

NEWS RELEASE

For immediate release...March 24, 2008

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25-year-old local company at center of industry's growth

Kentwood, MICH., -- Kentwood-based Baudville, Inc., one of the nation's leading providers of employee award and recognition products and tools, pauses to celebrate its 25th birthday in March, and reflects on the affect its products have had on increasing the financial balance sheet of companies across the globe.

Just how do the goods and services of an employee recognition company affect the bottom line of Fortune 500 companies? Simple. Proper staff recognition translates to increased sales or revenue.

"Baudville is passionate about employee recognition as we have been witnessing the powerful results of recognition for twenty five years," notes Baudville Incorporated's President and CEO Brad Darooge.

"When employees are satisfied with their work and their company, it shows in very measurable indicators," Darooge continues. "This is most evident in staff's interactions with the customer. Those interactions can impact that customer's future relationship with the company, that is, future sales. The companies that have experienced the benefits of regular employee recognition are the primary reasons why Baudville has experienced growth in its first quarter-century."

A 2004 Northwestern University study found that a direct link exists between employee satisfaction and customer satisfaction, and between customer satisfaction and improved financial performance.

"Ultimately, it's an organization's employees who influence the behavior and attitudes of customers," adds Darooge. "We've all experienced this; we receive poor service at one restaurant or retail store, and we don't go back. It's likely the employee wasn't engaged with the company or boss, and that affects how he will perform for customers.

Organizations with engaged employees are going to see the bottom line improve. The same Northwestern study found that these organizations have customers who use their products more often and are less expensive to serve.

Baudville celebrated the 25 year milestone with an employee reception on March 4, 2008, and plans to hold additional activities throughout the year.

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Baudville's Roots

Baudville got its start in 1983 as a two-man software development firm. It was the 1985 release of Award Maker, a template-based program for creating awards and certificates that steered the company down the path of recognition.

With the success of Award Maker, Baudville expanded its product line and began to offer pre-printed laser paper, certificate paper, certificate folders, seals and an exclusive collection of theme designs. These new products coupled with exceptional customer service caught the attention of Inc. Magazine, which recognized Baudville as a Positive Award Performer Finalist in 1995.

"The product expansion in the early '90s shaped the company to what it has become today," comments CEO Darooge. An award-winning provider of recognition solutions, Baudville continues to build on its pioneer products and has since grown to offer over 3,200 SKUs.

In 2007, the company was proudly recognized as one of West Michigan's "101 Best & Brightest Companies to Work For". And more people are realizing it. During 2007's slowing economy, Baudville added 26 new members to its team.

The success of another popular software program, ID Maker[®], prompted further expansion for Baudville. In 2002, IDville was launched with the goal to improving safety and security throughout organizations of all sectors and sizes by offering complete identification solutions including software and tools. Today, IDville accounts for as much as 20% of total corporate revenue.

The Future of Baudville

Future efforts will focus on the development of an eco-friendly business greeting card line. Company leadership hope the expansion will continue the hiring trend Baudville saw in 2007 and add more skilled and creative work opportunities to Grand Rapids.

"As Baudville looks forward to the next twenty five years, it plans to repeat its history of growth and expansion. We set pretty aggressive goals for ourselves," admits Darooge on the company's goal to grow the business by 15% each year. "To achieve our goals, we're focusing our attention on upgrading and expanding product development and marketing efforts."

Also on the horizon in the recognition industry is catering to the multi-generational workplace. "With four generations working side by side, human resource professionals are faced with new recognition challenges. We plan to set the trend for meeting those challenges," says Darooge.

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BAUDVILLE BY THE NUMBERS

- 1983 – Baudville gets its start in an apartment bedroom; 2 employees; 100 square feet.
- 1985 – Award Maker released; 8 employees; 750 sq. feet.
- 1987 – Moved into current location at 5380 52nd Street; 12 employees; 10,625 sq. feet.
- 1998 – “Priceless Motivation,” Baudville’s first book, is published.
- 2002 – IDville brand is launched; 42 employees; 35,000 sq. feet.
- 2008 – 25 years of business; 85 employees; 70,000 sq. feet.

ABOUT BAUDVILLE, INC.

Founded in 1983, Baudville (www.baudville.com) is a leading provider of employee award and recognition products and tools. Today, Baudville continues to build on its past success, aggressively upgrading and expanding product development and marketing efforts. A recent renovation doubled operations to nearly 65,000 square feet to provide room for all departments to grow as the company looks to future initiatives. Its 90 talented and dedicated employees will satisfy over 200,000 customers this year.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Images and company logos can be obtained by contacting Cori Drenth at (616) 698-0889, cdrenth@baudville.com.

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