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For more information, contact:  
Marjorie Koval, media@cbaonline.org

## **CBA Looks Forward to the Future with ICRS 2010, Exciting New Programs**

COLORADO SPRINGS, CO (November 4, 2009) – In this time of unprecedented change and the establishment of new paradigms for doing business in every aspect of retail, CBA, the Association for Christian Retail, recognizes the non-negotiable need to catapult the Christian retail industry into the next decade by:

- hosting the **International Christian Retail Show 2010**—the world’s largest and most comprehensive Christian product trade show,
- providing unequaled resources for customized online training via **CBA Connect** for both retailers and suppliers,
- advocating for its constituents by offering a realistic method to collect and analyze consumer intelligence and actual sales trends in **CBA CROSS:SCAN**,
- building a process to bring exclusive product and promotions directly to the Christian retailer through its **CBA Channel Exclusives Program** to increase traffic and awareness of Christian retail as the first place to shop,
- and by providing communications vehicles, including **CBA Retailers+Resources** magazine, that disseminate vital industry information in a consistent, intelligent, and trustworthy manner.

This year’s **International Christian Retail Show** to be held in St. Louis, MO, June 27-30, 2010, brings the entire industry together to do business face-to-face and heart-to-heart. “We’re excited about next year’s show in St. Louis,” says Scott Graham, CBA’s Meetings and Expositions Director. “We continue to hone ICRS to better meet our members’ needs and will be bringing a stronger sense of unity and a very Christ-centered focus to the Show in 2010. Because of its central location, with more than 3,500 stores within drivable distance to St. Louis, we anticipate healthy attendance. We also already have very strong exhibitor commitment to next year’s Show and will once again offer the joint marketing campaign for exhibitors to highlight their show specials.” Through idea exchanges, roundtables, panels, and interactive sessions, retailers and suppliers will learn from their peers and retail experts how to increase efficiencies and sales in a challenging economy. The huge trade show floor offers buying opportunities and discounts unavailable anywhere else on such a large scale.

**CBA Connect**, which launches officially on November 18, delivers consistent, easy-to-access training and product information through the retail value chain to the frontliner—the person who actually engages customers, sells products, and is most responsible for Christian store sales and differentiation in a crowded, competitive marketplace. Having trained staff (as opposed to untrained

staff) increases retail sales by as much as 30%. “We’re very excited about the launch of CBA Connect,” says CBA Strategic Solutions Executive Curtis Risky. “More than 3,500 industry users are already participating as we kick off this important new program.”

Consumer insights provide CBA with information and insights on core customers, their behaviors, purchasing motivations, buying habits, and attitudes. By using **CBA’s CROSS:SCAN**, Christian retailers receive critical information on product-sales trends and performance to help them better understand demand, optimize sales opportunities, and minimize sales declines. **CBA Consumer Intelligence** utilizes the information gleaned from CROSS:SCAN along with consumer insights to create a comprehensive view of the marketplace. “Good data and information are key to understanding what’s hot, what’s moving, and what I need,” says Risky. “With over 800 reporting stores and counting, CBA CROSS:SCAN is the Christian retail industry standard.”

The highly successful **CBA Channel Exclusives Program** enables suppliers to better understand and execute the process and strategies behind consumer- or church-directed initiatives and ministry projects that drive traffic to Christian stores and increase overall sales. Past and current CBA Channel Exclusives have had excellent results for both the participating companies and the stores and churches involved, “but even more awesome is the ministry aspect and the lives affected,” says Risky.

Keeping its members up to date and educated on the industry, new products, and retail best practices is at the core of the CBA Media Group, which is comprised of the highly regarded **CBA Retailers+Resources magazine**, the weekly **CBA Industry Brief e-newsletter**, and the **ICRS Show Daily newspapers**. Through its communications vehicles, CBA keeps the industry informed and prepared. “We have the best of the best in Christian retail writing and contributing to columns, features, and reviews in each issue of the magazine,” says CBA Publications Director Kathleen Samuelson. “No other industry publication offers the caliber of information *CBA Retailers+Resources* does.”

CBA is moving forward into 2010 with resolve, determination, and the strength of its operations team to educate, train, strengthen, and build up its members by equipping them with the resources, intelligence, communications, and opportunities they need to succeed going into 2010. For information on any of the business solutions, member services, products, and events mentioned, please contact [criskey@cbaonline.org](mailto:criskey@cbaonline.org).

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