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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

ICG Reports Strong Growth Among Its Independent Folding Carton Converter Members, Despite Continued Industry Consolidation

NEWTOWN, CONN., FEB. 5, 2019 – The Independent Carton Group (ICG) is pleased to report that, despite continued consolidation in the folding carton industry, business growth among its membership remains strong. This is evidenced by the significant investments that ICG members continue to make in their own operations and the strength of their collective buying power.

ICG members are independently owned folding carton converters, those who do not own, nor are controlled by, a paperboard mill. All members participate in the group purchasing program. This enables them to capture volume discounts on paperboard and other raw materials, as well as supplies and equipment, from over 40 of the industry's most reputable suppliers.

"Our members are all successful in their own right. Membership in the ICG doesn't take away their advantages as an independent, but rather further improves their value proposition for customers," said ICG executive director Jay Willie. ICG programs are aimed at helping members reduce costs, educate employees, apply best practices and implement disaster recovery plans.

Members invest millions annually in their operations.

ICG members maintain their competitive edge with continued infrastructure and equipment investments. **Curtis Packaging** (Sandy Hook, Conn.), **Wausau Container** (Wausau, Wis.) and **Accurate Box** (Paterson, N.J.) have new Koenig & Bauer Rapida presses. **Accurate Box** also installed robotic systems in its finishing department. ICG members had the opportunity to see the new equipment in action in November, when **Accurate Box** served as ICG meeting host.

All Packaging (Aurora, Colo.) added 30,000 square feet to its Salt Lake City facility, filling it with new employees and equipment, including a sheeter, die cutter and multiple folder-gluer. In the Midwest, all three **Colbert Packaging** (Lake Forest, Ill.) facilities are running new equipment, including a second Brasse die cutter, two Zünd cutting systems, a Signature folder-gluer and a Vijuk insert folder.

Other equipment investments among ICG members include a litho-laminator at **El Paso Paper Box** (El Paso, Texas), Bobst die cutter at **Dee Packaging** (Chester, Penn.), windowing machine at **Vista Color** (Miami, Fla.) and the addition of flexo print stations to the sheeter at **Frankston Packaging** (Frankston, Texas). **Sonderen Packaging** (Spokane, Wash.) will soon take delivery of a new eCon sheeter.

Dee Packaging is currently implementing CartonERP as its enterprise resource planning system. **Diamond Packaging** (Rochester, N.Y.), **Accord Carton** (Alsip, Ill.), **Royal Paper Box** (Montebello, Calif.) and **Curtis Packaging** also made notable IT investments in recent months, ranging from cloud backup and security platforms to next-generation production scheduling technologies.

Members lead the industry in longevity and innovation.

ICG members collectively represent over 1,400 years of packaging history. This year is a big one for anniversaries, as **Dee Packaging** turns 100; **Accurate Box**, 75; **Colbert Packaging**, 60; and **3C Packaging** (Clayton, N.C.), 40. Last year, **Zumbiel Packaging** (Hebron, Ky.) turned 175; **Indiana Carton** (Bremen, Ind.), 85; **Sonderen Packaging**, 55; **Vista Color**, 50; and **Wausau Container**, 25.

While longevity alone is proof of members' ability to meet evolving industry needs, evidence of innovation is also seen in the work they're doing and in the patents and certifications they hold.

Jones Packaging (London, Ontario) and **Diamond Packaging** are performing groundbreaking work in the integration of near field communication technologies and folding cartons. All ICG members are also addressing increased demand for anticounterfeiting and security solutions.

ICG members work hard to earn industry certifications. Many hold certifications for food safety, color consistency and sustainability. **Indiana Carton** recently exceeded quality standards while earning SQF 8.0 Food Packaging Certification. **Dee Packaging** and **Frankston Packaging** are now GMI-certified printers.

Members recognize the need to stick together.

The ICG brings members together not only to leverage their collective buying power, but also to foster a culture of learning and fellowship within the industry. Members meet several times per year at general membership meetings, where the host member gives a plant tour and arranges social events. The ICG also holds technical conferences for members' employees. The president of one ICG member company said his people always come away from ICG technical conferences with questions answered and a valuable list of professional contacts they can use as a resource.

"There's great camaraderie among our members, and it's clear to see they're genuine in their desire to support each other. Together, we learn about new equipment, discuss industry trends and challenges, network with our suppliers and do fun activities," said Willie. "Over the years, we've come together to render aid, celebrate retirements and mourn the loss of dear friends. We occasionally golf, enjoy dinner cruises, and one time, we even learned the sport of curling."

As consolidation continues and competition dwindles, Willie says the industry will begin to be plagued by higher prices, mediocre customer service and a lack of innovation. “It’s critical for independents to stick together – and just as critical for buyers to continue giving their business to independent carton converters,” he said. “The health of the industry depends on it.”

The ICG works tirelessly to make sure that its members have access to competitive pricing on raw materials, equipment and consumables as well as learning and networking opportunities and other programs that help them continue to be successful. To learn more about the ICG and inquire about membership, visit www.independentcartongroup.com or call 203.270.7578.

Independent Carton Group

The ICG, an association of independently owned and operated folding carton companies, helps its members provide exceptional products, service and pricing to their customers through group purchasing, continuity assurance, and educational and networking programs. Members include Accord Carton, Accurate Box, All Packaging, Colbert Packaging, Curtis Packaging, 3C Packaging, Dee Packaging Solutions, Diamond Packaging, El Paso Paper Box, Frankston Packaging, Indiana Carton, Jones Packaging, Royal Paper Box, Sonderen Packaging, Vista Color, Wausau Container and Zumbiel Packaging. Learn more at www.independentcartongroup.com.

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