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**Chicago-area Commercial Real Estate Veterans Launch The Crescendo Companies;
Announce Key Milestones on Wheeling and Rosemont Development Projects**

Oak Brook, IL (March 13, 2007) – Three Chicago-area commercial real estate veterans today announced the launch of The Crescendo Companies (“Crescendo”), an umbrella holding company for a group of well-established businesses specializing in developing and managing upscale retail, hotel, resort, mixed-use and restaurant properties. Crescendo co-founders David P. Bossy, Michael D. Firsel and Peter G. Dumon have been active in the greater Chicago-area commercial real estate community for the past 30 years.

There are four anchor companies under the Crescendo umbrella, which provide commercial real estate and hospitality services in major markets across the country. Companies now under the Crescendo banner include The Harp Group, Mid-America Development Partners, Portfolio Hotels and Resorts, and Cenitare Restaurants. At present, Crescendo has under development and manages properties and assets valued at \$1.2 billion, including nearly 5.8 million square feet of retail and shopping center space, 3,500 hotel and resort room keys, and 225,000 square feet of flexible convention space.

“Under the Crescendo umbrella, we are now able to offer an expanded and broader scope of commercial real estate investment and development activities,” said David Bossy, a Crescendo co-founder. “At Crescendo, we are focused on being a leader in developing retail, hospitality, and restaurant commercial assets that have significant revenue potential.”

Also today, the company announced milestones for two prestigious projects now under the Crescendo umbrella. These milestones are the completion of the Westin Chicago North Shore Hotel project in Wheeling, IL, and the beginning of construction on the Intercontinental Chicago O’Hare Hotel complex in Rosemont, IL.

“These projects underscore Crescendo’s ability to offer unique real estate investment and design-driven development opportunities,” commented Crescendo co-founder Peter G. Dumon. “Crescendo’s philosophy is to utilize an experienced team with a proven track record, creative ideas, strong management skills and a demonstrated ability to create destinations where consumers want to be.”

About the Westin Chicago North Shore Hotel Project:

Initially opened in mid-October 2006, the **Westin Chicago North Shore** is comprised of a 16-story, 412-room hotel, with 37,500 square feet of flexible meeting space. Four Cenitare Restaurants by acclaimed chefs Rick Tramonto and Gale Gand are also part of the Hotel. These are: Osteria di Tramonto; Tramonto’s Steak & Seafood; the RT Lounge; and Gale’s Coffee Bar.

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The Westin Chicago North Shore project also includes the Prairie Crossing Retail Center, located adjacent to the hotel, including 25,000 square feet of retail space, a free-standing ClaimJumper Restaurant, and a bank. Retail tenants include Massage Envy, which opened in 2006, and Experience Salon, which will open in the Spring of 2007.

“All of the Crescendo companies are committed to creating functional, attractive developments, such as the Westin North Shore, which enhance the community and deliver tangible value to the partners and the municipalities we serve,” said Michael D. Firsel, a Crescendo co-founder.

About the Intercontinental Chicago O’Hare Hotel Complex:

The **Intercontinental Chicago O’Hare Hotel** complex in Rosemont, located on the northwest corner of River Road and Foster Ave., is currently under construction with anticipated completion in Q4 2008. The \$180-million complex will include a 12-story, 570-room hotel, including 30,000 square feet of conference space, and three restaurants. There is a Cenitare-planned restaurant – Osteria di Tramonto, plus two additional restaurant tenants – Capital Grille and McCormick & Schmick’s Seafood. Portfolio Hotels & Resorts, one of the Crescendo Companies, will manage the hotel.

About The Crescendo Companies:

Headquartered in suburban Oak Brook, IL, Crescendo is a privately-held company specializing in commercial real estate development and management, with more than \$1.2 billion in projects now under development. In addition to the three co-founders, principals of the company include Tim Franzen, Michael Nortman, Adam Firsel and Andrew Robbins. The Crescendo Companies include:

The Harp Group is a real estate investment and development company that specializes in hospitality destinations. Based in Oak Brook Terrace, IL, The Harp Group is led by Peter G. Dumon, President. Currently, The Harp Group is developing nearly a dozen demand-driven hospitality-related properties across the country.

Mid-America Development Partners, LLC, is a full-service commercial real estate firm specializing in retail and shopping center development from concept through completion. The Oak Brook-based company is led by founders David P. Bossy, Chairman, and Michael D. Firsel, President. Currently, Mid-America is engaged in more than 20 retail and mixed-use developments throughout the greater Chicagoland area.

Portfolio Hotels & Resorts is a hospitality services company that specializes in managing signature destination resorts and significant urban hotels. Also based in Oak Brook Terrace, IL, the company is led by co-founders Helmut Horn and Graham Hershman. Currently, Portfolio Hotels & Resorts has 10 properties in its Collection.

Cenitare is a restaurant development and management company that focuses on high-concept properties. Renowned chef Rick Tramonto and pastry chef Gale Gand serve as the Culinary Director/Executive Chef and Consulting Executive Pastry Chef, respectively, for Cenitare. With corporate headquarters in Buffalo Grove, IL, the company has already launched four restaurant concepts in the Westin Chicago North Shore in Wheeling, IL.

To learn more about individual Crescendo companies and current development projects, please visit: www.thecrescendocompanies.com