



PRESS RELEASE

## SUPREMEX ANNOUNCES Q4 AND 2017 YEAR-END RESULTS AND DECLARES REGULAR QUARTERLY DIVIDEND

**Montreal, Quebec, February 21, 2018** – Supremex Inc. (“Supremex” or the “Company”) (TSX: SXP), a leading North American manufacturer and marketer of envelopes and a growing provider of packaging and specialty products, today announced its results for the fourth quarter and year ended December 31, 2017, and declared a regular quarterly dividend.

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### Fourth Quarter 2017 Highlights

- Revenue increased by 13.8% year-over-year to \$49.4 million.
- Adjusted EBITDA<sup>1</sup> increased by 2.3% to \$8.0 million, compared with \$7.8 million
- Adjusted Net Earnings<sup>2</sup> decreased by 4.8%, to \$4.4 million (or \$0.16 per share), compared with \$4.6 million (or \$0.16 per share).
- Maintained strong financial flexibility with a net indebtedness to Adjusted EBITDA<sup>1</sup> ratio of 1.5 times.
- Approved a quarterly dividend of \$0.065 per share, an increase of 8.3% year over year and equivalent to the last quarter.

### Fiscal 2017 Highlights

- Revenue increased by 11.5% year-over-year, reaching \$179.1 million compared with \$160.6 million.
  - Adjusted EBITDA<sup>1</sup> decreased by 2.7% to \$26.7 million compared with \$27.4 million.
  - Adjusted Net Earnings<sup>2</sup> increased by 1.0%, to \$14.7 million (or \$0.52 per share), compared with \$14.6 million (or \$0.51 per share).
  - Acquired Stuart Packaging Inc., a leading provider of premium quality folding carton packaging for the consumer market in July 2017.
  - Increased the credit facility from \$50 million to \$60 million in July 2017.
  - Declared a total of \$0.245 per share in dividends, an increase of 8.9% over the prior year.
  - Purchased a total of 205,882 common shares for cancellation under the NCIB, for total consideration of \$938,759.
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“Revenues increased by 11.5% in 2017 as a result of our continued diversification into packaging and specialty products and from the contribution of our growing U.S. envelope operations. Together, these two markets now represent almost half of our revenues, a significant achievement considering that just a few short years ago the vast majority of our revenues came from the Canadian envelope market.”

“After a string of acquisitions, our efforts aimed at integrating and optimizing these new businesses is starting to pay off, notably at our mid-west US region, which contributed positively in the quarter. Combined with our recent strategic decision to close a small non-core printing operation and expected tailwinds from structural changes in the US envelope market, we anticipate that our operational profitability will further improve in 2018,” added Mr. Emerson.

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<sup>1</sup> Refer to the reconciliation of Net Earnings to EBITDA to Adjusted EBITDA and to the definition of EBITDA, Adjusted EBITDA, Adjusted Net Earnings and Non-IFRS Measures.

<sup>2</sup> Refer to the reconciliation of Net Earnings to Adjusted Net Earnings and to the definition of EBITDA, Adjusted EBITDA, Adjusted Net Earnings and Non-IFRS Measures.

“In addition, with an ambitious capital expenditure program aimed at expanding our packaging manufacturing capacity and an opportunistic approach to M&A, we should be well positioned to further grow in diversified markets. As we have done over the last few years, we will prudently manage cash flow, optimally allocate capital between returning shareholder value, in the form of dividends and share repurchases, and by investing in growth opportunities all while maintaining low-leverage.” concluded Mr. Emerson.

### **Summary of the three-month period ended December 31, 2017**

Revenue increased by 13.8% or \$6.0 million reaching \$49.4 million during the fourth quarter of 2017 as a result of the Company’s diversification strategy and contribution of a packaging acquisition in Q3 2017.

Revenue from the Canadian envelope market stood at \$25.5 million, a decrease of 9.1% or \$2.5 million. An average selling price increase of 2.5% did not offset a reduction in volume of 11.3%. The volume decline is primarily the result of industry-wide secular decline combined with the effects of timing and the ebbs and flows of customer movement.

Revenue from the U.S. envelope market stood at \$11.0 million, a decrease of 1.5%. The volume of units sold increased by 5.4% and average selling prices decreased by 6.5% primarily from the effect of a stronger Canadian dollar when compared with the corresponding period of last year and a modest change in product mix.

Revenue from packaging and specialty products was \$12.9 million, an increase of 204.1% or \$8.6 million compared to the prior year, primarily due to the acquisition of Stuart Packaging Inc. concluded on July 20, 2017 and, to a lesser extent, the acquisition of Durabox Paper Inc. concluded on November 28, 2016 combined with continued growth in the Company’s e-commerce packaging business.

