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News Release

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Canada's 50 Best Managed Companies' Secrets of Success... Adaptability, Commitment and Passion

50 Best program recognizes nine winners in Quebec

Montreal, QC -- January 12, 2004 - Winners of the 2003 Canada's *50 Best* Managed Companies award, display a number of common business attributes which may provide insight into their ability to achieve significant growth and success.

"Through our analysis of this year's *50 Best* award winners, we found a number of common characteristics of these exceptional companies who have successfully developed, articulated and executed a strategy to achieve a high performance advantage," said Tony Grnak, Deloitte Partner and National Leader, Canada's *50 Best*. "These winning companies clearly exhibit a strong propensity and ability to stay in close contact with their markets and to adapt and align their strategy accordingly. As well they demonstrate significant passion and commitment to ensuring they acquire and retain the best possible employees."

Key traits that the 2003 *50 Best* companies share, include: a continued ability to remain alert and responsive to changes in the market and consumer demands; a passion to create the right leadership and vision; and a commitment to invest in the hiring and retaining of the most talented employees, are some the key determinants which contributed towards companies achieving recognition on this years *50 Best* winners list, while

requalifying companies share a remarkable commitment to stay at the leading edge of innovation and to continue growth.

“The 2003 *50 Best* recipients represent some of Canada’s most exceptional, talented and successful companies who clearly make a significant contribution in driving our economy and expanding our workforce. This year’s *50 Best* winners generated \$7.2 billion in combined revenue and account for more than 29,000 employees throughout Canada in 2003 (up significantly from \$6.2 billion and 21,000 respectively, in 2002). The average revenue increase from 2001 to 2003 for the *50 Best* companies is 26% which attests to the calibre of these companies and acts as a positive indicator for our economy,” continued Tony Grnak, Deloitte Partner and National Leader, Canada’s *50 Best*. “We applaud and congratulate all of this year’s *50 Best* winners.”

Established in 1993, the *50 Best* award is a national program, recognising Canadian companies that have implemented world-class business practices and created value in innovative ways. This year, nine Quebec winners of the Canada’s *50 Best Managed Companies* program were awarded top honours following an independent judging panel’s evaluation. The panel evaluates how companies address various business challenges such as new technologies, globalisation, brand, leadership, leveraging and developing core competencies and designing the right organizations and systems to facilitate growth and the new generation of people entering the labour market.

They are: ***Algorithme Pharma Inc., ATRAHAN Transformation Inc., Canplast Inc., Dinec Inc., Groupe Savoie - Les Residences Soleil, Induspac Packaging Group Inc., Location d'outils Simplex Limited, Quadra Chemicals Limited and SSQ Groupe Financier.***

Previous *50 Best* winners have an additional two years to use their *50 Best* designation, providing they successfully meet the requalification criteria. This year, eleven companies were awarded requalification in Quebec: ***3-SOFT Inc., Aliments Carrière Inc., Atrium Biotechnologies Inc., CIMA +, D.L.G.L. Ltd., Dessau-Soprin Inc., Forensic Technology WAI Inc., Groupe Germain, Le Groupe Montoni Division Construction Inc., Mediagrif Interactive Technologies and Chaussures Régence Inc.***

2003 winners and requalified winners of the Canada’s *50 Best Managed Companies* award will be honoured at the annual *50 Best* gala in Toronto on 9 February, 2004. The *50 Best* symposium, 9th and 10th February, will address issues relevant to today’s business leaders.

“The 2003 *50 Best* winners are an outstanding group of Canadian owned and managed companies who have proven their remarkable ability and commitment to apply best practices to all areas of their business operations,” said James McSherry, Executive Vice President and Managing Director, CIBC Commercial Banking, a national sponsor of the program. “These companies clearly demonstrate innovation, leadership and a focus on their customers and employees. Their example illustrates that focusing on the fundamentals while pursuing a clearly defined strategy is key to achieving exceptional results.”

About Canada’s 50 Best Managed Companies (www.canadas50best.com)

Canada’s *50 Best* Managed Companies (*50 Best*) is a national awards program that recognizes the 50 Best businesses from a wide range of industries that have implemented world-class best business practices. The program, established in 1993 and entering its 11th year, annually recognizes 50 well-managed Canadian companies that must complete an extensive and in-depth interview process to assess and examine its management practices.

National sponsors of the program are Deloitte, CIBC Commercial Banking, National Post, and Queen's School of Business. Information about Canada’s 50 Best Managed Companies 2003 is available online at www.canadas50best.com.