

13 Heritage brands separated and held for sale

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Ascential plc

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Ascential plc (the "Group" / LSE: ASCL.L), the international business to business media company with a focused portfolio of market-leading events and information services products, today announces that it has separated 13 heritage brands (the "Heritage Brands") into a separate operating entity. The Heritage Brands will develop an independent business strategy while new owners are sought.

The Heritage Brands are HSJ, MEED, Drapers, Nursing Times, Local Government Chronicle, Construction News, New Civil Engineer, Ground Engineering, H&V News and RAC, Retail Jeweller, Materials Recycling World and the architecture titles including Architects' Journal, The Architectural Review and the associated World Architecture Festival. Each provides essential content to the loyal subscribers and industries they serve across three platforms - digital, events and print.

Consistent with the evolution of its internal management reporting structure during 2016, the Group will be reporting these Heritage Brands as a separate segment for its 2016 financial year, the results of which are due to be announced on 27 February 2017. As a result of on-going discussions, the Board now considers a sale of the segment to be highly probable and has therefore reclassified it as a discontinued operation.

The Heritage Brands generated revenue of £63m in 2015 (2014: £64m) and £26m in H116 (H115: £29m). As stated at the time of Ascential's interim results on 1 August 2016, print advertising reduced to £9m in the 12 months to 30 June 2016 (or less than 3% of Group revenue). The Heritage Brands accounted for more than 90% of that £9m total.

Duncan Painter, CEO, Ascential, commented:

"Ascential's growth strategy continues to be to focus its resources and investment on its largest brands and those with the highest growth potential. Our top five products represented 56% of Group revenue and 71% of Adjusted EBITDA in the 12 months to 30 June 2016. This move will further focus our portfolio on our largest market leading products. The Heritage Brands, with large, loyal audience communities, provide an exciting opportunity for new owners."

For further information, please contact:

FTI Consulting LLP
Matt Dixon/Ed Bridges

020 3727 1000

About Ascential:

Ascential plc is a leading international media company that informs and connects business professionals in 150 countries through market-leading Exhibitions, Festivals, and Information Services. Ascential powers the prestigious Cannes Lions Festival for the branded communications industry, the world's premier payments and financial services congress Money20/20, Spring Fair/Autumn Fair, the global fashion trend forecasting service WGSN and environmental risk data business Groundsure.

23 of Ascential's 32 product lines are marketing leading and occupy number one positions. Ascential exists to provide our customers with world class content and connections empowering their businesses to be the best informed and best connected. Our products enable focus, growth and value. Ascential.com

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