

September 2, 2010

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## **FREEMAN ACQUIRES ENCORE PRODUCTIONS**

*Face-to-face event leader to leverage trend, opportunities in hotel event market*

DALLAS – Freeman announced today that it has acquired Encore Productions, a full-service creative production and audio visual equipment rental company based in Las Vegas. For more than 20 years, Encore has helped clients tell their stories in Las Vegas and around the world. Encore has full-service satellite audio visual rental offices in 14 of the top Las Vegas properties.

The purchase follows Freeman's long-term corporate strategy of investing in growth opportunities in the face-to-face industry. The results of the second annual [Meeting Planners Intentions Survey](#), commissioned by the Professional Convention Management Association (PCMA), the PCMA Education Foundation, American Express and the Y Partnership, showed an encouraging future for the face-to-face meeting and convention industry. The survey showed a net increase in the number of off-site meetings that planners expect to book in 2010 (15 percent) and 2011 (24 percent) versus the 2009 results. In addition, there is a net increase in expected attendance at off-site meetings in 2010 (23 percent) and 2011 (38 percent) versus 2009 results.

"Encore is privately owned. They are regarded as leaders in their field, and also have a reputation for outstanding customer service. Encore employees understand the value of partnering with customers, and we believe they will be a great fit for Freeman," said Joe Popolo, chief executive officer of Freeman. "Encore has demonstrated they are the technology and creative leader in their space. With the addition of their relationships to Freeman's resources, we are positioning the combined Freeman organization for growth in an important segment of the face-to-face industry."

The terms of the acquisition were not disclosed.

Freeman will retain Encore's name and brand identity. Encore's executive leadership team will remain in place to manage company operations and hotel customer relationships.

"Within the organization, Encore will be a part of Freeman's audio visual division," said Ken Sanders, president of Freeman Audio Visual. "With the acquisition of Encore, Freeman's AV holdings now position the company as the second-highest ranking technology supplier in the industry, providing the most diverse service offering of any company in the space."

"Becoming a Freeman company is an opportunity for Encore to provide additional value to its customers," said Phil Cooper, chief executive officer of Encore. "Freeman is viewed by its customers as the premier supplier in the face-to-face industry. As part of Freeman, Encore will leverage its own premium reputation and service offerings to expand Freeman's reach into the hospitality marketplace in Las Vegas as well as in other markets. We are very excited to be part of a team with the industry experience and depth that Freeman has."

Longtime Encore customers believe the Freeman and Encore combination will be a winning one.

"For many years, our partnership with Encore has been a tremendous benefit to our business and has added remarkable value to our customer's events," said Michael Massari, vice president of Las Vegas meetings for Harrah's Entertainment. "We are excited about the future of the partnership."

"Mandalay Bay Resort has enjoyed a sound relationship with Encore Productions and Freeman," said Richard Harper, senior vice president of sales for Mandalay Bay. "We look forward to seeing the benefits this new partnership may bring."

Prior to Encore, Freeman's most recent acquisition was the purchase of Hospitality Partners, LLC, in February 2009.

### **ABOUT FREEMAN**

Freeman ([www.freemanco.com](http://www.freemanco.com)) is the world's leading provider of integrated services for face-to-face marketing events, including expositions, conventions, corporate events and exhibits. Customer driven, Freeman offers a total package of solutions to our customers, with a scope of products and services unmatched by the competition. By empowering our employees to make educated, strategic decisions Freeman delivers reliable, consistent problem-solving solutions that our customers have come to rely on. With 40 offices in North America, Freeman produces more than 3,000 expositions annually, including 107 of the largest 200 U.S. trade shows, and more than 10,000 other events worldwide. The company has received numerous awards recognizing outstanding efforts in industry leadership, customer service excellence, creative design, community service, innovation and customer-driven partnerships.

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