

For immediate release

Publisac: endorsements and testimonials

Threatened by a possible recommendation from the City of Montréal that would result in its disappearance, the Publisac sparks more than 70,000 expressions of support from all over Québec

Montréal, November 21, 2019 – “We are very moved by the population’s widespread mobilization for the Publisac, a product that some look down upon but that is used by nine out of ten Quebecers,” stated François Olivier, President and Chief Executive Officer of TC Transcontinental (TSX: TCL.A TCL.B), owner of the Publisac. Launched in August, the ilovemypublisac.ca website helped gather more than 70,000 expressions of support from all over Québec, and close to 20,000 individuals took the time to leave us comments that speak volumes about people’s attachment to our product. We want to thank them very sincerely and spread their voices.”

November 12 marked the end of the public consultation held by the City of Montréal following a citizen petition seeking to modify the Publisac’s mode of distribution by reversing the current opt-out business model with an opt-in, which, because of its implied costs and complexity, would result in the disappearance of the Publisac. The consultation enabled various groups to express themselves. However, the silent majority, that is, the Publisac users and notably the underprivileged which depend on it every week, massively chose to express their support through ilovemypublisac.ca.

For the 2.5 million Quebecers living in households earning less than \$35,000 per year, the Publisac’s flyers represent between \$1,000 and \$1,500 in savings. “The Publisac is useful for everyone, but it’s particularly essential for low-income households and seniors, who overwhelmingly prefer paper to the digital format, and for whom the internet is often a luxury. Paper flyers remain the essential tool used by households to compare prices, look for deals, find rebate-coupons, plan their purchases and optimize their budget,” explained Mr. Olivier. Moreover, the Publisac helps thousands of local merchants attract customers to their stores, and almost all weekly newspapers in Québec are distributed through it.

“Environmental considerations are fundamental and we are already responding to them very actively. The Publisac is at the heart of the circular paper economy since 86% of flyers are recycled and no trees are cut to produce it. And it is now presented in a new plastic bag, entirely made here from recycled material – a first in Québec – while still being fully recyclable,” added Mr. Olivier.

Here are some of the testimonials from the 20,000 individuals about the Publisac:

“The Publisac is essential for planning my weekly purchases. I can compare prices from many suppliers in just a few minutes! It allows me to save substantially. Since I’m handicapped and low-income, it’s really very appreciated. Well done on your initiatives to reduce your environmental footprint.”

“Publisac lets me find out about good deals in my neighbourhood stores. Without the flyers, I wouldn’t go to the store and I’d probably buy online. It’s important to support local businesses in the face of e-commerce giants. I also like to read the local news and without the free weekly, I wouldn’t be aware of activities and news in my neighbourhood! I encourage you to continue distributing the Publisac!”

“I’m a single mother of four children. I rely on the Publisac to know what’s on special in which store, to use my budget well. It’s practical to have all the flyers in the same place, as opposed to searching for what I need on the internet. We save time and we can refer to the flyers.”

“The Publisac is a must for taking advantage of weekly savings. It’s particularly useful for people with income below the poverty line, and I’m one of them. Making it disappear would hurt low-income individuals.”

“When you have modest income, you can’t do without the Publisac. Good for those who turn their nose up at the flyers if they can afford to do so financially, but it’s far from being the case for everyone. The Publisac allows me to only buy items that are on sale, or almost only. Without these savings, it would be impossible for me to eat healthy!”

“A must-have in my search for weekly deals. Of course you can find it online, but I don’t like that, it’s too small on a cellphone or tablet, too tiring on a computer, as a programmer-analyst, I already spend too much time on the computer. It’s easier and simpler on paper! And we can easily carry them to argue a drop in price!”

“The Publisac is crucial in my case. I check all the specials and I prepare my order accordingly, especially when I want it delivered from the Métro store or when I can find someone to do my shopping or come along to help me. I’m a person with reduced mobility – I use a motorized wheelchair. I also have very modest income, I have to be very careful...”

“Hello, being a student and therefore having a more limited budget, the publisac is very useful when I look for the best deals to make my weekly grocery. I know that flyers are now available online but I do not get the same satisfaction as when I consult them in print. I like to circle with my pen the choices that interest me before adding them to my list. Because of this, I hope that it will not disappear.

“As an adult who has gone back to school, Publisacs allow me to see the savings I can make every week to reduce debt. Once after making my grocery list, I reuse the paper flyers (not those on glossy paper) to roll up the kitchen waste to place it in the compost bin. So, the circular papers will have been used not one, but twice! And I reuse the plastic bags for our little trash! ”

The Publisac is not distributed to those who do not want to receive it, simply by posting a pictogram that is very easy obtainable by calling 1 888 999-2272 or at publisac.ca. This model enables reduction at source. According to a recent CROP survey, 86% of Quebecers support the Publisac’s current mode of distribution, rather than seeing it disappear.

About TC Transcontinental

TC Transcontinental is a leader in flexible packaging in North America, and Canada’s largest printer. The Corporation is also positioned as the leading Canadian French-language educational publishing group. For over 40 years, TC Transcontinental’s mission has been to create products and services that allow businesses to attract, reach and retain their target customers.

Respect, teamwork, performance and innovation are the strong values held by the Corporation and its employees. TC Transcontinental's commitment to its stakeholders is to pursue its business activities in a responsible manner.

Transcontinental Inc. (TSX: TCL.A TCL.B), known as TC Transcontinental, has over 9,000 employees, the majority of which are based in Canada, the United States and Latin America. TC Transcontinental had revenues of more than C\$2.6 billion for the fiscal year ended October 28, 2018. For more information, visit TC Transcontinental's website at www.tc.tc.

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