

Simplicity and The Leaders Group Unite to Bring an Unrivaled Service Offering to the Independent Financial Product Distribution Channel

Summit, NJ (February 15, 2023) – Simplicity Group Holdings, Inc. ("Simplicity") today announced that it has entered into a definitive agreement to acquire The Leaders Group, Inc. ("The Leaders Group"), a national, independent broker-dealer (IBD) located in Littleton, CO. Founded by Dave Wickersham in 1994, The Leaders Group is a leading broker-dealer for brokerage general agencies and independent financial advisors. Led today by Sean Wickersham, who will become a partner in the Simplicity Group, The Leaders Group has been at the forefront of the convergence between the traditional securities and insurance industries and has been the leading distributor of variable universal life insurance for seven consecutive years.

"Like so many businesses in our industry, we have a long and trusted history of working with The Leaders Group, the preeminent broker-dealer for BGAs, and we have come to know Sean as one of the most forward-thinking and trusted professionals in the broader financial products distribution industry," said Bruce Donaldson, President and CEO of Simplicity. "With our new partnership, Simplicity meaningfully enhances its ability to provide institutional-quality support and services for our independent distribution partners. We are thrilled to welcome Sean and his team to Simplicity."

"In this ever-changing industry, it was important for us to find a partner that agreed with my dad's motto: 'doing the right thing is always the right thing.' We adhere to that motto every day. With Simplicity, we have found a partner with shared beliefs and I firmly believe they will help us continue to honor Dave's legacy as we work to grow our collective business," said Sean Wickersham.

The Leaders Group, Inc. has been recognized as a top independent broker-dealer in the nation several years running by *InvestmentNews*. For 2021, The Leaders Group was the 4th fastest-growing IBD and among the top 30 firms ranked by revenue and size. Mesirow Investment Banking served as exclusive financial advisor to The Leaders Group on this transaction.

This transaction is subject to certain regulatory approvals and is expected to close sometime later this year.

"For the last six years, Simplicity has supported over 100 independent BGAs and thousands of financial advisors with their wealth and insurance needs," said Bruce Donaldson. "The lynchpin to our success has always been the trust and integrity with which we manage our clients' business. The Leaders Group exemplifies these exact same characteristics in an adjacent channel. Now, in partnership together, Simplicity and Leaders will deliver an unrivalled suite of resources to help grow the independent distribution channel."

About The Leaders Group

Founded in 1994 by the late Dave Wickersham, The Leaders Group, Inc. is a national, independent SEC registered broker-dealer and member of FINRA. The Leaders Group's mission is to provide extraordinary service, expertise, and flexibility to our financial professionals, wholesale organizations, and industry partners. The firm envisions an industry where the complexities of doing business are simplified, and relationships are developed and aligned to deliver the highest level of service to clients. For more information, please visit www.leadersgroup.net.



NEWS RELEASE

About Simplicity Group

Simplicity Group is one of the nation's largest and fastest-growing financial product distribution companies. Each of Simplicity's operating businesses is directed by its local management team and benefits from access to Simplicity's group resources. Through partnership with top distribution organizations and technology companies, Simplicity seeks to provide compelling business solutions that will attract the industry's best leadership, talent, advisors, agents, and future partners.

Simplicity supports independent financial advisors and agents across the country with investment, annuity, and life insurance solutions with a focus on client education, consumer value and partnership. For more information, please visit: www.simplicitygroup.com and follow the Company on [LinkedIn](#).

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