



news release

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UNITED STATIONERS COMPLETES ACQUISITION OF ORS NASCO

DEERFIELD, Ill., Dec. 21, 2007 — United Stationers Inc. (NASDAQ: USTR) announced today that its wholly owned subsidiary, United Stationers Supply Co., has completed the purchase of 100% of the outstanding shares of ORS Nasco Holding, Inc. (ORS Nasco) from an affiliate of Brazos Private Equity Partners, LLC of Dallas, Texas, and other shareholders. ORS Nasco is a pure wholesale distributor of industrial supplies, with annual sales of approximately \$285 million. The company sells exclusively to independent distributors, offering them about 200,000 premium branded and private label products from over 600 manufacturers. ORS Nasco sells to more than 10,000 independent distributors in multiple channels, including industrial, MRO (maintenance, repair and operations), safety, construction, welding, and oilfield services. It serves a very diverse customer base through eight distribution centers strategically located across the U.S., and is headquartered in Muskogee, Oklahoma.

The transaction is expected to be accretive to United's earnings beginning in 2008. The all-cash purchase price was approximately \$178 million plus \$6.5 million related primarily to future tax benefits to United as a result of ORS Nasco stock options being exercised. The purchase price multiple was approximately 8.5-times trailing 12 months' EBITDA. The acquisition was financed through the addition of a \$200 million term loan under the accordion feature of United's existing credit agreement.

Acquisition Provides Entry into Wholesale Industrial Supplies Market

Richard W. Gochnauer, president and chief executive officer of United Stationers, said "ORS Nasco diversifies our product and customer base into the estimated \$22 billion wholesale industrial supplies market with solid growth and good margins. The acquisition expands our product line for United's customers in the important category of safety and security, and significantly extends ORS Nasco's product and service capabilities for its customers. It also offers us excellent opportunities for strong synergies. For instance, there are a great many similarities between ORS Nasco and our Lagasse business. Lagasse's sales have grown from approximately \$80 million to nearly \$1 billion over the last 10 years, with its janitorial and breakroom product line representing our fastest growing category. We believe that ORS Nasco provides a similar platform for profitable growth. Combining our expertise in logistics and marketing will help ORS Nasco become an even more valuable partner with its customers and suppliers. As a result, we expect this acquisition will help us deliver the long-term value and profitable growth that our shareholders deserve.

"One very important element that we recognized early in the process was that our companies share a common culture," continued Gochnauer. "ORS Nasco has a passion for supporting the success of its distributor customers through a pure wholesale model that is at the center of the company's strategies. We believe that this transaction is an excellent strategic fit for both companies."

Conference Call

United Stationers will hold a conference call followed by a question and answer session on Wednesday, January 9th, at 9:00 a.m. CT, to discuss the ORS Nasco acquisition. To participate, callers within the U.S. and Canada should dial (866) 202-3109 and international callers should dial (617) 213-8844 approximately 10 minutes before the presentation. The passcode is "61434581." To listen to the webcast, participants should visit the Investor Information section of the company's Web site at www.unitedstationers.com several minutes before the event is broadcast and follow the instructions provided to ensure that the necessary audio application is downloaded and installed. This program is provided at no charge to the user. In addition, interested parties can access an archived version of the call, also located on the Investor Information section of United Stationers' Web site, about two hours after the call ends and for at least the following two weeks. This news release, along with other information relating to the call, will be available on the Investor Information section of the Web site.

Forward-Looking Statements

This news release contains forward-looking statements, including references to goals, plans, strategies, objectives, projected costs or savings, anticipated future performance, results or events and other statements that are not strictly historical in nature. These statements are based on management's current expectations, forecasts and assumptions. This means they involve a number of risks and uncertainties that could cause actual results to differ materially from those expressed or implied here. These risks and uncertainties include, but are not limited to the following: United's ability to achieve the growth opportunities and synergies offered by this acquisition; United's ability to effectively manage its operations and to implement general cost-reduction and margin-enhancement initiatives; United's reliance on key customers, and the business, credit and other risks inherent in continuing or increased customer concentration; United's reliance on independent dealers for a significant percentage of its net sales and, therefore, the importance of their continued independence, viability and success; continuing or increasing competitive activity and pricing pressures within existing or expanded product categories, including competition from product manufacturers that sell directly to United's customers; prevailing economic conditions and changes affecting the business products industry and the general economy; United's reliance on key suppliers; the impact of variability in supplier pricing, allowance programs, promotional incentives and other terms, conditions and policies; the impact of variability in customer and end-user demand patterns on United's product offerings and sales mix and, in turn, on customer rebates payable and supplier allowances earned by United; United's ability to maintain its existing information technology systems and to successfully procure and implement new systems without business disruption or other unanticipated difficulties or costs; United's ability to effectively identify, consummate and integrate acquisitions; United's reliance on key management personnel, both in day-to-day operations and in execution of new business initiatives; and the effects of hurricanes, acts of terrorism and other natural or man-made disruptions.

Shareholders, potential investors and other readers are urged to consider these risks and uncertainties in evaluating forward-looking statements and are cautioned not to place undue reliance on the forward-looking statements. For additional information about risks and uncertainties that could materially affect United's results, please see the company's Securities and Exchange Commission filings. The company does not undertake to update any forward-looking statement, and investors are advised to consult any further disclosure by United on this matter in its filings with the Securities and Exchange Commission and in other written statements it makes from time to time. It is not possible to anticipate or foresee all risks and uncertainties, and investors should not consider any list of risks and uncertainties to be exhaustive or complete.

Company Overview

United Stationers Inc. is North America's largest broad line wholesale distributor of business products, with net sales for 2006 of \$4.5 billion. The company's network of 62 distribution centers allows it to offer nearly 46,000 items to its approximately 20,000 reseller customers. This network, combined with United's depth and breadth of inventory in technology products, traditional business products, office furniture, janitorial and breakroom products, and foodservice consumables, enables the company to ship products overnight to more than 90% of the U.S. and major cities in Mexico. United's focus on fulfillment excellence has given it an average line fill rate of better than 97%, a 99.5% order accuracy rate, and a 99% on-time delivery rate. For more information, visit www.unitedstationers.com.

ORS Nasco is a pure wholesale distributor of industrial supplies, with annual sales of approximately \$285 million. The company sells exclusively to independent distributors from eight distribution centers strategically located across the U.S. ORS Nasco offers about 200,000 premium branded and private label products from over 600 manufacturers. ORS Nasco sells to more than 10,000 independent distributors in multiple channels, including industrial, MRO (maintenance, repair and operations), safety, construction, welding, and oilfield services.

United Stationers' common stock trades on the NASDAQ Global Select Market under the symbol USTR.

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