WPP and IBM Team Up to Revolutionize Business-to-Business Marketing with Generative AI

- WPP Open for B2B is powered by IBM's watsonx AI and data platform to solve complex B2B marketing challenges

- IBM is the first user of the platform to accelerate its AI-driven marketing and communications transformation

- WPP and IBM will collaborate with LinkedIn to better understand buying groups

CANNES, France, June 19, 2024 /PRNewswire/ -- WPP (NYSE: WPP) and IBM (NYSE:IBM) today announced the launch of a new business-to-business (B2B) solution powered by IBM's AI and data platform watsonx designed to reinvent how B2B marketers identify and engage clients and prospects across the buying journey.

WPP Open for B2B will help marketers solve complex B2B marketing challenges, accurately identify and engage buying groups, and improve clients' return on investment. Buying groups are made up of multiple stakeholders with different priorities who influence key purchasing decisions both inside and outside of organizations, which can make it difficult to deliver a consistent message over a long sales period. Traditionally, understanding how to adjust that message across the right channels to guide buying groups to purchase is challenging and often leads to inefficient marketing spend.

WPP Open for B2B is powered by watsonx – an AI and data platform designed to accelerate the impact of AI across businesses – and will bring together market-leading, proprietary capabilities from both organizations. WPP and IBM will strategically collaborate with LinkedIn to help brands better understand buying groups so they can market more effectively and reach target buyers.

Alan Webber, Program Vice President – Digital Platform Ecosystems at analyst firm IDC believes "this product and partnership have the potential to be an exponential force multiplier for the Fortune 1000."

Stephan Pretorius, Chief Technology Officer at WPP, said: "Our clients want to get in front of the right people, at the right time, on the right channels, with the right message. However, most solutions in the market today are designed for consumer marketing, targeted at sole decision-makers at a single point of purchase. WPP Open for B2B, and our collaboration with IBM and LinkedIn, will help solve some incredibly complex challenges in the B2B marketing space, using the best of WPP and IBM

technology and expertise."

Jonathan Adashek, Senior Vice President of Marketing and Communications at IBM,said: "B2B marketers have been focused on creating truly personalized, relevant and consistent experiences for buying groups at scale for years. Our collaboration with WPP and LinkedIn provides real-time, actionable insights that are based on trusted data. We are excited to create and use these new, powerful and trusted AI solutions to deliver a force multiplier for B2B marketing."

Penry Price, Vice President at LinkedIn, said: "With success in B2B requiring customers to reach between 6 to 10 stakeholders, building relationships and 'collective confidence' among the entire buyer group is key. We are looking forward to working with WPP and IBM to determine how our unique knowledge of buyer groups can help inform WPP Open for B2B and help clients deliver more effective advertising campaigns."

WPP and IBM have used watsonx to build capabilities for the platform including:

- **AI-powered Buying Group Brain™** – a WPP AI model that can more accurately identify target buying groups in a B2B client account, built with IBM watsonx.ai and trained on trustworthy data from the client and third parties through IBM watsonx.data. It can also inform how marketers deliver personalized and consistent experiences across channels and across the duration of a long-term influencer campaign.
- **Orchestration and optimization** – using insights from WPP's Buying Group Brain™ AI model to optimize engagement and opportunity progression for buying groups. That includes providing recommendations for channel mix and content to ensure buying groups experience a cohesive, consistent and relevant message. It can also help marketers track marketing activity effectiveness with a buying group and adjust messaging or influencer targeting on demand.
- **Chief Marketing Officer command center** – an AI assistant that serves as a command center for CMOs, bringing forward data and insights and connecting underlying systems so senior marketers can plan and model scenarios, predict results, make more data-driven decisions and execute recommended actions.

These capabilities are supported by the IBM watsonx.governance toolkit to help clients govern and transparently track the performance of the AI models.

Accelerating IBM's AI-powered marketing and communications transformation

IBM has already begun deploying the new platform within its marketing and communications organization. WPP's creative and technology expertise alongside the joint innovation on the watsonx platform is expected to support IBM's objective to accelerate growth through AI-driven marketing.

An open approach with embedded governance

WPP Open for B2B powered by watsonx is designed for enterprise scale, security, governance and easy integration into clients' existing systems, combining the open capabilities of WPP Open, IBM watsonx and Red Hat OpenShift[1].

IBM Consulting is the primary change management consulting partner for the solution. That includes helping clients customize and operate the platform, integrate it into their marketing workflows and build employees' skills and adoption of the platform, using the collaborative engagement model IBM Garage. IBM consultants can help clients select and deploy the right AI models for the platform based on their requirements, including enterprise grade models like IBM Granite, open source or other third-party models.

About WPP

WPP is the creative transformation company. We use the power of creativity to build better futures for our people, planet, clients and communities. For more information, visit www.wpp.com.

WPP Open for B2B is part of WPP Open, WPP's intelligent marketing operating system powered by AI. Applying WPP's decades of experience serving enterprise clients, WPP Open is designed to integrate with any client, partner or technology vendor to create optimised and automated marketing capabilities.

About IBM

IBM is a leading provider of global hybrid cloud and AI, and consulting expertise. We help clients in more than 175 countries capitalize on insights from their data, streamline business processes, reduce costs, and gain the competitive edge in their industries. Thousands of government and corporate entities in critical infrastructure areas such as financial services, telecommunications and healthcare rely on IBM's hybrid cloud platform and Red Hat OpenShift to affect their digital transformations quickly, efficiently, and securely. IBM's breakthrough innovations in AI, quantum computing, industry-specific cloud solutions and consulting deliver open and flexible options to our clients. All of this is backed by IBM's long-standing commitment to trust, transparency, responsibility, inclusivity, and service.

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