

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

Tim Handley: CEO, Advantage Plaza, Inc. (800) 600-2510

Timster@advantagecredit.com

Julie Jordan: V.P. Marketing, Advantage Plaza, Inc. (800) 600-2510

jjordan@advantageplaza.com

ADVANTAGE CREDIT HITS INC. 500 LIST FOR FOURTH CONSECUTIVE YEAR

PENSACOLA, FL, October 24, 2002 -- Advantage Credit has been named the 234th fastest-growing private company in America by *Inc* magazine, with it's fourth appearance on the *Inc 500* list in as many years.

The ranking reflects Advantage Credit's 5-year growth rate of 961%, with sales growing from \$1.34 million in 1997 to \$14.23 million in 2001. Over \$18 million in sales are forecast for 2002.

Advantage Credit primarily provides mortgage credit reports to brokers and financial institutions. "Lower interest rates and the refi surge of the past 12 months have grown our sales substantially, but the *Inc* numbers show our robust growth before the boom," said founder & CEO Tim Handley. Handley credits the company's performance to high customer retention rates and strong corporate account activity. Advantage serves some of the largest mortgage brokerages in the U.S., including Allied Home Mortgage, Cartaret and Homegold. Handley also lauds the company's colleagues. "It's all about the people of Pensacola," he said. "They genuinely care for each other and our customers, giving us a huge advantage that's hard to duplicate."

Mark Simms, the company's president, further analyzed the achievement. "Companies in this sector typically grow through acquisition," he said. "Advantage grows because of sound business practices, innovative technology and satisfied customers," he continued.

--MORE--

The 2002 *Inc 500* reveals a surprising resiliency within the entrepreneurial sector, where leading companies are continuing to show dramatic rates of growth despite the recession. The five-year average growth rate for all *Inc* companies this year is 1,521%. While less than the 1,933% average for companies on last year's list, it is nonetheless dramatic in the current environment.

Advantage Credit's four appearances in particular underscore the company's success in maintaining high growth when compared with its peers across the nation. Only 65 companies in the award's 21-year history have entered the *Inc 500* Hall of Fame, which requires five appearances. Only 12 have had six appearances. Advantage ranks in a tie position at 66th most frequently-appearing company after its fourth win this year. "Our fifth win will be challenging but is possible in the next couple of years," commented CEO Handley.

No other Pensacola company has appeared 4 times. "Advantage Credit, under the leadership of CEO Tim Handley, is annually listed among the nation's fastest growing companies and is a significant IT-based employer in the Pensacola area," said Ken Ford, Director and Professor of Computer Science, and Founder and Director of Institute for Human and Machine Cognition at the University of West Florida—a leading edge artificial intelligence research organization.

About Advantage Credit

Founded in 1991, Advantage Credit is a wholly-owned subsidiary of Advantage Plaza, Inc. The company broke into the *Inc 500* first in 1999. For more information, contact Julie Jordan, V.P. of Marketing, at (800) 600-2510, or email to jjordan@advantagecredit.com, or visit www.advantagecredit.com.