



Orange County Company's Distinctive Brand Strategy Fuels Business Growth in a Down Economy

*Office-seating Manufacturer **Highmark** Invests in Marketing, Manufacturing and Technology;
Posts Strong Revenue Growth Despite Industry-wide Decline*

HUNTINGTON BEACH, CA – (Marketwire – November 19, 2009) – Last year, Orange County-based seating manufacturer [Highmark](#) re-launched with a new brand promise that emphasized simplicity: simple sell, simple design, and simple service. Today, in the midst of a recession, Highmark President and Founder Chuck Loeb is once again swimming against the tide and, unlike his larger competitors, is heavily investing in all areas of the business.

The result? Business is booming. When the company debuted its new brand strategy at NeoCon 2008, the world's largest tradeshow for contract furnishings, its "simple" message struck a chord with the industry: orders surged, showroom attendance increased by more than 200 percent over the prior year, and sales increased by nearly 6.5 percent in contrast to the office furniture industry decline of 2.3 percent during the same period.

The company has continued the momentum in 2009 - Highmark posted the strongest sales in its 17-year history in the first three quarters of this year, with bookings **up by almost 10 percent over prior year.**

"Companies that succeed in a down market are those that invest in the business, in particular in marketing and brand strategy," commented Loeb. "Last year's re-branding was just the beginning. We've been listening to the needs of our partners and customers, and over the coming months will be delivering a slew of new products, marketing programs, and interactive services designed to build Highmark's brand awareness and support our reps and dealers nationwide. In short, we're making the decision for a seating partner simple – It's Highmark."

The simple approach belies what has been an intensive – and expensive - undertaking. Throughout 2009, Loeb has focused strategic investments on:

- **People.** The company has hired four new team members, including a new General Manager and Lead Product Engineer; along with ongoing training and education for all employees.
- **Product.** Late 2009 and early 2010 will be a momentous time for Highmark, as the company is poised to announce an aggressive new product roll-out, featuring eight new chairs over the coming eight months.

- **Process.** Focus is on operational excellence, lean and green manufacturing, and an overall industry best customer experience. Highmark recently completed [GREENGUARD](#) certification, and has also streamlined its offerings to eliminate chairs that do not meet its 'intuitive, clean, affordable, and green' standard. Additionally, the company recently hired a lean manufacturing expert to assist it as it moves to world class manufacturing standards.
- **Marketing.** Highmark has continued to invest in building its brand and supporting its extended sales team by developing new marketing programs and leveraging interactive technology and social media to stay connected with its partners and customers.

Outlook for 2010

In an industry that has been hit as hard as office furnishings, Loeb refuses to predict what the future holds for his, or any other company. Regardless, he continues to build on the brand promise, optimistic that Highmark's simple approach is the right tactic to take during the storm.

The Highmark Brand: Seating Made Simple.

Highmark brought its brand mission to life with products that were intuitive, clean, affordable, and green. The new brand's premiere product, the [InSync](#), combined high design with breakthrough technology to create the first affordable counterbalance chair. *Buildings* magazine awarded InSync a Certificate of Excellence and *Design Journal* designated it a platinum winner in the 2009 ADEX awards.

About Highmark

[Highmark](#) is seating made simple: simple sell, simple use, and simple service. Headquartered in Orange County, CA – a confluence of fashion, art and eco-friendly design – Highmark offers intuitive, clean, affordable, green designs built with cutting edge technology. Founded in 1992, Highmark is known for quality, selection, and unparalleled customer service. All Highmark products come with a lifetime warranty on components, conform to international ergonomic guidelines, and are available with Speed Ship delivery. For more information about the company and its products, visit www.highmarkergo.com, watch us at www.YouTube.com/HighmarkSeating, or follow us on Twitter at www.twitter.com/highmarkseating.

Contact

For more information:

Highmark

Chuck Loeb, *President*

chuckl@highmarkergo.com

800.441.4975