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America Haunts' Members Lead the Way in Helping Haunted Houses and Fall Attractions Gain Market Share in Halloween Retail Scene

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DETROIT, Oct. 17, 2012 /PRNewswire/ -- Candy and costumes will always be synonymous with Halloween, but according to America Haunts, haunted houses are increasing their market share in this growing retail scene.

The association of elite haunted houses that delivers fear-based entertainment to millions of thrill seekers every Halloween season credits the growth of this \$300-\$500 million industry to owners and operators now providing offerings ranging from Hollywood-quality make up and special effects to branded apparel, food and rides to customers.

"Running a haunted house has become a year-round job for many owners and their staffs," said America Haunts board member Amber Arnett-Bequeaith. "Research shows that people enjoy being scared while in a safe environment such as attending a movie, going on a thrill ride or visiting a haunted house. We have a responsibility to make sure that each year is better than the last. We may have just over three weeks left in the season, but our members already are planning what their attractions will look like in 2013."

Haunted houses and outdoor fall attractions like haunted hayrides, corn mazes and ziplines, also are important stimulators to the local economies in which they reside. In addition to their full time staffs, elite haunted houses hire anywhere from 200-300 workers each season. Owners also annually spend \$50 million with vendors for supplies like fog machines, scary animatronic monsters, lighting equipment and masks and costumes, and an additional \$85 million on print, broadcast and online advertising.

Nonprofits are another major beneficiary of the growing haunted house industry, according to America Haunts. More more than 80 percent of all haunted attractions across America are either operated by or help benefit a charity in the form of tens of

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millions of dollars every year. In 2011, America Haunts members donated more than \$500,000 to nonprofits in the 20 U.S. markets where it operates. This year, the association is currently on track to contribute \$750,000 through its efforts.

"Whether it's working with businesses or nonprofits, supporting the communities where we do business is very important to America Haunts because our fans are the most loyal," Arnett-Bequeaith said. "It is great seeing them come back year after year, particularly when they bring friends or family members for their first visit."

For more information, including hours and ticket prices, go to www.AmericaHaunts.com/attractions.

With 30 haunted houses and attractions across the country, America Haunts delivers fear-based entertainment to more than a million thrill seekers annually. America Haunts has been featured on the Travel Channel and its members recognized by The Guinness Book of World Records on multiple occasions. The organization is committed to providing technical excellence, stunning set design, Hollywood-quality make-up, costumes and actors. For more information, visit AmericaHaunts.com.

Resources: National Retail Federation, Transworld and America Haunts.

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