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Sonic Automotive Announces Management Realignment; B. Scott Smith Appointed President, David P. Cosper Named Vice Chairman

CHARLOTTE, N.C., March 13 /PRNewswire-FirstCall/ -- Sonic Automotive, Inc. (NYSE: SAH) Chairman and Chief Executive Officer O. Bruton Smith announced today a key management realignment for the company, including the appointment of B. Scott Smith to the position of President, replacing current President and Chief Operating Officer, Jeffrey C. Rachor, who will be leaving the Company's employment effective March 23, 2007 to pursue other opportunities.

(Photo: http://www.newscom.com/cgi-bin/prnh/20070313/CLTU206-a)

(Photo: http://www.newscom.com/cgi-bin/prnh/20070313/CLTU206-b)

The Company also announced that its Board of Directors has invited Mr. Rachor to remain on the Board, and that Mr. Rachor has agreed to continue his service as a Director of Sonic.

"Jeff has been a significant driver of the Company's growth and success over the last ten years, and we wish him great success in his new primary endeavors," said Bruton Smith. "Since becoming President almost three years ago, Jeff has focused on developing an outstanding management team that has consistently executed our operating strategy. We are delighted that he has accepted our invitation to remain on Sonic's Board of Directors, where he will continue to contribute to Sonic in the future."

Mr. Rachor, who is leaving to assume a leadership role with another company, stated "I am very proud of Sonic's accomplishments during my almost ten years with the Company. It has been a privilege to serve as Sonic's President and Chief Operating Officer for the past three years, and I am very appreciative of the confidence and trust placed in me by the Board and our Chairman during this time. I am also honored to continue my association with this great company as an Outside Director on the Board. The Company has a strong management team, a sound strategy and positive momentum going forward."

In addition to appointment of Scott Smith to President, the Company's Board of Directors approved other key management realignments in titles and responsibilities.

In addition to his new role of President, Scott Smith will continue with his current responsibilities as Chief Strategic Officer. The Board also appointed Mr. David P. Cosper to the position of Vice Chairman in addition to his current responsibilities as Chief Financial Officer, and promoted Mr. James D. Evans and Mr. Frank J. "Jeff" Dyke to the positions of

Divisional Chief Operating Officer, where they will share the Company's day-to-day operational responsibilities under the oversight of Mr. B. Scott Smith. In addition, Mr. David B. Smith was promoted by the Board to a position of increased responsibility as Senior Vice President of Corporate Development.

Commenting on Scott Smith's appointment to President of the Company, Mr. Bruton Smith said "Scott has more than 20 years of experience in the auto retail industry, and has served in important leadership roles for this Company during its entire ten-year existence. Scott has been instrumental in the Corporation's strategic development and implementation over the past four years in his capacity as Vice Chairman and Chief Strategic Officer. The Board of Directors and I are excited about his resuming the reins as President." Mr. B. Scott Smith co-founded Sonic Automotive in early 1997, served as President and Chief Operating Officer of Sonic from April 1997 until October 2002, and as Vice Chairman and Chief Strategic Officer of Sonic from October 2002 until the present.

Mr. Smith also stated, "Since joining Sonic Automotive as Chief Financial Officer in March 2006, Dave Cosper has proven to be an outstanding leader for our Company and has demonstrated his considerable abilities in the oversight of Sonic's financial and capital management and strategic direction of the business. Dave has quickly earned both my confidence and the confidence of our Board of Directors." Mr. Cosper has over 27 years of financial experience, including most recently as Vice Chairman and Chief Financial Officer of Ford Motor Credit Company prior to joining Sonic.

About Sonic Automotive, Inc.

Sonic Automotive, Inc., a Fortune 300 company based in Charlotte, N.C., is one of the largest automotive retailers in the United States operating 171 franchises and 37 collision repair centers. Sonic can be reached on the Web at www.sonicautomotive.com.

Included herein are forward-looking statements that anticipate future events or trends. There are many factors that affect management's views about future events and trends of the Company's business. These factors involve risk 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 quarterly report on Form 10-Q for the quarter ended September 30, 2006. The Company does not undertake any obligation to update forward- looking information.

SOURCE Sonic Automotive, Inc.