WASHINGTON, DC – April 6, 2011 – More than 2,600 timeshare professionals and industry leaders gathered for the 2011 American Resort Development Association (ARDA) Convention and Exposition at the Orlando World Center Marriott from March 27 through March 31. This year’s theme, the “Year of the Consumer,” was emphasized throughout all educational forums, workshops, and sessions, including how to leverage digital relationships, ensuring consumer protections for the secondary marketplace, and enhancing sales and marketing practices.

“Our program featured timely topics and relevant speakers as the industry celebrates the passion of timeshare consumers, which has become vacation ownership’s most important asset,” says Howard Nusbaum, ARDA president and CEO. “We were thrilled to see so many of the best and brightest in our industry and hear from many dynamic speakers as the industry continues to develop vacation products consumers desire.”

Keynote speaker Terry Jones, founder and former CEO of Travelocity.com and current Chairman of Kayak.com, shared his insights on how to strengthen digital relationships between business and consumers, particularly in the travel industry where more than 80
percent of today’s consumer utilizes the Internet to make travel choices. Attendees also heard from timeshare developer CEOs representing Hilton Grand Vacations, Holiday Inn Club Vacations, Marriott Vacation Club International, Welk Resorts, and Wyndham Vacation Ownership on the state of the industry, the sales process, the secondary marketplace, exchange programs, and the value of vacations. ARDA also honored its outgoing Chairman Jim Lewis, president of Disney Vacation Club, and welcomed its incoming Chairman, Don Harrill, president and CEO of Orange Lake Resorts, home to Holiday Inn Club Vacations.

Other notable sessions included the Sales and Marketing Forum, which focused on reaching both existing owners and new consumers, and the Resale Forum, which provided perspectives on the secondary marketplace and process from developers, home owners associations, resale brokers, and vendors. ARDA recently unveiled proposed legislation for the secondary resale market as part of the industry’s effort to standardize and legitimize timeshare resellers and the resale process to ensure a safe experience for all consumers. ARDA’s Model Resales Act will be used in efforts with state legislators and other policymakers as a recommended policy to help guide state legislative solutions to the timeshare secondary market.

ARDA members were joined by hundreds of international colleagues from 31 countries. Activities included an ARDA-Caribbean Committee, the International Marketplace, an International Reception, and several educational sessions that focused on growth and opportunity in international markets. “International interest in ARDA’s Convention continues to grow,” said Nusbaum. “Given the global business models of many ARDA members, along with the increasing interest of the international industry community, next year’s convention theme will be ‘ARDA World,’ and will offer more global educational and networking opportunities.”

This year’s convention also featured its annual golf tournament at The Legends at Orange Lake Resort, hosted by exchange company RCI, where 144 golfers played in support of the ARDA International Foundation (AIF). The proceeds from the tournament support
industry research and education programs. Interval International’s “Party with a Cause,” featuring KC and The Sunshine Band, also raised funds for AIF.


The American Resort Development Association (ARDA) is the Washington D.C.-based professional association representing the vacation ownership and resort development industries. Established in 1969, ARDA today has almost 1,000 members ranging from privately held firms to publicly traded companies and international corporations with expertise in shared ownership interests in leisure real estate. The membership also includes timeshare owner associations (HOAs), resort management companies, and owners through the ARDA Resort Owners Coalition (ARDA-ROC). For more information, visit www.arda.org or ARDA’s consumer website at www.VacationBetter.org.

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