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The Innovation Group Reveals Long-Term Senior Management Transition Plan, Promotions

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The Innovation Group of Companies is pleased to announce the promotion of two individuals within its senior management structure.



Michael Soll, who has served as Executive Vice President of The Innovation Group since 2006, has been promoted to the position of President. In his expanded senior leadership role, Mr. Soll assumes primary responsibility for corporate strategy development and implementation, helping further position the organization as the premier advisory firm for the gaming, entertainment, hospitality, tourism, leisure and sports industries.

Prior to his position at The Innovation Group, Mr. Soll was Vice President Casinos for Hard Rock Café International, Inc, and also held previous leadership roles as Vice President Planning & Development for Caesars Entertainment, Director of Asset Management for Starwood Hotels & Resorts, and Vice President, Leisure Equity Research for Bear Stearns & Co. Based in the firm's Orlando-area office, the University of Wisconsin graduate also received a M.S. in Urban and Regional Planning from The College of Urban and Public Affairs in New Orleans.



Kimberly Arnold, who joined The Innovation Group as Vice President of Operations in 2008, has been promoted to Partner and Chief Operating Officer roles. Ms. Arnold supports all of the organization's affiliates (The Innovation Group, Innovation Capital, Innovation Project Development, Innovation Marketing, Innovation Management Services, Innovation Food & Beverage, Innovation Sports & Entertainment and Innovation Interactive), sustaining the full array of the organization's financial, management, research, investment banking, development, marketing and related advisory functions.

Ms. Arnold has been tasked to help coordinate and oversee targeted client relationships and a wide range of strategic corporate initiatives, including the launch of various company affiliates, industry outreach and educational efforts, and other internal programs. She has been involved extensively with the growth of the organization's online gaming efforts throughout the past three years, and currently serves as Co-Manager of the company's interactive advisory division. Currently based in the Denver area, Ms. Arnold graduated Summa Cum Laude from Colorado State University in Fort Collins, Colorado and completed advanced coursework at the University of Virginia.

Company founder and Chief Executive Officer Steve Rittvo observed, "The appointment of Michael Soll and Kimberly Arnold into these senior positions within our organization, supported by the continued leadership of existing partners Paul Girvan and Tom Zitt, Ph.D., is a key step in the gradual leadership transition of The Innovation Group of Companies. My long-time partner Steve Szapor and I have both targeted a three to five year timeframe that will steadily reduce our involvements to ensure that our multi-disciplined organization maintains its leadership position as the premier advisory firm for the gaming, entertainment, hospitality, tourism, sports and leisure industries. We are confident that the guidance we have provided throughout the past two decades has created the foundation and capabilities within our core staff and senior management team to continue our position as the industry's go-to advisor for many years to come."

Both Steve Rittvo and Steve Szapor will maintain their majority ownership positions in the organization for the foreseeable future, and have committed to guiding the transition of The Innovation Group team that was formally initiated this summer.

Current President Steve Szapor, who will continue to prioritize cross-marketing efforts for the various Innovation affiliates throughout the next several years, added, "Steve and I look forward to continuing our ownership and senior leadership roles within The Innovation Group of Companies, and providing continued guidance to our emerging leaders. We commit to maintaining relationships with key clients that have come to rely on our expertise throughout the past two decades, and will promote and sustain the activities of all of our Innovation affiliates to position them for prolonged success."

The Innovation Group of Companies has been associated with more than \$75 billion in investment decisions specific to the gaming, entertainment, hospitality, tourism and leisure sectors throughout the past 20 years. Additionally, the organization's areas of specialization have naturally expanded into such related disciplines as F&B, mixed-use retail, convention centers, sports/performance venues, social media, online gaming and other offerings that define the ever-changing world of leisure and entertainment.

Whether engaged to advise on the economic, financial, social or political, The Innovation Group of Companies has earned a reputation for accuracy, objectivity and reliability that is second to none. The Innovation leadership has helped bring many of the world's largest entertainment and hospitality developments to fruition, and the staff has been exposed to industry best practices across six continents and 78 countries throughout the globe. Multi-billion dollar organizations, government entities, global financial institutions, professional associations and private equity investors have all made sound, prudent decisions based on Innovation analysis, advice and support.

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