



LAURENTIAN BANK
OF CANADA

PRESS RELEASE

For immediate release

**FURTHER IMPROVING SERVICE TO SME CLIENTS:
LAURENTIAN BANK LAUNCHES “MAXAFFAIRES”**

Montreal, May 9, 2006 – Laurentian Bank of Canada launches “**MAXAFFAIRES**”, its new identity for commercial financial services, to further improve its services to SMEs. Always presents to businesses, the Bank now channels its efforts into various new initiatives with the goal to become a number one choice for SMEs.

“**MAXAFFAIRES**” is some 200 people specializing in services to businesses: experts in designing tailored solutions for SMEs in the manufacturing, service, retail, agricultural and real estate sectors, as well as specialists in international trade. It is a complete line of services, including financing solutions (term loan, line of credit, small business loan, bank acceptance credit, revolving credit on capital assets), international services (letter of credit, letter of guarantee, foreign exchange, lock box service in the USA, \$US accounts in the USA), checking account, banking packages, VISA card, electronic services, LBC*Direct* service online or by phone, payment services and merchant services, all offered through 28 commercial banking centres, of which 21 are in the Province of Quebec. It is also the Bank’s network of 157 branches serving small businesses and self-employed workers and meeting the transactional banking needs of SMEs. Finally, it is Laurentian Bank’s Quebec decision-making centre that helps to keep file processing delays to minimum. Its staff members are experts in the particularities and the reality of the Quebec market.

Always closer to SMEs

After having recruited some ten more experts, the Bank has recently inaugurated two new commercial banking centres on the South Shore and the North Shore of Montreal. The Bank has also grouped under one roof its SME teams and its Retail Financial Services teams in Quebec, Central Quebec and Ottawa. “And it’s just a beginning, with more initiatives like that to be launched soon. Commercial Financial Services is our priority. These decisions are part of our growth strategy, they prove our drive and determination to promote our products and services among SMEs,” stated Réjean Robitaille, Senior Executive Vice-President, Retail and Commercial Financial Services, Laurentian Bank of Canada.

Improved product offering

For several weeks now, the Bank has been offering its new BUSINESS Packages designed specifically for self-employed workers and SMEs. Flexible and streamlined, these banking packages are optimized to allow for easy and cost-effective management of finances by avoiding pay-as-you-go bank transactions. Moreover, commercial clients can take advantage of the Bank's spring promotion to finance building acquisition and construction.

Ready to go a step further

Renowned for the excellence of their service, our teams are ready to go a step further to truly contribute to the development and growth of businesses and self-employed workers.

"For my colleagues and myself, it has always been a priority to provide excellent service with a human touch. We do have a full range of competitive solutions to meet the particular needs of our clients. And we want to go even further. With the latest initiatives, we become even more performing. We are very proud to be known for our values of service quality and availability. "MAXAFFAIRES" builds on our strengths, helping further promote our distinctive advantages," said Gilles Lévesque, Senior Manager, Commercial Financial Services, Laurentian Bank of Canada.

About Laurentian Bank of Canada

Laurentian Bank of Canada is a Quebec banking institution operating across Canada, dedicated to meeting the financial needs of its clients through the excellence of its service, its simplicity and its proximity. The Bank serves individual consumers, small and medium-sized businesses as well as, through B2B Trust, independent financial advisors. It also provides full-service brokerage solutions through the Laurentian Bank Securities subsidiary. Laurentian Bank is well established in the Province of Quebec, operating the third largest retail branch network, and is a performing player in specific market segments elsewhere in the country. Laurentian Bank of Canada has over \$16 billion in balance sheet assets and close to \$15 billion in assets under administration. Founded in 1846, the Bank employs more than 3,000 people. Its common shares are listed on the Toronto Stock Exchange (TSX: LB). For more information, please visit www.laurentianbank.ca.

- 30 -

For information:

Manon Stébenne
Senior Advisor
Public Affairs and Communications
Office: 514 284-4500, extension 8232