



**Media Contacts:**

Lori Martin, Vollmer Public Relations  
713-970-2116 (office); 832-563-5519 (cell)  
Lori@vollmerpr.com

Lindsey Klingensmith, Vollmer Public Relations  
713-970-2126 (office); 713-248-8782 (cell)  
Lindsey@vollmerpr.com

**OPPORTUNITY HOUSTON<sup>SM</sup> TO EXPAND HOUSTON REGION'S  
GLOBAL INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY FOOTPRINT**

***International Initiatives, Technology and More will Strengthen  
Economic Development in IT Industry Sector***

**HOUSTON (Oct. 30, 2006)** -- The Greater Houston Partnership unveiled a historic fundraising effort aimed in part at building greater awareness of the region's business advantages to information technology firms.

*Opportunity Houston<sup>SM</sup>*, chaired by Houston Astros' owner Drayton McLane, is designed to expand the region's global reach through enhanced international initiatives and leveraging technology to target foreign and domestic companies for relocation and expansion in the 10-county region.

McLane said that IT is one of the sectors being targeted because it is a natural fit with the region's existing infrastructure, skilled workforce, and entrepreneurial culture.

The region is already home to over 300 software development companies, 350 firms providing telecommunications services, and more than 100 offering online data services. The software development sector alone contributes more than \$4.2 billion annually to the region's economy and employs about 24,000 workers.

"We have a tradition of supporting innovation and providing the resources and encouragement that technology companies need to grow their businesses," McLane continued. "We're wired for success today, but also have the ability to keep pace with the technical breakthroughs that occur every day in the IT sector.

"That means we can support the current demands of IT companies while at the same time being a hub for the kind of development and invention that spurs future breakthroughs."

*Opportunity Houston<sup>SM</sup>* is a \$40 million aggressive marketing campaign that will support the Partnership's strategic plan to help create 600,000 new jobs, attract \$60 billion in capital investment, and generate \$225 billion in foreign trade.

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Included among the possible programs *Opportunity Houston*<sup>SM</sup> would fund are:

- Development of a Geographic Information System (GIS), an advanced technology that can capture data according to location and link prospects with specific sites throughout the 10-county region that best meet their requirements.
- Lead-generation methodology that will enable the Partnership to identify and aggressively pursue the strongest potential prospects in key growth sectors.
- Enhanced international outreach that includes trade missions similar to those taken earlier this year to India and China.
- Marketing efforts and public relations designed to impact domestic and international perceptions of the Houston region.

Taken together, McLane said, these and other activities will enable the region to make a powerful case for growth and development – not just in the IT industry but in other sectors as well.

“We have what companies need: a low cost of doing business, a strong pro-business environment, a great partnership with local governments, a skilled workforce – pretty much anything anyone could ask for,” he continued.

“All we have to do is get the word out, and that is exactly what *Opportunity Houston*<sup>SM</sup> is designed to do.”

The Greater Houston Partnership is the primary advocate of the Houston business community and is dedicated to building regional economic prosperity. It represents 10 counties: Austin, Brazoria, Chambers, Fort Bend, Galveston, Harris, Liberty, Montgomery, San Jacinto, and Waller.

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