



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**INDUSTRIAL OPPORTUNITY PARTNERS**  
**INVESTS IN CARLSON SYSTEMS HOLDINGS, INC.**

**Evanston, Ill., September 2, 2009** – Industrial Opportunity Partners (“IOP”), a private equity firm based in Evanston, Ill., today announced that it has partnered with existing shareholders and senior management in an investment in Carlson Systems Holdings, Inc., and its two subsidiaries, Carlson Systems, LLC, and Mid-Atlantic Fasteners, LLC (together “Carlson Systems” or the “Company”) to support a recapitalization of the family-owned business.

Carlson Systems is a leading multi-regional distributor of product assembly systems serving the fastening and packaging needs of construction, industrial, and OEM customers, with products such as hand-held nailers, staplers, tapers, marking and labeling products, stretch/shrink wrappers, and strappers. Carlson Systems sells over 15,000 SKUs sourced from over 900 vendors from 53 sales sites spread across 22 states (primarily in the Midwest, Central, Southwest and Mid-Atlantic regions) and parts of Mexico.

IOP is partnering in its investment with the current shareholders within the Carlson family, as well as other members of the Company’s senior management team, all of whom will remain active in continuing to manage and grow the business going forward. Mr. Todd Carlson will remain in his roles of President, CEO and Executive Vice President of Sales of Carlson Systems. In addition, James Todd, an IOP Operating Principal, will assume the position of Chairman, with Messrs. Don and Todd Carlson continuing to serve on Carlson Systems’ Board of Directors. Mr. Todd, who has significant experience with companies serving similar end-markets, is a member of IOP’s Board of Operating Principals, which is comprised of seasoned executives who provide leadership to businesses in which IOP invests.

Kenneth M. Tallering, Senior Managing Director of IOP, stated, “We are very excited to partner with the Carlson family shareholders and management team. Carlson Systems is an established business with a broad portfolio of branded and private-label products, an excellent reputation for customer service, and strong relationships with high-quality customers and vendors.”

Mr. Todd added, “Carlson Systems has been focused on customer needs since its inception more than 60 years ago. Its deep focus on customer service has helped the company grow from a small business based in the home of founders Carl and Julia Carlson to a multi-regional corporation that operates in 22 states and Mexico and serves over 31,000 customers. I look forward to working closely with Todd Carlson, his management team and all Carlson Systems’ associates in growing the company by building on Carlson Systems’ reputation with its customers and suppliers.”

Mr. Carlson commented, “I and the Carlson family shareholders and management team are excited to partner with IOP. IOP brings both capital and the experience of Jim Todd and the rest of the IOP team, which will permit the Company to continue to grow and capitalize on opportunities as the Company’s end markets improve.”

KPMG Corporate Finance, LLC, represented Carlson Systems and its shareholders in this transaction. First National Bank of Omaha provided financing for the acquisition. McDermott Will & Emery LLP provided legal representation to IOP in the transaction.

**About Carlson Systems Holdings, Inc.**

Carlson Systems is a leading multi-regional distributor of product assembly systems serving the fastening and packaging needs of construction, industrial, and OEM customers, with products such as hand-held nailers, staplers, tapers, marking and labeling products, stretch/shrink wrappers, and strappers. Carlson Systems sells over 15,000 SKUs sourced from over 900 vendors from 53 sales sites spread across 22 states (primarily in the Midwest, Central, Southwest and Mid-Atlantic regions) and parts of Mexico. For more information about Carlson Systems and Mid-Atlantic Fasteners, visit the Company's websites at [www.csystems.com](http://www.csystems.com) and [www.midatlanticfasteners.com](http://www.midatlanticfasteners.com).

**About Industrial Opportunity Partners**

IOP is an Evanston, IL based private equity firm dedicated to creating value through investing in manufacturing and value-added distribution businesses with sales between \$30 million and \$350 million. IOP focuses on businesses with strong product, customer and market positions, and provides management and operational resources to support growth in sales and earnings at its businesses. For more information, visit IOP's website at [www.iopfund.com](http://www.iopfund.com).