

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

“Blindness separates us from things, but deafness separates us from people”. *Helen Keller*

Pan-Oston introduces plug-and-play kit that provides America’s Hearing Impaired with clear and ambient noise-free communication in retail and service outlets.

Bowling Green, KY - June 18, 2009 Pan-Oston, a leader in smart retail counter and checkout solutions for over 4 decades, is proud to make available, a simple kit that enables retailers, health-care providers, airlines, hotels, libraries, businesses, as well as government and private service organizations to unobtrusively and directly assist hearing aid wearers.

Shop Hear™ and **Service Hear™** upgrade kits combine sophisticated electronic induction loop circuitry along with the amplifier, microphone/(s), power and connecting cables and signage to quickly convert any service or checkout counter to a Hearing Impaired friendly point of communication.

The induction loop technology used in **Shop Hear™** and **Service Hear™** kits works with T-Coil technology already built into the majority of hearing aids. Users identify the service positions marked with the internationally recognized symbol for T-Coil technology. By switching their hearing aids to the “T” position, they enjoy direct, clear and confidential one-on-one personal communication without the interference of background noise or music.

“Shop Hear™ and **Service Hear™** upgrade kits easily integrate with virtually every existing counter or checkout/service technology available today. Companies and organizations using the **Shop Hear™** or **Service Hear™** kits will provide a valuable community service to a large segment of our population and comply with government regulations,” said Jim Vance, President of Pan-Oston.

There are approximately 28 million people in the United States with a self-described “hearing difficulty” and at least five million Americans wear hearing aids. This number of people with “hearing difficulty” is expected to rise with the aging of the baby-boomer generation because the percentage of individuals with “hearing difficulty” is greatest among those 65 years and above.

The U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission’s recent ADA publication helps to advance the goals of Ex-President George W. Bush’s New Freedom Initiative, a comprehensive strategy for the full integration of people with disabilities into all aspects of American life. The New Freedom Initiative seeks to promote greater access to technology, education, employment opportunities, and community life for people with disabilities.

A CrossRoads/IGA grocery in Bowling Green, KY has the honor of being the first store in the USA to provide **Shop Hear™** service to its customers. More information and details on how to purchase your **Shop Hear™** or **Service Hear™** upgrade kits is available at www.shop-hear.com or service-hear.com.

Pan-Oston, a majority owned subsidiary of Houchens Industries, Inc., one of the largest employee owned (“ESOP”) companies in the United States, has been an industry leader in the design and manufacture of retail checkout products as well as a broad range of retail fixtures and fittings for over 40 years. www.panoston.com

For more information, contact Tara Ohning, (270) 783-3932, tohning@panoston.com

XXXXXXXXXXXX