

Contact: Clark Crowley
Stern + Associates
908-276-4344 ext. 503
clark@sternassociates.com

**PATH TO PROFIT AND PHILANTHROPIC PURPOSE:
“Driving With No Brakes” Offers Roadmap
for How Companies Can Do Well by Doing Good**

BOSTON – September 14, 2010 – Despite the impact of the current recession on the travel industry, Boston-based [Grand Circle Corporation](#) is increasing profitability and growing at a rate of nearly 20 percent per year – as it has been for the last two decades. What makes this company succeed while competitors fail? What can companies in other industries learn from its example?

These questions pave the way for the book, ***Driving With No Brakes: How a bunch of hooligans built the best travel company in the world.*** Authored by Grand Circle co-owners Alan and Harriet Lewis, the book shows how businesses and their leaders can achieve greater growth and profitability by following a business model that focuses on integrating values and philanthropic mission into the business strategy.

“Most corporations are so focused on efficiency and the bottom line that they sacrifice the flexibility that enables them to respond to changing circumstances,” says Alan Lewis. “While this model may benefit companies in the short-term, it alienates their number one resource – people – and leaves them vulnerable. The key to increasing profits and sustained business success is a corporate climate that puts people, values and social purpose ahead of all else.”

In 1985, Grand Circle was a travel company that generated \$27 million in sales from one office—and was losing \$2 million a year. Twenty-five years later, Grand Circle has grown into a highly profitable international travel company with annual sales in excess of \$600 million. The company owns or charters 60 ships and employs 2,300 associates in 30 plus offices worldwide. Each year, Grand Circle and its affiliate, Overseas Adventure Travel, are responsible for taking more than 119,000 American travelers to 100 countries around the world. Under the Lewises’ leadership, Grand Circle has emerged as an adaptive organization and developed a systematic leadership process to survive – and thrive – through some 300 crises, including the 9-11 attacks, the rise of online competitors, and global political, economic and environmental turbulence that shuttered the doors of many major competitors.

In ***Driving With No Brakes***, the Lewises provide a brutally honest look at Grand Circle’s successes and failures, and highlight important business choices and strategies, including its values-based culture, that have propelled it to become one of the world’s leading travel companies. Through the lens of Grand Circle, they offer a case for how leaders within any industry can make their businesses more profitable and more generous.

-more-

Proving that competitive advantage goes to those companies that can “do well and do good,” philanthropy is a key pillar of Grand Circle’s business strategy and fuels its success. Since 1992, the company has donated or pledged more than \$50 million to educational, humanitarian and cultural endeavors worldwide. The Lewises also developed the Community Service Team, an employee-run task force that supports volunteerism and philanthropy, which has donated more than 60,000 hours of service to local non-profits since 1993.

ABOUT THE AUTHORS

Alan Lewis is owner and chairman of Grand Circle Corporation. An entrepreneur, philanthropist and agent of change, Lewis has a proven track record of creating both corporate profitability and growth and innovative philanthropic programs despite the challenges presented by a highly competitive industry operating in a chaotic world.

Harriet Lewis is owner and vice chair of Grand Circle Corporation and helps drive the company’s mission to enhance the lives of its travelers, its global workforce and the communities to which it travels. A former teacher, Harriet serves as chair of Grand Circle Foundation, the organization’s charitable arm, which has pledged or donated more than \$50 million since 1992 and is dedicated to supporting 100 schools in 60 villages worldwide.

Driving With No Brakes: How a bunch of hooligans built the best travel company in the world (ISBN 978-0-615-37782-7, Soft cover, \$19.95, September, 2010)

###