



PRESS RELEASE

Paris, 24 May 2018

HAVAS GROUP CREATES AN AI INNOVATION CENTRE IN MONTRÉAL

Havas Group, one of the largest communications groups in the world, announces the creation in Montréal of an innovation centre for artificial intelligence and its applications to the customer experience, on the sidelines of the AI Forum at C2 Montréal. The objective is to use AI to monitor at-scale customer journeys and thus improve clients' business performance through a predictive and automated user experience.

The centre is part of a larger global initiative known as Havas X. This innovation powerhouse focuses on developing Havas' expertise in new technologies and disruptive solutions, creating business value for both Havas and its clients.

For **Yannick Bolloré, CEO Havas Group and Chairman of Vivendi**, Montréal was uniquely positioned to host the new innovation centre. *"Our Group has deep roots in Montréal. The city is a nerve centre for innovation and an AI hotbed, making Havas Montréal the ideal agency to provide full-service support in the development of AI-based solutions for brands. This gives us a unique, unparalleled position in the marketplace. It enables us to leverage our talents, while at the same time, provide new technologies and solutions that enhance our clients' brand and CX performance."*

A joint effort between BETC, Havas New York and Havas Montréal, the centre will combine technology, data and creativity to develop impactful brand and customer experiences powered by artificial intelligence for clients in Europe and North America.

By the end of 2020, the innovation centre will employ 60 specialists in AI, data science, customer experience design and programming. An augmented reality studio will also complement the offering.

"Montréal's AI ecosystem boasts the highest concentration of researchers in the world and a critical mass of businesses, providing Havas with all the talent and support it needs to boost innovation," says **Hubert Bolduc, President and CEO of Montréal International**. *"The decision to locate in Montréal shows once again how well the city has succeeded in promoting its expertise and high-tech sectors internationally."*

"BETC strongly encourages diversity and creative excellence, and Montréal embodies these values. Moreover, with the city located at the junction of Europe and North America, we share cultural and linguistic similarities that are complementary. Montréal is definitely a city of designers and innovators. The innovation centre's unique offer will mean great achievements for our brands,"

says **Mercedes Erra, Founder and President of BETC**. *“It’s a great opportunity for us to create a place where creatives and technologists meet, to supercharge creative and innovative output for our clients,”* adds **Olivier Vigneaux, CEO of BETC Digital**.

“The Montréal innovation centre strengthens Havas’ leadership position in customer experience and artificial intelligence in North America,” adds **Paul Marobella, Chairman & CEO, Havas Creative, North America**. *“The centre is an extension of existing AI capabilities critical to our business. It will allow us to scale capabilities to meet client needs by leveraging a critical mass of talent, including both creatives and technologists.”*

“The opening of the innovation centre is part of Havas Montréal’s strategy to offer our national clients a new breed of expertise and to position the agency as an epicentre of innovation within the Vivendi family. We are honoured to be part of a network that invests in innovation and in customer experience for brands,” says **Jan-Nicolas Vanderveken, President and CEO of Havas Montréal**.

The development of the innovation centre will be supervised by Jan-Nicolas Vanderveken and Pierre-Benoît Lemieux, named Vice President, Customer experience. It will be located in the downtown offices of Havas Montréal.

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About Havas Group

Havas is one of the world's largest global communications groups. Founded in 1835 in Paris, the Group employs 20,000 people in over 100 countries.

Since the end of 2017, Havas Group is fully integrated into Vivendi. Havas Group is committed to being the world's best company at creating meaningful connections between people and brands through creativity, media and innovation. Based on a client-centric model across media and creative, the Havas Group is the most integrated company in its sector. We operate with three business units (creative, media and healthcare & wellness) within our 52 Havas Villages all over the world where teams share the same premises ensuring agility and a seamless experience for clients.

Further information about Havas Group is available on the company's website: www.havasgroup.com

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About Havas Montréal

Havas Montréal comprises 80 communications specialists offering creative, design, strategy and production services, as well as media expertise, to a wide range of local and international brands. Havas Montréal's main clients include Couche-Tard, National Bank, Fromageries Bel, Air France-KLM, Richter and Décathlon.

About Montréal International

Established in 1996, Montréal International is a non-profit organization funded by the private sector, the governments of Canada and Québec, the Communauté métropolitaine de Montréal and the City of Montréal. Its mandate is to attract and retain foreign investment, international organizations, skilled workers and international students to Greater Montréal by providing support services tailored to their needs.

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