#) carried out by the Associated Chambers of Commerce and Industry of India (ASSOCHAM India) underscored the significant expansion of the public relations industry in India, which is growing

32 percent annually, measured against the acceleration of between 22 percent and 25 percent witnessed during the last few years.

“Today marks another important milestone for Ketchum as we continue to implement our global vision of providing consistently excellent communications service to our clients in the key business and communications markets where they operate,” said Ray Kotcher, senior partner and CEO, Ketchum. “Our investments over the past six months, in Russia, China and now India, are predicated on this strategy and fortify the foundation we have in place for our clients and our people.”

This partnership will significantly expand Ketchum’s presence in South Asia, complementing Ketchum’s strong network in the Asia-Pacific region which includes Greater China, Australia, Indonesia, Japan, the Philippines, Singapore, South Korea and Thailand. Other noteworthy progress in developing the firm’s geographic client service strategy includes the 2010 completion of its [merger with Pleon](#) to form Ketchum Pleon in Europe, creating the largest, most diversified communications consultancy in the region. In addition, Ketchum established a joint venture in the Middle East and North Africa called [Ketchum Raad Middle East](#) and a new exclusive affiliate relationship in South Korea with local market leader [Prain](#), both of which also were selected as Consultancy of the Year contenders for their regions.

Jon Higgins, Ketchum senior partner and CEO of international operations, said, “India occupies a powerful place in the world economy today. With Sampark, Ketchum has acquired one of the most respected PR businesses in India. Ketchum has worked closely with Sampark’s leadership team for some time now, and we have tremendous respect for their people and business. We are eager to put our enhanced partnership on a path of even greater possibility for our clients.”

With more than 125 employees, Ketchum Sampark is renowned within the industry for its financial and corporate communications, investor relations, issues and crisis management, technology, brand marketing and infrastructure expertise.

Ketchum Sampark handles a combination of Indian domestic clients and Ketchum global network clients across a broad range of industries, including automotive, finance, healthcare, technology and travel, among others.

As part of the transaction, in addition to Bela Rajan and N.S. Rajan, the India operation’s board of directors will include Higgins, Robert Lorfink, senior partner, COO and CFO of Ketchum, and Tom

Harrison, Chairman and CEO of Diversified Agency Services, a division of Omnicom Group. The leadership team of Bela Rajan, N.S. Rajan and Ajay Sharma, managing partner, will continue to manage the day-to-day operations of the agency in India.

“The enormous potential in India leads to a strong demand for communications services from global companies operating in the region and Indian companies looking at new markets. This is an ideal time to reach this agreement,” said N.S. Rajan. “We are eager to work with the board and Ketchum’s leadership group to expand our partnership with Ketchum and maximize opportunities for our clients. We believe we can better service our clients and can accomplish far more together in the years ahead than we could have achieved on our own.”

For more information, visit [www.samparkjoinsketchum.com](http://www.samparkjoinsketchum.com).

#### **About Ketchum**

Ketchum is a leading global communications firm with operations in more than 70 countries across six continents. Named 2010 Large PR Firm of the Year (*Holmes Report* and *PR News*) and the winner of an unprecedented three consecutive *PRWeek* Campaign of the Year Awards, our colleagues partner with clients to deliver strategic programming, breakthrough creative and measureable results that build brands and reputations. For more information on Ketchum, a unit of Omnicom Group Inc. (NYSE:OMC), visit [www.ketchum.com](http://www.ketchum.com).

#### **About Sampark PR**

Sampark Public Relations ([www.sampark.com](http://www.sampark.com)), India's leading public relations and perception management company, was established in 1994 to assist in the image enhancement of corporations. The company's services include public relations, media relations, crisis management, marketing communications, events planning, and more. The company has offices in Mumbai, New Delhi, Kolkata, Chennai, Bangalore, Pune, and Hyderabad. Besides this, the company has a network of 80 associate offices across India.

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<sup>i</sup> The Holmes Report is an online public relations trade that provides “global knowledge and insight for public relations professionals.”