



THE CIRLOT AGENCY  
INCORPORATED

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### ***Mississippi, Believe It!*<sup>™</sup> Campaign Relaunch Challenges Stereotypes Around the State**

*The Cirlot Agency launches new public service ads, and offers free school curriculum  
to new generation of Mississippians*

**JACKSON, MISS.** (December 8, 2016) – “Do you still see the KKK on your streets every day and do you hate all black people?” That question, asked by a 12-year-old boy from Connecticut to a Mississippi businessman on a plane 11 years ago, started a public relations campaign, which was completely financed by the businessman’s company to the tune of over \$1 million, and has been viewed by over 150 million people worldwide.

The Cirlot Agency created the *Mississippi, Believe It!*<sup>™</sup> campaign, on a pro bono basis, to inform and educate the world about the accomplishments, individuals, aspects and facts associated with the state of Mississippi. The campaign, which today consists of 21 public service ads, takes common Mississippi stereotypes and twists them to reveal the truth about the state. Service Printers of Flowood, Miss., donated all printing services, totaling over \$100,000 in services. Mac Papers in Pearl, Miss., supplied all of the paper necessary for printing.

After promoting the virtues and culture of Mississippi for the past 11 years, The Cirlot Agency relaunched the *Mississippi, Believe It!*<sup>™</sup> campaign by introducing four new public service ads, as well as updating the entire campaign with relevant content about the people, places and spirit of Mississippi. Additionally, the ads have been developed into lesson plans for 4<sup>th</sup> grade students, which cover areas of music, economics, geography, government, biology, history, and English.

“We’ve donated over \$1 million of our time and resources in the past 11 years to show the rest of the country a different side of Mississippi and our people,” said Rick Looser, President and COO of The Cirlot Agency. “Right now, we are most excited about offering 4<sup>th</sup> graders throughout Mississippi a complete curriculum based on each ad. All lesson plans were created by Mississippi teachers and

meet College and Career Readiness/Common Core standards. Teachers can download the free lesson plans from the website,” Looser added.

The Cirlot Agency plans to send 1500 sets of all 21 posters to every public and private school in the state.

Full-length feature stories on the *Mississippi, Believe It!*<sup>™</sup> campaign have appeared in *The New York Times*, *USA Today*, *US News & World Report*, *The Washington Post*, and *The Chicago Sun Times*. The campaign has also been featured on the *NBC Today Show* as well as NPR’s *All Things Considered* and *Morning Edition*. The campaign has been viewed by an estimated 150 million people and created publicity valued at \$80 million.

Regardless of the millions in publicity dollars and hundreds of millions in viewership, Looser says the campaign still tends to resonate most among older Mississippians.

“I had a little old lady come up to me with a tear rolling down her cheek,” said Looser. “She said, ‘I tried to read these ads and I only got halfway through them and I started crying. You have said, in these words, what I have wanted to say my whole life, but didn’t know how to articulate.’”

**About The Cirlot Agency:**

*The Cirlot Agency is a leading global brand strategy, integrated communications and business development firm specializing in public relations, creative development and media strategy. The Cirlot Agency represents clients on a national and international basis, ranging from Fortune 100 companies to some of the world’s largest privately held corporations. The Cirlot Agency is headquartered in Jackson, Mississippi, with offices in Washington, DC.*

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