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COLD STONE CREAMERY ANNOUNCES EXPANSION PLANS FOR THE MIDDLE EAST

Agreement Signifies Company's Dedication to International Growth

SCOTTSDALE, Ariz. (Jan. 30, 2007) – [Cold Stone Creamery®](#), the fastest-growing ice cream concept in the United States, has reached an agreement with the [Apparel Group](#) to open more than 40 stores over the next five years in the Gulf Cooperative Council which includes United Arab Emirates, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Qatar, Bahrain, Oman and Jordan. The company plans to open its first store in Dubai, United Arab Emirates by May of this year and hopes to open in Saudi Arabia by the year's end. This agreement marks Cold Stone Creamery's dedication to bringing the *Ultimate Ice Cream Experience®* to ice cream lovers worldwide.

“We are truly excited to partner with the Apparel Group to launch Cold Stone Creamery in the Middle East and to bring the ultimate ice cream experience to Dubai as early as May,” said Lee Knowlton, president of international and new business development, Cold Stone Creamery. “They are incredible retail operators and share the same desire we do; to make people happy around the world.”

“It is an honor and privilege to be associated with Cold Stone Creamery, the ultimate ice cream experience, and we are very proud to bring the same experience of customer enjoyment across the Middle East,” said Apparel Group Chief Executive Officer Nilesh Ved.

Based in the United Arab Emirates, the Apparel Group has carved a niche for itself through its exclusive mix of international retail concepts. Currently, the company operates nearly 230 stores across the Middle East encompassing brands such as Tommy Hilfiger, Kenneth Cole, Anne Klein and Nine West.

[Cold Stone Creamery](#) opened its first store in Tempe, Ariz. in 1988 and its first international store in the Roppongi Hills complex in Tokyo, Japan in November 2005. Since its international arrival, the company has served more than one million ice cream lovers through its eight Japanese stores and thousands of others through its four Korean stores.

Next, Cold Stone Creamery plans to open international stores in Indonesia and Mexico and is exploring many other international markets as well.

Cold Stone Creamery continues to lead the industry and was ranked No. 14 in the January 2007 “Franchise 500” issue of *Entrepreneur* magazine. Cold Stone Creamery is taking a bite out of the \$20.7 billion U.S. ice cream industry with reported 2006 system-wide revenues exceeding \$471 million, up 15 percent over 2005.

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About The Apparel Group

Based in the United Arab Emirates, the Apparel Groups vision aims at being the premier source of contemporary fashion and food in the region offering world-class excellence, quality and value. Through a partnership with world class concepts, the Apparel Groups mission is to completely satisfy its multicultural customer base through the best of international brands that offer the latest trends and contemporary design. Currently, the Group has grown to include 29 international brands under its portfolio from the United States, Canada, Europe, Australia and Far East and continues to target other various markets. The company now operates nearly 230 stores in the United Arab Emirates, Kuwait, Qatar, Bahrain, Oman, India, Poland, Singapore, Jordan, Thailand and Malaysia. Additionally, clear strategies are in place to enter emerging markets such as Saudi Arabia, Russia, Czech Republic, Hungary, Indonesia, Pakistan and Philippines. For more information about the Apparel Group, please visit the company's Web site at www.appareluae.com.

About Cold Stone Creamery

Cold Stone Creamery delivers the *Ultimate Ice Cream Experience*[®] through a community of franchisees who are passionate about ice cream. The secret recipe for smooth and creamy ice cream is handcrafted fresh daily in each store and then customized by adding a variety of mix-ins on a frozen granite stone. Headquartered in Scottsdale, Ariz., Cold Stone Creamery is an independently owned franchise system with 1,400 stores in the United States, Puerto Rico, Guam, Japan and Korea. For more information about Cold Stone Creamery, visit the company's Web site at www.coldstonecreamery.com.

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