Fourth quarter Adjusted EBITDA was at \$8.0 million, compared with \$7.8 million in the same quarter of 2016, an increase of \$0.2 million or 2.3%. After quarter-end, Supremex closed its Printer Gateway Inc. operations to focus its efforts on its core diversification strategy (see “Corporate Developments” below). The EBITDA loss attributable to this operation was \$0.4 million in the fourth quarter of 2017. Excluding this loss, adjusted EBITDA would have been \$8.4 million including the positive contribution of Stuart Packaging acquired in the third quarter of 2017, an improvement of \$0.6 million compared with \$7.8 million in the fourth quarter of 2016. Accordingly, adjusted EBITDA margins would have been 17.1% of revenues excluding Printer Gateway’ sales compared with 18.0% in the fourth quarter of 2016.

Net earnings were at \$2.3 million (or \$0.08 per share) for the three-month period ended December 31, 2017, compared with \$4.6 million (or \$0.16 per share) for the equivalent period in 2016. The closure of the Printer Gateway operations resulted in non-recurring expenses totaling \$2.2 million - asset impairment charges and other closing expenses in the fourth quarter of 2017. Excluding these non-cash items of \$1.6 million net of tax and the provision for contingent remuneration of \$0.5 million, after tax, Adjusted Net Earnings would have been \$4.4 million (or \$0.16 per share) for the three-month period ended December 31, 2017, compared with \$4.6 million (or \$0.16 per share) for the equivalent period in 2016.

### **Summary of the twelve-month period ended December 31, 2017**

Revenue for fiscal 2017 increased by 11.5% or \$18.5 million to \$179.1 million compared with \$160.6 million in 2016. This increase was primarily the result of the Company’s diversification strategy in the packaging and U.S. envelope markets.

Revenue from the Canadian envelope market stood at \$102.1 million down by \$7.9 million or 7.2% from fiscal 2016. The decline is mainly attributable to a 7.7% reduction in volume combined with a slight increase in average selling prices when compared with last year. A vast majority of the volume variation is attributable to the secular

decline in the envelope market. For comparison, Canada Post's most recently available information<sup>3</sup> indicates Transactional Mail volume was down 5.7% in the first three quarters of 2017 compared to the same period in 2016.

Revenue from the U.S. envelope market grew to \$42.4 million, representing an increase of 10.4%. The majority of this increase is attributable to the acquisition of Bowers Envelope Inc. located in the Midwestern United States and concluded on August 29, 2016. The number of units sold increased by 12.6% and average selling prices were slightly lower on the effect of a stronger Canadian dollar and a modest change in product mix.

Revenue from packaging and specialty products reached \$34.6 million, an increase of 184.0%. This increase is attributable to the acquisition of Stuart Packaging in July 2017, to the acquisition of Durabox Paper Inc. in the fourth quarter of 2016 and to a lesser extent, continued growth of the Company's legacy e-commerce packaging business.

Adjusted EBITDA was \$26.7 million for the year ended December 31, 2017 compared with \$27.4 million for the same period in 2016, a decrease of \$0.7 million or 2.7%. The EBITDA loss attributable to the now closed Printer Gateway operations was \$1.4 million during fiscal 2017. Excluding this EBITDA loss, Adjusted EBITDA would have been \$28.1 million including the positive contribution from Stuart Packaging acquired in the third quarter of 2017, compared to \$27.4 million in 2016, an improvement of \$0.7 million. Additionally, Adjusted EBITDA margins would have been at 15.9% of revenues excluding Printer Gateway's sales, compared to 17.1% last year.

Net earnings were \$12.4 million (or \$0.43 per share) for the year ended December 31, 2017, compared with \$14.6 million (or \$0.51 per share) for the equivalent period in 2016. The closure of the Printer Gateway operations resulted in totaling \$2.2 million - asset impairment charges and other closing expenses in the fourth quarter of 2017. Excluding these non-cash items of \$1.6 million net of tax and the provision for contingent remuneration of \$0.7 million, after tax, Adjusted Net Earnings would have been \$14.7 million (or \$0.52 per share) for the year ended December 31, 2017, compared to \$14.6 million (or \$0.51 per share) during the equivalent period in 2016.

Operating activities generated cash of \$15.9 million compared with \$21.6 million during the same period in 2016.

