



701 CARLSON PARKWAY, MINNEAPOLIS, MN 55459
CARLSON.COM

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Contact:

Sam Macalus
Director, Public Relations, Carlson
+1-763-212-2477
smacalus@carlson.com

**CARLSON NAMES HUBERT JOLY AS NEW PRESIDENT AND CEO;
MARILYN CARLSON NELSON CONTINUES AS CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD**

MINNEAPOLIS, MINN. (Jan. 8, 2008) – Global travel, hotel, restaurant and marketing giant Carlson today announced that its board of directors has appointed Hubert Joly as the company’s new president and chief executive officer, effective March 1, 2008.

Joly currently serves as president and chief executive officer of Carlson Wagonlit Travel (CWT), the world’s leading travel management company, which is 55% owned by Carlson. Under his leadership, CWT has grown its sales from \$8.9 billion (USD) in 2003 to about \$22 billion (USD) in 2007. He becomes Carlson’s fourth CEO in the company’s 70-year history, succeeding company co-owner and internationally recognized business leader Marilyn Carlson Nelson, who will continue as Carlson’s chairman of the board.

“After an extensive internal and external search, our board of directors unanimously agreed that Hubert has the business acumen, leadership qualities and global experience to lead our company to the next level of growth and excellence,” Nelson said. “We are extremely pleased and proud that Hubert has accepted the opportunity to carry forward Carlson’s strategy to expand our brands and operations around the world.”

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The search committee was composed of Lead Director and Search Committee Chair Lawrence Perlman, Board member Edwin C. “Skip” Gage and Board member Diana Nelson.

Speaking on behalf of the Board, Perlman said, “This was one of the most extensive and thorough search processes I have ever been involved in. We set clear criteria for our next CEO, including global experience and mindset, proven business success and leadership skill. Hubert was the ideal candidate in all of these areas.”

In comments to employees today, Joly said, “I am honored to have been chosen for this role. I am impressed with the Carlson legacy – its portfolio of brands, its values, its culture and its growth opportunities. I look forward to working with Marilyn and the board on seizing these opportunities. Leading this great family owned company will be a distinct privilege.”

Joly noted that under Nelson’s leadership, Carlson has grown into a global giant whose brands and services employ nearly 200,000 people around the world. The company owns or manages 1,000 restaurants and nearly 1,000 hotels (including franchise operations), and has become the leading travel management company in the world. Nelson has been a staunch supporter of the travel industry. After the Sept. 11, 2001, crisis, she and other Carlson executives met with congressional and Bush administration advisors to call attention to the plight of the travel and tourism industry, which had suffered greatly since the Sept. 11 attacks. Nelson also has emphasized business integrity during her leadership tenure at Carlson. In 2007, Carlson received a Corporate Social Responsibility Award from the Foreign Policy Association.

Nelson and Joly indicated that the Carlson Wagonlit Travel board has initiated a search for the future CEO of CWT.

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Joly was appointed as the president and CEO of Carlson Wagonlit Travel in July 2004. CWT is a world leader in business travel management, with about \$22 billion (USD) in sales and 22,000 employees in more than 150 countries. Joly came to CWT from Vivendi Universal, where he was a member of the executive team that led the company's recovery, serving as executive vice president with responsibility for overseeing the company's U.S. assets. Previously, Joly was CEO of Vivendi Universal Games, the video games division of Vivendi Universal, headquartered in Los Angeles. Before joining Vivendi, Joly worked in the technology sector from 1996 to 1999 as vice president of Electronic Data Systems (EDS) Europe and president of EDS France. Prior to joining EDS, he spent 12 years in consulting with McKinsey & Company, based in San Francisco, New York, Tokyo and Paris. As a partner, he specialized in the high-tech sector.

Born and raised in France, Joly spent seven years working in the United States, including New York, San Francisco and Los Angeles, and has traveled extensively around the world in his diverse functions, working across geographic and cultural boundaries. Joly and his family look forward to moving to Minneapolis and becoming a part of the community.

"The board was very impressed with Hubert's outstanding results at Carlson Wagonlit Travel. After interviewing several internal and external candidates, we are all extraordinarily pleased to have such a strong leader from inside the Carlson enterprise," said Gage, board member and Carlson family member.

"The Board of Directors and the Carlson family have known Hubert for some time, and we have great confidence in his abilities," said Diana Nelson, a Carlson Board member, Curtis L.

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Carlson Family Foundation trustee and granddaughter of company founder Curtis Carlson. “We are proud of the success that has characterized Carlson’s first 70 years, and we believe that Hubert is the leader who can build our future success.”

Carlson is a global group of connected companies, providing travel, hotel, restaurant and marketing services directly to consumers, corporations and government entities. Carlson is on *Working Mother* magazine's 2001-2004 and 2006-2007 lists of "The Best Companies for Working Mothers," and *Fortune* magazine's 2002 list of "The 100 Best Companies to Work For." In 2006 and 2007, Carlson was named one of the "Best Places to Work for GLBT Equality" by the Human Rights Campaign.

Carlson's history is one of the classic business success stories in the American free enterprise system. Starting in 1938 with an idea and a \$55 loan, entrepreneur Curtis L. Carlson (1914-1999) founded the Gold Bond Stamp Company in his home town of Minneapolis. He knew that grocery stores, drug stores, gas stations and other independent merchants could use stamps to drive customer loyalty and to distinguish themselves from their competitors. During the 1950s and 1960s, Gold Bond and sister company, Top Value Stamps, helped revolutionize the way retail goods were marketed. Trading stamps proved to be right for the times and swept the nation in a wave of dramatic growth.

In the late 1960s, when the trading stamp market reached its peak, the Gold Bond Stamp Company expanded into the hospitality industry. In the 1970s, the company acquired dozens of additional businesses, including T.G.I. Friday's and the internationally renowned Ask Mr. Foster

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travel agencies. To reflect its diversification, Gold Bond changed its name to Carlson Companies in 1973, and since 2006, to demonstrate that it is one company serving a variety of needs, it has become known as Carlson.

ABOUT CARLSON:

Carlson is a global leader in the hotel, restaurant, travel and marketing industries. The Carlson family of brands and services include: Regent Hotels & Resorts[®], Radisson Hotels & Resorts[®], Park Plaza Hotels & Resorts, Country Inn & Suites By Carlson, Park Inn[®] hotels, T.G.I. Friday's[®] and Pick Up Stix[®] restaurants, Carlson Wagonlit Travel[®], Carlson Marketing, Peppers & Rogers Group[®], and Gold Points Plus Reward Network[®]. Based in Minneapolis, Carlson's brands and services employ about 190,000 people in 150 countries and territories. Carlson's 2006 system-wide sales, including franchised operations, totaled \$37.1 billion.
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