

*For Immediate Release*

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### **Hotel Brokers International to Broaden International Membership**

KANSAS CITY, Mo., August 2007—Hotel Brokers International (HBI), the nation's largest hospitality brokerage organization with more than 30 offices, today announced plans to significantly increase its international membership over the next three to five years to respond to the increasing globalization of the hotel industry.

HBI will launch its expansion program at the International Hotel Conference in Rome October 17-19. The organization will have a booth showcasing properties for sale and to discuss membership opportunities with qualified attendees. Charles Fritsch, president of HBI and president of MBA Hotel Brokers based in suburban Washington, D.C., will be a panelist on "Managing Your Portfolio" at the event.

"HBI has had international transactions and membership dating back more than 20 years and currently has properties listed for sale in Europe, Africa and Mexico," Fritsch said. "Within the past few months, we have been in discussions with brokers in Greece, Italy, Pakistan and Canada and believe this outreach will accelerate the membership recruiting process.

"We believe hoteliers will increasingly seek global representation, and we intend to be a significant presence wherever hotel transactions are taking place," he said. "By offering our clients greater professional services, such as highly specialized hotel brokers located around the world, we believe we will better serve our existing clients while attracting new ones.

Concurrently, we will build a network that will allow broker colleagues to refer clients and properties to one another in virtually every market.

“It is becoming increasingly common for hoteliers to own properties in multiple countries,” he noted. “As they move into new international markets, they want to have confidence that they can work with a broker who understands local market conditions and how to maneuver through government and brand requirements to consummate a transaction quickly. These hoteliers will want to work with a network of highly skilled brokers. A more internationally diversified HBI membership will better serve their hotel clients and will help us attract other top hotel brokers from around the world.”

Fritsch added that HBI will seek brokers who focus primarily on first-class and mid-market properties in their respective markets, which is in line with the current, largely U.S.-based membership. The organization will seek out elite firms that specialize and have in-depth expertise in hospitality real estate.

“Given the strength of the U.S. hotel market, we believe that we will see cooperation initially focused primarily with buyers coming to the U.S., but over time we expect to see a flow of business in both directions in response to the hotel real estate cycle in the respective countries’ markets,” he noted. “For example, if a French hotelier is invested only in Europe, he may want to diversify his holdings by acquiring in the U.S. Or, a U.S.-based hotelier may want to participate in the hotel expansion boom currently underway in India and China.”

### **About Hotel Brokers International**

Founded in 1959, Hotel Brokers International (HBI) is the world’s largest and oldest hospitality real estate organization, with a rich heritage of experience and expertise in hotel real estate valuation, transactions, and other essential services. Comprised of over 75 hotel real estate

broker specialists, HBI provides the hospitality industry with the most powerful hotel real estate marketing force, creating greater visibility through a unified and inclusive advertising and marketing approach. For more information, please visit, [www.hbihotels.com](http://www.hbihotels.com).