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**ACE HARDWARE RANKS 5th ON 'FRANCHISE TIMES 200' LIST FOR 3rd
CONSECUTIVE YEAR**

OAK BROOK, Ill., Oct. XX, 2008 – Ace Hardware has once again captured the fifth place position on the *Franchise Times* 200 (FT200), an annual list that ranks franchise systems based on their total worldwide sales.

The 2008 FT200, published in the October issue of *Franchise Times*, indicates that the 4,630 Ace store locations domestically and abroad generated \$12.5 billion in retail sales during 2007. Ace has held the fifth-place position since 2006.

Ace is the sole non-quick service restaurant or convenience store to rank in the top five. McDonald's, 7-Eleven, KFC and Burger King landed in the other four positions.

“The superior sales and customer service performance of Ace locations throughout the world truly speaks to the strength of Ace's brand power and our successful business model – even in this difficult economic climate,” said Ray Griffith, president and chief executive officer of Ace Hardware Corp. “Even more importantly, this ranking is a testament to the entrepreneurial drive of each of our retailers and their commitment to offering exceptional, helpful customer service.”

Since 2005, Ace has experienced the largest expansion in its 84-year history. Last year, 140 new stores opened across the country, and to date, 83 stores have opened in 2008 – with a projected 100 in total to open by the end of the year. With more than 4,600 neighborhood hardware stores, 50 percent of the U.S. population is within three miles of an Ace store.

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Franchise Times is a news and information source for franchise owners, operators and senior executives of multi-unit franchise companies. It regularly covers successful franchise businesses and their owners, as well as information on finance, real estate, human resources, international business, industry news and legal issues.

Throughout its 84-year history, Ace Hardware has been known as the helpful hardware store by both customers and communities. This year, Ace ranked “Highest in Customer Satisfaction among Home Improvement Stores for the Second Consecutive Year,” according to J.D. Power and Associates. With 4,600 hardware, home center and building materials stores that generate annual retail sales of more than \$12 billion, Ace is the largest retailer-owned hardware cooperative in the industry. Headquartered in Oak Brook, Ill., Ace currently operates 14 distribution centers in the U.S. and one in Shanghai, China, and its retailers’ stores are located in all 50 states and more than 60 countries. For more information on Ace, visit www.acehardware.com.

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