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For Immediate Release:

Epicomm Launches Leading Indicators™

*New benchmarking program will serve as a business early warning system,
enabling company executives to track vital financial metrics monthly.*

(Alexandria, Va., May 12, 2015)—Epicomm, the Association for Leaders in Print, Mail, Fulfillment, and Marketing Services, has teamed with sponsor Konica Minolta to launch Leading Indicators,™ a new free benchmarking program for companies in every sector of the graphic communications industry, regardless of their size, region, or specialty.

“For years, Epicomm Chief Economist Andy Paparozzi has been writing that the changing nature of today’s industry creates historic opportunities for the prepared and profound threats for the unprepared,” says Epicomm President and Chief Executive Officer Ken Garner. “Our new Leading Indicators program has been designed to help keep participating companies among the most prepared in the industry.

“This innovative program will enable them to identify internal trends that could affect the health of their business,” he continues, “providing critical financial information in time for them to act to offset any possible threats to their business or capitalize on any opportunities the data may reveal.”

“Konica Minolta is proud to be a part of the Leading Indicators program by Epicomm,” says Kevin Kern, Senior Vice President, Marketing, Konica Minolta Business Solutions, USA, Inc. “As fast as the industry is changing, it’s critically important to discover, recognize and act upon the elements that provide businesses a pathway of evolution. As an on-going program, we’re confident that Leading Indicators proves valuable on a continuous basis while always helping companies stay ahead of the curve.”

To participate in the program, companies first complete a detailed profile that includes company type, location, size, products offered, services offered, and revenue composition (percent of revenue from offset, digital printing, mailing, fulfillment, etc.). As participation in the program grows, these profiles will enable companies to benchmark their data against comparable businesses, such as providers of mailing services in a particular region or printing companies of a particular size.

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Epicomm Launches Leading Indicators Program/Page 2

Participants then submit some basic monthly financial and employment data, including gross sales, cost of goods sold, payroll, gross margin, EBITDA, accounts receivable, number of employees, and number of sales personnel. Data entry takes less than five minutes, but companies must submit data monthly to participate in the program.

“From the data submitted, the Leading Indicators program instantly calculates 13 vital metrics, including sales growth, payroll as a percent of sales, gross margin, EBITDA as a percent of sales, days of receivables outstanding, and sales per employee,” says Paparozzi. “There are dozens of financial indicators the program could track, but it focuses solely on those vital few metrics that will tell company leaders what they most need to know about their businesses.”

All data are submitted at the secure Leading Indicators website. There are no paper surveys and no one ever sees a company’s data—or would even know that it is a participant—except the person submitting the data, anyone the company designates as a program contact, and the Epicomm program administrator.

Participants access all results at the Leading Indicators website, including averages of the 13 vital metrics for both the full group and for top performers (top 20%), so they can benchmark their results against their peers and industry leaders. Epicomm members will also be able to break out results by company type, size, and other relevant criteria. Non-participants have no access to any Leading Indicators results.

“Because even the most relevant, carefully defined metrics never tell the whole story, Leading Indicators also includes a monthly ‘beyond the numbers’ question, asking companies, for example, what they view as their biggest opportunities, threats, or barriers to growth,” says Paparozzi. “We’ll also interview select participants, as we always have in our *State of the Industry* research, to provide even greater context and insight.”

All participants also have the option of joining the private Leading Indicators Community, where they can discuss the program, post questions and comments, etc. The community reinforces that Leading Indicators is not the occasional check of “where we stand,” but an ongoing process through which participants continue to learn from each other, act on what they learn, and challenge themselves to improve even further,

To view a sample Leading Indicators program survey and participant profile, or to apply to participate, visit research.epicomm.org or contact Paparozzi at apaparozzi@epicomm.org.

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Epicomm Launches Leading Indicators Program/Page 3

About Epicomm:

Epicomm, the Association for Leaders in Print, Mail, Fulfillment, and Marketing Services, is a not-for-profit business management association representing companies in the \$80+ billion graphic communications industry in North America. It provides industry advocacy, management training, and a comprehensive slate of business-building solutions for companies in an evolving market environment. It was created in 2014 through the merger of the Association of Marketing Service Providers (AMSP) and the National Association for Printing Leadership (NAPL)/National Association of Quick Printers (NAQP). Its founding associations have some 200 years of combined experience serving graphic communications companies of every size and specialty. Epicomm headquarters is at 1800 Diagonal Road, Suite 320, Alexandria, Va., 22314. It also maintains offices at One Meadowlands Plaza, Suite 1511, East Rutherford, N.J., 07073. For more information, visit www.epicomm.org or call (800) 333-6272 (Va.) or (800) 642-6275 (N.J.).

About Konica Minolta:

Konica Minolta Business Solutions U.S.A., Inc. (Konica Minolta) is one of the world's leaders in information management focused on enterprise content, technology optimization and cloud services. Our portfolio of offerings deliver solutions to improve our customers' speed to market, manage technology costs, and facilitate the sharing of information to increase productivity. The All Covered IT Services division offers a range of IT strategy, support, project and cloud computing solutions across all verticals. Konica Minolta has won numerous awards and recognition, including placement in the Leaders Quadrant on the Gartner 2014 Magic Quadrant for Managed Print Services (MPS) and Managed Content Services (MCS). Konica Minolta has been recognized as the #1 Brand for Customer Loyalty in the MFP Office Copier Market by Brand Keys for eight consecutive years. Konica Minolta, Inc. has also been named to the Dow Jones Sustainability World Index for three years in a row. For more information, please visit: www.kmbs.konicaminolta.us and follow Konica Minolta on Facebook, YouTube, and Twitter @konicaminoltaus.

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