

## PRESS RELEASE

### **Cornerstone Advisors Expects Record Participation for 2010 Benchmarking Study**

SCOTTSDALE, Ariz. /March 4, 2010/ – Cornerstone Advisors announced today it is anticipating a record response to its invitation for mid-size banks to participate in ***The Cornerstone Report 2010: Benchmarks and Best Practices for Mid-Size Banks***. The 2010 study is the eighth in a series of benchmarking studies that provide spending, staffing and process benchmarks, and industry best practices for banks with assets between \$1 billion and \$40 billion.

“A great deal has happened with mid-size banks since our last study in 2007, and we believe there will be an enormous amount of interest on the part of these banks to gauge not only how their performance held up through the Great Recession, but how their competitors sustained operations through the economic crisis over the last two years,” said Scott A. Sommer, president and CEO of Cornerstone Advisors, Inc.

Sixty-seven institutions took part in Cornerstone’s 2007 study. Sommer said in light of shrinking margins, disappearing fee income and greater regulatory demands, mid-size banks will undoubtedly want to know what they can do going forward to increase productivity, enhance fee income, and hold managers accountable for meeting and beating peer performance numbers.

As in years past, there is no charge for banks to complete the survey. There are, however, “significant benefits for participation,” according to Sommer. In addition to a free compilation of the benchmarking data, participants will receive the following:

1. Detailed staffing and productivity benchmarks in 17 key bank functions;
2. Key revenue and fee income benchmarks;
3. An analysis of overall technology spending levels versus peer banks; and
4. An examination of technology utilized and deployed as compared to peers.

Participating banks will receive, prior to publication, three complimentary copies of *The Cornerstone Report* (a value of \$775 each) as well as a confidential, customized *Cornerstone Scorecard*. The *Cornerstone Scorecard* provides comparison data and a breakdown of revenue enhancement and expense-reduction opportunities in 17 major bank areas. The *Scorecard* also evaluates an individual bank's performance in key fee income and non-interest expense categories.

The study results will be published in late 2010.

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