

## **NORTH CASTLE PARTNERS INVESTS IN PALLADIO BEAUTY GROUP**

### **Partnering with CEO to Accelerate Growth of Premium Color Cosmetics and Skincare Product Company**

April 18, 2012 (Greenwich, CT; Hollywood, FL) – North Castle Partners, a leading private equity firm focused on investments in consumer-driven product and service businesses that promote Health, Wellness, and Active Living, announced today that it has completed an investment in Palladio Beauty Group, in partnership with CEO and owner Philip Solomon, further extending North Castle's presence in the personal care sector. The terms of the investment were not disclosed.

Based in Hollywood, Florida, Palladio Beauty Group is a leading marketer of premium color cosmetics and skincare products sold primarily through the beauty supply and professional beauty channels. Palladio's unique ability to deliver high-quality products, rapid innovation, and exceptional customer service, all at a value price point, is the foundation of the company's success. Palladio enjoys strong brand loyalty among its U.S. and growing international customer and consumer base.

"When we determined it was time to bring in a partner to help with our growth strategy, I immediately thought of North Castle given their industry knowledge, commitment to partnership, and successful track record in beauty and personal care," said Mr. Solomon. "We share a vision for continuing to grow Palladio, including: bringing more consumers who seek the Palladio brand into the stores of our U.S. distribution partners, acquiring complementary brands, and continuing to expand the Palladio international footprint. I am very excited to announce this partnership and look forward to working together with the North Castle team."

"Investing in companies that provide high quality personal care products and services is a cornerstone of North Castle's mission to partner with industry leading companies in the Health, Wellness, and Active Living market," said Lou Marinaccio, a North Castle Managing Director. "Our cumulative experiences in the personal care industry through our successful prior investments in Avalon Organics, Alba Botanicals, and Doctors Dermatologic Formula, combined with our current investments in gloProfessional, Mineral Fusion Natural Brands, and the Red Door Spa, have provided North Castle with a deep knowledge base and network to support the Palladio team in accelerating company growth. We are proud to welcome Phil and his team into the North Castle family."

North Castle Managing Director Jon Canarick added, "We spent time developing a relationship with Phil and his team long before pursuing this investment, and became very impressed with his capabilities as a leader in this fast-moving industry. Palladio's strong customer service orientation, deep industry relationships, and tight operating efficiency provide a platform for continued growth, both for the Palladio brand and for potential acquisitions of brands that can complement Palladio in serving the company's growing customer base."

"We are excited to partner with an impressive entrepreneur/CEO who recognizes the value of North Castle's prior experience in the personal care and color cosmetics industries. Part of Palladio's attractiveness is based on its distinctive value proposition as a low cost but high quality 'value' product line. While North Castle has generally invested in companies serving the premium price point consumer with innovative products, we have in the wake of the global recession sought, and with Palladio now have, a partner who provides lower-cost, but high-quality, products at a better price," said Chip Baird, North Castle's Managing Partner.

Morrison Cohen provided legal counsel and Cherry, Beckaert & Holland provided financial advice to North Castle. Goldfinger Lassar and Marcum LLP provided legal counsel to Palladio Beauty Group.

### **About North Castle Partners**

North Castle Partners is a leading private equity firm focused on investments in consumer-driven product and service businesses that promote Health, Wellness, and Active Living. North Castle is a hands-on, value-added

investor in high-growth, middle market companies in the (i) beauty & personal care, (ii) consumer health, (iii) fitness, recreation & sports, (iv) home & leisure and (v) nutrition sectors, among others. North Castle's current portfolio includes such well-known brands as glominerals, Mineral Fusion, Red Door Spas, Performance Bicycles, Cascade Helmets, World Health, Octane Fitness, Ibex Outdoor Clothing, and Flatout Flatbreads. Prior portfolio company holdings include Atkins Nutritionals, Bora-Bora Organic Foods, Equinox Fitness, EAS, Enzymatic Therapy, CRC Health Group, Doctor's Dermatologic Formula, Naked Juice Company, and Avalon Organics / Alba Botanicals. North Castle and its operating executives and advisors partner with management to bring a wide range of strategic and operational capabilities, as well as an extensive knowledge base and network to build world-class companies. North Castle is headquartered in Greenwich, CT. For more information, visit [www.northcastlepartners.com](http://www.northcastlepartners.com)

#### **About Palladio Beauty Group**

Palladio Beauty Group (based in Hollywood, Florida, USA) is the manufacturer of Palladio — a cruelty-free, “herbal and vitamin enriched cosmetics” brand. The brand is distributed through professional beauty supply stores and high-end specialty retailers in over 40 countries. Palladio products are enhanced with unique vitamin complexes (containing skin essentials such as green tea, chamomile, ginseng, aloe vera and vitamins A, C, D & E) which have been scientifically proven to repair the skin's elasticity and combat aging. In addition, this beneficial cosmetic line is composed of the highest-quality ingredients, and yet remains affordable to consumers. For additional information, or product inquiries, please visit: [www.PalladioBeauty.com](http://www.PalladioBeauty.com).