



For immediate release:

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Kretek International, Inc. Expands Media Platform with Latest Acquisitions

Kretek International, Inc. acquires media assets of SpecComm International, including Tobacconist, Pipes & Tobacco, and Cigars & Leisure, CTS Report and TobaccoReviews.com

Kretek International has entered into a definitive agreement with Tobacco Merchants Association (TMA) to acquire media assets of the company formerly known as SpecComm International, Inc., which TMA acquired in January of 2019. This includes *Tobacconist Magazine*, *Pipes & Tobacco Magazine*, *Cigars & Leisure*, and *TobaccoReviews.com*. These media entities will be housed under Tobacco Media Group (TMG), a subsidiary business of Kretek International.

“We feel this is a strategically sound acquisition for Kretek,” says Jason Carignan, CMO of Kretek International, Inc. “We recognize the power of journalism and its influence in building relationships between both people and products. These titles have done the footwork- creating loyal audiences and solid reputations. And now it’s time to up the ante, utilizing our extensive network to leverage their foundation and work towards disseminating information and ideas that strengthen the premium tobacco industry as a whole. We’re committed to supporting TMG as a key information source for people in all facets of the tobacco industry and are confident in their success.”

For several decades, *Tobacconist Magazine* and *CTS Report* were the go-to trade publications for the premium retail and convenience store markets. TMG is also excited to expand its reach into the consumer market with the acquisition of *Pipes & Tobacco Magazine*, *TobaccoReviews.com* and *Cigars & Leisure Magazine*. TMG has been looking for a way to better to serve the premium tobacco industry and community with tailored news and content and will be able to do so with *Pipes & Tobacco Magazine* and the popular consumer-driven review website, *TobaccoReviews.com*. These titles will be in addition to *Tobacco Business Magazine*, which is a bi-monthly premium trade publication for the premium tobacco and cigar industry. Specific plans for each of these titles will be announced in the fourth quarter of 2019.

“TMA wanted to be good stewards to these important assets to the tobacco community.” Says Chris Greer, CEO of TMA. “After our acquisition of SpecComm’s assets, we needed to find a home for them with an organization that could deal with consumers in a way an information

group like ours could not. TMG is the perfect home to grow and develop these titles and serve their important communities. We look forward to seeing the continued success of these assets.”

TMG is the leader within the tobacco industry through its publishing and annual trade show properties. TMG strives to create an inclusive media ecosystem where the “total tobacco” category can ignite business growth by working together across the industry. In the last two years, *Tobacco Business* has quickly become the leading tobacco trade publication that has helped tell the story and give international exposure to many tobacco businesses, professionals and their products both in print and digitally. The Tobacco Plus Expo (TPE) trade show has also emerged as a top choice for businesses and retailers in the tobacco, vapor and alternative industries and has continued to grow year after year. The acquisition of these new titles and websites shows TMG’s overall commitment to serve as a voice and platform for the global tobacco industry.

“Bringing these properties into the fold is a strategic move for TMG. We wanted to give our partners a whole of market, 360-degree opportunity to promote and market their brands to both trade and consumer groups. We are now able to offer a one-stop-shop for all tobacco, premium cigar, pipes and pipe tobacco companies that want to grow their brands under a highly reputable organization of TMG. This is an exciting time for us and the industry. We look forward to offering our partners with increased opportunities in the tobacco industry through these new media platforms,” says Ben Stimpson, managing director of TMG.

For additional information about Kretek International, Inc. and its subsidiaries, please visit kretek.com.

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About Kretek International, Inc.

Kretek International, Inc., parent company to Phillips & King, Ventura Cigar Company and Tobacco Media Group (TMG), is America’s number one importer, marketer, and distributor of specialty tobacco products to convenience, mass, and national retailers. For over 30 years, Kretek has enjoyed a strong reputation for providing exceptional customer relationships and top-quality goods. The company continues to offer standout brands the Djarum, Cuban Rounds, and Djeep Lighters to distribution channels across the United States and Canada, bringing value, high-margins, and growth to retailers and distributors.

About Tobacco Media Group (TMG)

Tobacco Media Group (TMG) is the publishing and event subsidiary of Kretek International. TMG owns and operates Tobacco Business Magazine and the Tobacco Plus Expo (TPE). Tobacco Business Magazine is a print and online publication providing industry news, information, and insights to tobacco retailers, manufacturers, and wholesalers, servicing all categories of the market, including premium tobacco, cigarettes, smokeless, vapor, pipe tobacco, and alternative accessories. A complement to the magazine, TPE is the largest B2B tobacco trade show highlighting the full-spectrum of tobacco, vapor, alternative and general merchandise products available on the ever-evolving market. TPE 2020 is planning to deliver the industry’s most compelling content and will be held January 29 – January 31 at the Las Vegas Convention Center. To learn more about TPE, please visit the website: www.tobaccoplusexpo.com.

About Tobacco Merchants Association (TMA)

TMA, a non-profit, member-driven organization, is dedicated to providing all stakeholders with open and engaging forums and unbiased information on all tobacco and nicotine issues.

TMA continues to focus on informative content for tma.org, its 26 publications that provide the information and analysis that TMA members and subscribers depend on to widen their understanding of tobacco and nicotine issues globally, along with its highly regarded Annual Meeting and Conference.