

**NATIONAL Public Relations Acquires SHIFT Communications, Inc.**

***Top Canadian PR Firm poised to emerge quickly as industry leader in the U.S. through acquisition of award-winning firm***

**Montreal, QC and Newton, MA – May 4, 2016** – NATIONAL Public Relations, Canada’s leading public relations firm and one of the world’s leading independent communications firms, today announced that SHIFT Communications, an integrated communications agency with offices in Boston, New York City, Austin and San Francisco, is joining its ranks.

The transaction is part of NATIONAL’s long-term growth strategy focused on maintaining and diversifying the Firm’s international client base and capabilities. When added to the Firm’s already flourishing specialist healthcare consultancy, AXON Communications in New York’s Hudson Valley, NATIONAL is now poised to quickly emerge as an industry leader in the U.S.

“Our story is one of sustained targeted growth. Over the last 40 years, NATIONAL has grown from a two-person Montreal-based public relations shop to the 24<sup>th</sup> most important PR agency in the world, now with 550 employees and 17 offices across North America and Europe,” said Andrew Molson, chairman of NATIONAL Public Relations. “We are thrilled to welcome SHIFT into the NATIONAL fold. Their stellar industry reputation, notably in data-driven PR, and their geographical footprint add significant value to our current and future service offering.”

SHIFT was founded in 2003 by principals Todd Defren and Jim Joyal, and quickly established itself as a pioneer in the PR industry with its early thought leadership and adoption of social media. More recently SHIFT has pushed the boundaries of the definition of public relations. By blending earned and social media with marketing technology and creative elements, SHIFT is bringing the vision of “data-driven PR” to life. Through this process SHIFT is leading the evolution of public relations into a true strategic driver for marketing at the C-Level. And in a unique turn, last year SHIFT entered into a strategic agreement with Google to become a Google Analytics™ Certified Partner (GACP), a significant milestone for the Agency and for the public relations industry as a whole.

“We are delighted to join the NATIONAL family,” said Defren. “This is a deal that began – and crossed the finish line – because from our first meeting, we recognized an immediate alignment on values, culture and vision. We’re very much looking forward to helping NATIONAL expand its North American footprint, and believe we have found the right partner to help us achieve our own ambitions for delivering a new style of data-driven PR.”

SHIFT will retain its name, leadership team, marketplace agenda and geographic footprint following the transaction and the firm is committed to ensuring a seamless transition for all of its stakeholders. The success of existing client programs and priorities was a central consideration in the structuring of the transaction, and both parties look forward to collaborating in support of our teams and clients.

**About NATIONAL Public Relations**

NATIONAL Public Relations connects clients to the people who matter most; delivering the right message, at the right time. Grounded in research, insight and deep sector understanding, we bring together teams of discipline experts from across our network to provide creative communications solutions that move people in thought and actions. For 40 years, NATIONAL has been at the centre of issues and industries that matter, leading change for today and tomorrow.

NATIONAL is Canada's leading public relations firm, servicing clients across a wide range of sectors, with offices in Vancouver, Calgary, Toronto, Ottawa, Montreal, Quebec City, Saint John, Halifax and St. John's. The NATIONAL network also includes NATIONAL Equicom, the industry's foremost investor relations and financial services communications practice; healthcare specialists AXON Communications, with offices in New York, Toronto, London and Copenhagen; and Madano, a UK strategic communications consultancy based in London. NATIONAL Public Relations is part of RES PUBLICA Consulting Group, and is affiliated internationally with public relations firm Burson-Marsteller, a WPP company. For more information about NATIONAL, please visit our website at [www.national.ca](http://www.national.ca) or you can [follow us on Twitter](#).

**About SHIFT**

Established in 2003, SHIFT Communications is an award-winning, national public relations firm that represents some of the best-known enterprise and consumer brands, including Citrix, Demandbase, Hawaii Visitors and Convention Bureau, McDonald's, Orchard Supply Hardware, Red Hat, RSA Conference, Webroot and Whole Foods Market. SHIFT Communications' 150+ employees are located in the Boston, San Francisco, New York and Austin metros. For more information on SHIFT's data-driven approach to marketing and public relations visit [www.shiftcomm.com](http://www.shiftcomm.com).

**INFORMATION:**

*NATIONAL Public Relations media contact info:*

Scott Anderson

[sanderson@national.ca](mailto:sanderson@national.ca)

416-586-1954

*SHIFT media contact info:*

Derek Lyons

[dlyons@shiftcomm.com](mailto:dlyons@shiftcomm.com)

617-779-1838