

For Immediate Release:
Contact: Scott Piro (scott@mkpr.com)
Patrick Kowalczyk (patrick@mkpr.com)
MKPR, 212-627-8098

PHOTOS AVAILABLE UPON REQUEST

WITH SPA INDUSTRY BOOMING, DELEGATES AT FIRST-EVER GLOBAL SPA SUMMIT

CITE LABOR SHORTAGE AS TOP INDUSTRY CHALLENGE

*More than 160 Leading Spa Executives From Around the World
Attended First-Ever Global Spa Summit in New York*

www.GlobalSpaSummit.org

New York, NY – May 30, 2007 – A shortage of high-quality, trained labor – including spa managers and directors, aestheticians, and therapists – is the major challenge facing the global spa industry today, according to a survey of more than 160 world spa and wellness industry leaders who attended the first-ever Global Spa Summit earlier this week in New York.

The three day, invitation-only gathering, held at the Waldorf-Astoria Hotel, brought together leaders from the global spa, real estate, investment, travel, spa education, beauty, and wellness sectors to chart the future of the booming \$40 billion plus spa industry, which has seen double digit growth for the past 20 years.

According to the survey, 29 percent of delegates cited labor shortages as the top issue facing the industry, while 22 percent said the main challenge was the lack of industry-wide standards for defining spa categories and best practices. Environmental sustainability was cited by 12 percent of the delegates as another top concern.

In terms of opportunities for the industry, delegates placed the greatest emphasis on enhancing clients' health (29 percent), educating consumers that spas are about wellness (26 percent), and promoting preventative medicine (20 percent).

The summit featured keynote addresses by three of the leading visionaries in the spa and wellness industry: Steve Case, whose Revolution LLC is leading innovation in the health care, wellness, and resort industries; Kevin Kelly, president of Canyon Ranch, an international wellness lifestyle company; and Susan Harmsworth, founder and CEO of British-based ESPA International, which designs and operates spas in over 50 countries throughout the world.

“We are at a tipping point, as consumers are seeking more than an environment to be pampered in, but also a place to achieve balance,” said Case in his keynote address. “We have an opportunity now to take the idea of balanced living and bring it into the mainstream.”

Individual presentations showcased the latest spa industry data and statistics from around the world, while a series of presentations, panels, and break-out sessions also addressed industry investment opportunities, sustainability, and ownership and management arrangements for hotel spas.

Another major concern raised by delegates was “protecting the authenticity of the spa industry” – how its emphasis on the genuine transformation of mind, body, and spirit might be threatened by outside investors whose first priority is the bottom line. Maintaining the integrity of a fast-growing industry, while at the same time attracting investors and reaching more consumers, was cited as a key challenge that would require a world-wide strategy.

Kevin Kelly, president of Canyon Ranch, drove home this point in his keynote address. “Because demographic trends are so economically compelling, Wall Street has increased its interest in our industry,” Kelly said. “The danger to avoid is shifting the focus to efficiency at the cost of losing our soulfulness. I believe we can grow a profitable business and retain our authenticity. We need to hold fast to the vision.”

Delegates attended from 24 different countries, including Australia, Austria, Bermuda, Canada, China, France, Germany, India, Indonesia, Italy, Japan, Mexico, Philippines, Russia, Saint Lucia, Singapore, Sweden, Switzerland, Thailand, Turkey, Turks and Caicos, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom, and United States.

Notable participants and presenters included:

- Leonard Fluxman (U.S.), President & CEO, Steiner Leisure Ltd.
- Peter Yesawich (U.S.), Chairman & CEO, YPB&R
- Emanuel Berger (Switzerland), CEO, The Victoria-Jungfrau Collection
- Steven Conquy (Thailand), CEO, MSpa International Ltd.
- Philip Wolf (U.S.), CEO, PhoCusWright, Inc.
- Leandro Gualtieri (Italy), Owner & President, STB Group
- Stephen Purdew (U.K.), Director & Co-Owner, Champneys Health Resorts
- Deborah Szekely (U.S.), founder, Rancho La Puerta and Golden Door
- Marc Cohen (Australia), Medical doctor and Professor, RMIT University
- Mary Tabacchi (U.S.), Professor, Cornell University - School of Hotel Administration

Other executives represented such leading spa brands as Mandarin Oriental, Ritz Carlton Hotel Company, Four Seasons Hotels and Resorts, One&Only Resorts, Starwood Spa Collection, Shangri-la International, Fairmont Raffles Hotels International, Inc., Six Senses Resorts & Spa, Hilton, Jumeriah, Spa Chakra, and Pritikin Longevity Center & Spa. For an overview of presenters, delegates, and sessions, please visit the Summit agenda at <http://globalspasummit.org/agenda.php>.

According to Spa Finder CEO Pete Ellis, delegates overwhelmingly agreed that the Summit should become an annual event and take place in different cities around the world to reflect the industry’s global stature.

A white paper will be developed based on the three-day series of presentations, panels, and speeches. An executive summary will be available to the media in mid-Summer.

About Global Spa Summit

Global Spa Summit is an international organization dedicated to bringing together leaders and visionaries to shape the future of the global spa and wellness industry. Founded in 2005, the organization hosted the first-ever Global Spa Summit in New York City in May 2007, where top industry executives gathered to exchange ideas and advance industry goals, such as establishing a common language and understanding across regions and continents and creating uniform performance benchmarks for spas worldwide. Global Spa Summit is underwritten by Spa Finder, Inc., the world’s leading spa marketing and media company, in collaboration with a team of international advisors. For more information, visit www.globalspaSummit.org.