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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Columbus Consulting Expands Team and Alliances to Support Growing Demand for Retail Consulting Services

Company adds three senior consultants and creates alliances with a number of respected independent industry consultants

COLUMBUS, Ohio – January 16, 2006 – Columbus Consulting, a leading retail merchandise systems consulting firm, today announced that Bill Crayton, Gary Hull and Reshma Pandya have joined the firm as senior consultants to help support the firm’s growth and manage existing and new retail merchandising projects. The firm also introduced a new strategic alliance program that adds a number of independent industry consultants to the company’s pool of expert resources. Columbus Consulting will call upon its alliances as needed to help support individual projects based upon the consultants’ areas of expertise.

Prior to joining Columbus Consulting, Crayton held various managerial positions during a 20-year career with retail, wholesale, and consulting firms, including Mervyn’s, County Seat Stores, J. C. Penney, Payless ShoeSource, Hallmark Cards, and Planalytics. His experience spans buying, planning, allocation, store operations and IT, including the start up of the merchandise planning function at two retailers. For more than 14 years, Hull has served in various positions with retail, software and consulting firms. His experience includes inventory management, planning, presales and system design and implementation. His client experience includes Brown Shoe Company, Charlotte Russe, Dollar Tree Stores, Famous Footwear, Gordmans, J. Crew and Talbots. Pandya is an experienced industry veteran proficient in JDA Arthur Planning and general merchandise planning processes.

“Since I launched Columbus Consulting in 2001, we have consistently grown year over year, and have built a reputation as objective retail merchandising experts with have a firm understanding of the processes and technology systems that are driving today’s successful retailers,” said Richard Amari, president of Columbus Consulting. “Reshma, Gary and Bill all bring significant knowledge and industry practice that will prove invaluable to our team and our customers who will benefit from our firms more than 150 years of combined experience in retail. We look forward to the ongoing contributions of our new senior consultants.”

The company has also created alliances with the following consultants: Tim Detter, Anne Gallutia, Karl Gillam, Jim Henderson, Kavindra Malik, Rick McPhillips, Marc Skinner and Tito Thomas.

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“Our alliance program demonstrates our commitment to the invaluable independent consultants that help us support our growing list of customers,” added Amari. “Our alliances have a broad range of experience and expertise that we can call upon at any time to enhance our team. We have proven that we are not intimidated by the size of the company or the project, nor are we tied to a single solution. Columbus Consulting’s experienced senior consultants and growing base of alliances allows us to objectively recommend the solutions that will best enhance efficiencies, improve business performance and increase profitability.”

About Columbus Consulting, Inc.

Founded by industry veteran Richard Amari in 2001, Columbus Consulting, Inc. is comprised of a team of highly experienced specialists in retail systems and processes. The company works with many of the world’s largest and well-known retailers, general merchandisers and apparel stores, including American Eagle Outfitters, Ann Taylor, Big Lots, CVS Pharmacy, and New York & Company. Columbus Consulting is called upon to provide a variety of services, from managing short-term, high-impact, executive-level advisory services on matters of strategic importance relating to retail systems and processes, to overseeing large, multi-disciplinary, multi-million dollar projects, lasting more than a year. The company is based in Columbus, Ohio. For more information on Columbus Consulting, visit www.columbusconsultinginc.com.

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