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AWARD-WINNING HINT[®] WATER UPGRADES PACKAGE, SALES TEAM, SKU FOCUS

Starbucks Coffee Company to launch Hint throughout USA & Canada

San Francisco, CA (January 2010) – How does the best product in an emerging premium category maintain retailer and consumer attention during a rough economy? That’s the question Hint Inc. CEO Kara Goldin asked her team in the Fall of 2008 and they spent the better part of 2009 implementing the answers. Meanwhile the company racked up a string of awards this past year, including a Retailer Choice Award from CSP Magazine and Best Flavored Water from Men’s Health.

Among those taking notice of the brand’s progress is Starbucks Coffee, which will launch Hint Blackberry water nationwide on March 9, with Canada to follow soon thereafter.

Retailers visiting BOOTH 1359 at the Winter Fancy Food Show will immediately notice the biggest change: a dramatically improved label, designed to increase the rate of product trial on the grocery warm shelf. “To date, Hint has not focused on traditional grocery, but we’ve long known that we would need to move away from our clear labels in order for consumers to really see the product on the typical grocery shelf” says CEO Goldin. “Now that we’re expanding our distribution, the label will be critical to product trial, and it turns out it makes a big difference even where we have already established strong sales. We’ve tested the revised package in New York and are seeing astonishing improvements in sales, especially for the Winter time.”

Also new at Hint Inc. is a focus on core SKUs that attract the broadest possible consumer audience. “We discovered this year that even consumers with the most refined palates love our core SKUs (Blackberry, Watermelon, Mango-Grapefruit, Pomegranate-Tangerine, Raspberry-Lime and Strawberry-Kiwi), but many of the best retailers had gravitated towards our more unusual flavors, such as Honeydew-Hibiscus and Cucumber” says Hint COO Theo Goldin. “Over the past few months we’ve really challenged retailers to focus first on the most popular SKUs and to add in the other flavors only after we have built a loyal base of consumers. The buyers have appreciated this disciplined approach and the results have been awesome.”

Coming out of the busiest December they have had to date, Hint Inc.’s sales and management team is looking forward to meeting with retailers at BOOTH 1359 and demonstrating how, if properly managed, the emerging essence water category can generate substantial incremental sales for retailers in 2010.

About HINT

HINT, whose mantra is Drink Water, Not Sugar[®] is the brainchild of Kara Goldin, a San Francisco mother of four who was seeking a refreshing, unsweetened, zero-calorie beverage to give her family. Her solution – HINT Essence Water, a simple product that is light, refreshing and never sweet. Launched in 2005, Kara developed HINT in response to the growing wall of reinvented sodas and fruit punches being sold as “energy drinks” and “functional beverages.” HINT is at the heart of a healthy lifestyle[™], and is available in many delicious flavors including Blackberry, Watermelon, Pomegranate-Tangerine, Mango-Grapefruit, Strawberry-Kiwi and Raspberry-Lime. HINT Essence Water can be found in fine grocery stores and retailers all over the United States or purchased online at www.drinkhint.com.

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