### **Declaration of Dividend**

On February 20, 2018, the Board of Directors declared a quarterly dividend of \$0.065 per share, payable on April 13, 2018, to shareholders of record at the close of business on March 29, 2018. The dividend is equivalent to the last quarter and represents an increase of 8.3% over the dividend declared in the same quarter of the prior year. This dividend is designated as an "eligible" dividend for the purpose of the Income Tax Act (Canada) and any similar provincial legislation.

### **Corporate Developments**

On November 27, 2017, the Company announced that Bertrand Jolicoeur, Chief Financial Officer and Corporate Secretary was leaving the Company effective December 15, 2017 to pursue other employment opportunities. Supremex is currently in the recruitment process for this position. Lyne Bégin is acting as Interim Vice-President of Finance. Ms. Bégin has been with the Company continually since 2014 and over 15 years in total and is a seasoned executive. She has been involved in every aspect of Supremex' financial reporting, treasury management, planning and analysis. Subsequent to the end of the year, the Company further strengthened its executive team with two key appointments to oversee the integration and growth of the US operations and of the Packaging Division.

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<sup>3</sup> Canada Post Corporation, November 24, 2017, Q3 2017 [Results Press Release](#) for the period ended December 31, 2017.

On January 22, 2018, the Company closed its Printer Gateway Inc. operations. After a challenging post-acquisition transition, it was determined that this business required disproportionate management attention and resources to achieve acceptable profitability. Given the subsequent acquisition of Stuart Packaging Inc. and its other more profitable and growing operations, a swift decision was made to close this business and dedicate the Company's resources to further grow its packaging operations, which are at the core of the growth and diversification strategy. The EBITDA loss attributable to this business during fiscal 2017 was \$1.4 million, and represented \$0.4 million during the fourth quarter ended December 31, 2017. Closing this operation will not affect continuing operations and will improve the Company's operational profitability going forward. Costs to shut down including the impairment of the non-core assets amounted to \$2.2 million and they were accounted for on the fourth quarter Company's consolidated financial statements for the fourth quarter ended December 31, 2017.

Over the last several years, the U.S. envelope market has been undergoing structural changes and pricing pressure resulting from an oversupplied environment. Earlier in February, the envelope industry's largest manufacturer filed for Chapter 11 bankruptcy protection<sup>4</sup>. Although there can be no assurances of such an outcome, management believes that Supremex, through its U.S. operations, is well positioned to capture additional market share.

### Non-IFRS Performance Measures

#### Reconciliation of Net Earnings to EDITBA to Adjusted EBITDA

(In thousands of dollars)

	Three-month periods ended December 31,		Twelve-month periods ended December 31,	
	2017	2016	2017	2016
<b>Net Earnings</b>	<b>2,262</b>	4,643	<b>12,391</b>	14,593
Income tax expense	1,015	1,886	4,656	5,474
Financing charges, net	399	202	1,078	852
Loss on disposal of property, plant and equipment	40	3	115	27
Amortization of property, plant and equipment	1,025	777	3,713	4,520
Amortization of intangible assets	497	316	1,682	1,917
<b>EBITDA<sup>(1)</sup></b>	<b>5,238</b>	7,827	<b>23,635</b>	27,383
Shutdown of non-core operations of Printer Gateway	2,192	—	2,192	—
Provision for contingent remuneration related to business combinations	577	—	827	—
<b>Adjusted EBITDA<sup>(1)</sup></b>	<b>8,007</b>	7,827	<b>26,654</b>	27,383

<sup>(1)</sup> Refer to "Definition of EBITDA, Adjusted EBITDA, Adjusted Net Earnings and Non-IFRS measures"

<sup>4</sup> [Envelope Maker, Comic Book Printer Cenveo Files for Bankruptcy Protection](#), Reuters, February 2, 2018.

## Reconciliation of Net Earnings to Adjusted Net Earnings

(In thousands of dollars)

	Three-month periods ended December 31,		Twelve-month periods ended December 31,	
	2017	2016	2017	2016
<b>Net Earnings</b>	<b>2,262</b>	4,643	<b>12,391</b>	14,593
Adjustments				
Plus: Shutdown of non-core operations of Printer Gateway, net of income taxes	1,620	—	1,620	—
Plus: Provision for contingent remuneration related to business combinations, net of income taxes	<b>538</b>	—	<b>722</b>	—
<b>Adjusted Net Earnings</b> <sup>(1)</sup>	<b>4,420</b>	4,643	<b>14,733</b>	14,593

<sup>(1)</sup> Refer to "Definition of EBITDA, Adjusted EBITDA, Adjusted Net Earnings and Non-IFRS measures"

