



Allied Irish Banks, p.l.c. acquires Ketchum Canada

14th January 2002

Baltimore, Md., January 14, 2002 -- Allied Irish Banks, p.l.c. (AIB), parent company of Allfirst Financial Inc., today announced that it has reached an agreement to acquire Ketchum Canada, Inc., Canada's largest and best-known fundraising consultancy.

AIB and Allfirst have established a unique niche in providing the full array of financial services to the Not For Profit (NFP) sector, including credit, credit enhancement, cash management, asset management and risk management services. The Ketchum acquisition reflects AIB's strategy to build a world class NFP business by combining the banking strengths of Allfirst and AIB with fundraising expertise and services, thus providing a one-stop shop for NFP clients. Last March, AIB purchased Community Counselling Services (CCS) the largest fundraising consultancy in the United States.

"AIB has identified the charitable sector in North America and Europe as a strategic growth area and the acquisition of Ketchum Canada fits in extremely well with our plans for expanding in this market," said Brian M. Leeney, AIB Executive Vice President and Chairman and CEO of CCS, Inc.

Since its founding in 1984, Ketchum Canada has assisted more than 600 clients in the Canadian NFP sector in raising \$1.5 billion. Ketchum has provided fundraising training to universities, hospitals, cultural institutions and religious organizations. A staff of 85 operates across Canada, with main offices in Toronto, Montreal, Calgary and Vancouver, and satellite offices in Ottawa and Halifax.

Frank P. Bramble, Chief Executive of AIB's USA Division, and Chairman of Allfirst, said, "This is an exciting step forward for AIB. I welcome our new colleagues at Ketchum Canada to the AIB Group and look forward to further developing our Canadian based business."

The purchase of Ketchum Canada is conditional on the approval of the appropriate regulatory authorities and will be effected through Allfirst Financial Inc. Ketchum Canada will retain its name, staff and regional offices and will report to the USA division of AIB along with CCS, its sister company.

"It's a natural evolution for Ketchum Canada to become part of an international fundraising organization," said Ross McGregor, Ketchum's Chairman, CEO and founder.

The USA division of AIB includes Allied Irish America, CCS and Allfirst Financial Inc. Allfirst is a regional, diversified financial services company headquartered in Baltimore, Md., offering a full range of financial services including banking, trust, investment and insurance to retail, business and commercial customers. Its banking subsidiary, Allfirst Bank, operates over 250 bank branches and more than 575 ATMs throughout Maryland, Pennsylvania, Washington, D.C., Northern Virginia and Delaware. Allfirst Financial Inc.'s assets were \$17.7 billion on September 30, 2001. Information about Allfirst Financial Inc. is available at www.allfirst.com.

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For further information contact:-

Ireland

Catherine Burke
Head of Corporate Relations
AIB Group
Bankcentre
Ballsbridge
Dublin 4
Tel: +353-1-641 3894

USA

Philip Hosmer

Vice President, Corporate Relations
Allfirst Financial Inc
Baltimore
Maryland
USA
Tel: +1-410-949-3042