March 20, 2008

Sonic Automotive, Inc. CEO and President Enter Into Rule 10b5-1 Trading Plans

CHARLOTTE, N.C., March 20 /PRNewswire-FirstCall/ -- Sonic Automotive, Inc. (NYSE: SAH), a leader in automotive retailing, today announced that its Chairman and Chief Executive Officer, Mr. O. Bruton Smith, and its President and Chief Strategic Officer, Mr. B. Scott Smith, have each entered into written trading plans in accordance with SEC Rule 10b5-1 and Sonic's insider trading policy.

The Rule 10b5-1 plan entered into by Bruton Smith relates to the planned sales of up to 315,000 shares of Class A Common Stock that will be issued upon the exercise of options to purchase a total of 450,000 shares. Bruton Smith intends to retain ownership of a substantial amount of the shares underlying these stock options, after payment of the aggregate exercise prices for the stock options, applicable taxes and commissions.

The Rule 10b5-1 plan entered into by Scott Smith relates to the planned sales of up to 230,000 shares of Class A Common Stock that will be issued upon the exercise of options to purchase an equivalent number of shares. Scott Smith intends to use the net proceeds of the planned sales to diversify his personal financial portfolio.

Transactions under these Rule 10b5-1 plans will be disclosed in filings with the Securities and Exchange Commission.

Mr. Bruton Smith stated, "These are stock options which were granted over the course of 1998 and 1999 which, according to their terms, will begin to expire over the next 20 months. I intend to retain ownership of a substantial number of the shares underlying my stock options after payment of the aggregate exercise price for the stock options, applicable taxes and commissions. A successful completion of my Rule 10b5-1 plan will result in an approximate 135,000 share increase over the actual number of shares of Class A Common Stock that I currently own. In recent years, Sonic Automotive's long- term incentive compensation plans for senior management have become more oriented towards grants of restricted shares rather than stock options, in part to avoid circumstances such as this. Sonic recently completed a very successful year in the midst of a challenging economic environment and we remain extremely optimistic about Sonic's future outlook as a result of the operating initiatives we discussed on our recent earnings call."

About Sonic Automotive

Sonic Automotive, Inc., a Fortune 300 company based in Charlotte, N.C., is one of the largest automotive retailers in the United States operating 166 franchises and 34 collision repair centers. Sonic can be reached on the Web at www.sonicautomotive.com.

Included herein are forward-looking statements pertaining to anticipated sales of shares of

the Company's Class A Common Stock by certain executive officers and Sonic's future operating performance. There are many factors that affect management's views about future events and trends of the Company's business. These factors involve risks and uncertainties that could cause actual results or trends to differ materially from management's view, including without limitation, economic conditions, risks associated with acquisitions and the risk factors described in the Company's annual report on Form 10-K for the year ended December 31, 2007. The Company does not undertake any obligation to update forward-looking information.

SOURCE Sonic Automotive, Inc.