## Definition of EBITDA, Adjusted EBITDA, Adjusted Net Earnings and Non-IFRS Measures

References to "EBITDA" are to earnings before financing charges, income tax expense, amortization of property, plant and equipment and of intangible assets, and gain or loss on disposal of property, plant and equipment. Supremex believes that EBITDA is a measurement commonly used by readers of financial statements to evaluate a company's operational cash-generating capacity and ability to discharge its financial obligations. References to "Adjusted EBITDA" are to EBITDA adjusted to remove the expenses related to the shutdown of non-core operations of Printer Gateway as well as the effect of removing remuneration expense related to the accounting of contingent considerations in connection with business combinations as these charges are considered non-recurring. References to "Adjusted Net Earnings" are to net earnings adjusted to remove the expenses related to the shutdown of non-core operations of Printer Gateway as well as the effect of removing remuneration expense related to the accounting of contingent considerations in connection with business combinations, net of income taxes as these charges are considered non-recurring.

EBITDA, Adjusted EBITDA or Adjusted Net Earnings are not recognized earnings measures under IFRS and do not have a standardized meaning prescribed by IFRS. Therefore, EBITDA, Adjusted EBITDA or Adjusted Net Earnings may not be comparable to similar measures presented by other entities. Investors are cautioned that EBITDA, Adjusted EBITDA or Adjusted Net Earnings should not be construed as an alternative to net earnings determined in accordance with IFRS as an indicator of the Company's performance. Other non-IFRS measures include net indebtedness to Adjusted EBITDA ratio (with Adjusted EBITDA including the recently acquired companies' last-twelve-month EBITDA). This ratio is calculated in accordance with the definition in the Company's credit agreement as total debt net of cash divided by Adjusted EBITDA.

### Conference Call:

A conference call to discuss the Company's 2017 year-end and fourth-quarter results will be held on February 21, 2018 at 10:00 a.m. (Eastern Time). A live broadcast of the conference call will be available on the Company's website, in the Investors section under Webcast.

To participate (professional investment community only) or to listen to the live conference call:

- Local participants (Montreal area), dial into (514) 807-9895
- North-American participants, dial toll-free 1-888-231-8191
- A replay of the conference call will be available on the Company's website in the Investors section under Webcast.

## **Forward-Looking Information**

This press release contains “forward-looking information” within the meaning of applicable Canadian securities laws, including (but not limited to) statements about the EBITDA and adjusted EBITDA and future performance of Supremex and similar statements or information concerning anticipated future results, circumstances, performance or expectations. Forward-looking information may include words such as anticipate, assumption, believe, could, expect, goal, guidance, intend, may, objective, outlook, plan, seek, should, strive, target and will. Such information relates to future events or future performance and reflects current assumptions, expectations and estimates of management regarding growth, results of operations, performance, business prospects and opportunities, Canadian economic environment and liability to attract and retain customers. Such forward-looking information reflects current assumptions, expectations and estimates of management and is based on information currently available to Supremex as at the date of this press release. Such assumptions, expectations and estimates are discussed throughout our MD&A for the year ended December 31, 2017.

Forward-looking information is subject to certain risks and uncertainties, and should not be read as a guarantee of future performance or results and actual results may differ materially from the conclusion, forecast or projection stated in such forward-looking information. These risks and uncertainties include but are not limited to the following: economic cycles, availability of capital, decline in envelope consumption, increase of competition, exchange rate fluctuations, raw material increases, credit risks with respect to trade receivables, increases in funding requirement of the Company’s pension plans, postal services deficiencies, interest rates fluctuations and potential risk of litigation. Such risks and uncertainties are discussed throughout our MD&A for the year ended December 31, 2017 and in particular, in “Risk Factors”. Consequently, we cannot guarantee that any forward-looking information will materialize. Readers should not place any undue reliance on such forward-looking information unless otherwise required by applicable securities legislation. The Company expressly disclaims any intention and assumes no obligation to update or revise any forward-looking information, whether as a result of new information, future events or otherwise.

The Management Discussion and Analysis and Financial Statements can be found on [www.sedar.com](http://www.sedar.com) and on Supremex’ website.

## **About Supremex**

Supremex Inc. is a leading North American manufacturer and marketer of envelopes and a growing provider of packaging and specialty products. Supremex operates facilities across seven provinces in Canada and three facilities in the United States employing approximately 820 people. Supremex’ growing footprint allows it to efficiently manufacture and distribute paper and packaging solutions designed to the specifications of major national and multinational corporations, resellers, government entities, SMEs and solutions providers. For more information, please visit [www.supremex.com](http://www.supremex.com).

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