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Elephant from India and RKS of the United States Formalize a Bridge Between Continents and Cultures

Los Angeles, California and Pune, India, October 16, 2007 – RKS announces the signing of a formal strategic partnership with India’s leading strategic design firm.

“Today we have announced a strategic partnership that will provide a bridge for North American clients seeking to improve their performance in the growing Indian market, and for Indian companies seeking presence in the US” said Ravi Sawhney, PhD, CEO of US-based RKS. Together Mr. Sawhney and Mr. Sudhir Sharma, Director of Elephant Strategy + Design, described the unmistakable trend toward globalization by product manufacturers & service providers seeking access to emerging markets whose cultures are sometimes unfamiliar to them.

Mr. Sawhney said “we think of ourselves as the guide for companies building brand value globally. With our partners at Elephant, we’re able to craft a segment-specific understanding of international customs and cultures in order to develop new products and services that appeal to a range of global tastes and preferences.” With the Elephant partnership, RKS and Elephant hope to deliver an even broader range of value and market access to its clients, which include many US-based market leaders.

As part of the agreement, RKS will license the use of its exclusive Psycho-Aesthetics methodology. RKS uses this platform to enable its clients to achieve market goals once newly designed products are launched. With this platform, RKS is able to determine sources of market demand, and pinpoint the nature of target audience tastes and preferences in advance of the product design process.

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RKS, founded in 1990 by Ravi Sawhney, is a full service Industrial Design consultancy offering a full range of strategy, innovation and design services. The company is recognized as one of North America's leading Industrial Design firms, consistently ranked in the Business Week Top 10. RKS specializes in market segments that include medical / dental, consumer electronics, sporting goods, house wares, consumer products, and industrial goods. Its clients include Apple, JBL, Nokia, HP, Intel, Zyliss, Panavision, Medtronic, and many others. RKS has won more than 50 product design awards globally, and has been issued hundreds of US patents.

“With RKS and their immense experience in the product conception understanding, we at Elephant are very excited with the potential it brings to a growing country like India. We see a huge qualitative jump this partnership can offer to brands in India and the Asian region. We look forward to share our deep understanding of Indian and Asian cultures with RKS” says Mr. Sudhir Sharma of Elephant.

Elephant Strategy + Design is a pioneering design practice in India. It specializes in design of brand experiences for products, services and environments for emerging markets. Since its start in 1989, Elephant Strategy + Design has helped create confidence in Industry to use design as a tool for change. Elephant has created some of the best known Indian Brands and is a preferred partner for global companies such as Unilever, P&G, Nissan, Henkel, TATA Group & Britannia. With a combination of specialized skills, knowledge, innovation and passion, Elephant's segment expertise spans healthcare, information technology, banking, house wares, consumer & industrial products and transportation. Elephant also devotes considerable time and energy towards not-for-profit projects that support community, development and environment conservation efforts.

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