

## PRESS RELEASE

### **Cornerstone Extends Deadline for 2007 Mid-Size Bank Benchmarking Study Due to Overwhelming Interest**

SCOTTSDALE, Ariz. /May 21, 2007/ -- With 70 banks already completing surveys to participate in ***The Cornerstone Report: Benchmarks and Best Practices for Mid-Size Banks*** and many more having expressed interest, Cornerstone Advisors, study sponsor and author of the report, announced today it will extend the submission deadline from May 31 to June 11.

"We're excited to see this level of interest for the 2007 study," said Scott Sommer, president and chief executive officer of Cornerstone Advisors, a Scottsdale, Ariz.-based management consulting firm. "This stands to be a record number of participants in the five editions of the publication, and we want to make sure banks that would like to be involved in this important study know they've still got time."

Earlier this year, Cornerstone invited banks with assets of \$1 billion to \$30 billion to participate in the 2007 study, which will provide detailed spending, staffing and process benchmarks, and industry best practices for mid-size banks. Sixteen banks served on advisory boards to fine-tune *The Cornerstone Report* survey, which will provide more than 250 key performance benchmarks across all major bank functions.

"*The Cornerstone Report: Benchmarks and Best Practices for Mid-Size Banks* is designed to give bank executives the information they need to increase productivity, enhance fee income, and hold managers accountable for meeting and beating peer performance numbers," Sommer said. "The more banks that take part in the study, the more valuable the resultant benchmarking statistics will be not only to study participants but to all mid-size banks interested in comparison data."

Cornerstone will provide each bank that participates in the study with a customized and detailed itemization of its revenue and expense-reduction potential in the form of a personalized Cornerstone Scorecard®, as well as the following essential peer data:

1. Detailed staffing and productivity benchmarks in 11 key bank functions;
2. Key revenue and fee income benchmarks; and
3. An examination of technology utilized and deployed as compared to peers.

In addition to their personalized Scorecard, participating banks will receive, prior to public release, three complimentary copies of *The Cornerstone Report* (a value of \$775 each).

Cornerstone also reported that several major industry vendors are encouraging their larger bank clients to participate in the study. "This cross-industry level of interest indicates to us that the data this report will produce is valuable not only to mid-size banks, but also to the leading providers that service this financial market," Sommer stated.

The study results will be published in the fall of 2007.

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