

Banorte and asista.com reach strategic partnership to promote business to business (b2b) e-commerce

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Monterrey, Mexico and Miami, FL - September 12, 2000 -- Grupo Financiero Banorte (BANORTE), Mexico's fifth largest financial group, and Asista.com (ASISTA), the leading business to business (B2B) digital marketplace for the sale and purchase of indirect goods and services in Latin America, announced today that they have signed a strategic alliance for the on-going development of various on-line payment features, as well as different e-commerce business to business solutions available via Asista's platform.

BANORTE and ASISTA will immediately begin developing electronic payment solutions, which will be offered to clients by the fourth quarter of this year. Additionally, BANORTE will promote ASISTA's e-commerce services to its clients and will purchase all indirect goods and services exclusively from Asista.com's electronic marketplace. In addition, the parties have agreed to share the income resulting from their joint efforts. As a result of this alliance, BANORTE will speed its development of financial products and services via the Internet, while offering its clients the most advanced Internet purchasing solution in all of Latin America.

"After several months of analysis at BANORTE, we have reached the conclusion that the fastest and most productive way to begin developing on-line financial services and other e-commerce activities, was to create an alliance with a dynamic and agile company such as ASISTA. In this manner, we are able to keep our commitment to offer the most advanced services to our clients," said Othón Ruiz Montemayor, Chief Executive Officer for Grupo Financiero Banorte.

"We are proud to work in collaboration with BANORTE to develop and offer the most advanced on-line payment features," said Carlos A. Guajardo, president and founder of Asista.com. "ASISTA's dynamic and agile nature, together with BANORTE's strength and infrastructure, offer the ideal ingredients for the creation and development of business to business (B2B) e-commerce solutions. This alliance reiterates ASISTA's leadership."

About Asista

Asista is based in Miami, Florida, and has offices in Mexico, Argentina and Brazil. Its management team is formed by experienced executives with expertise in the International Business, Supply and Internet arenas. Asista.com is positioned as the first enabler of digital transactions in a many-to-many eMarketplace in Latin America. During April of this year, Asista launched its digital marketplace in Mexico; Argentina was launched in June and Brazil in July. Asista has already begun the process of developing strategic alliances with leading e-Commerce and industry partners in Argentina and Brazil. Asista's most important financial partners are JP Morgan Capital and Morgan Stanley Dean Witter. Asista uses the Ariba B2B Commerce Platform as the basis for its digital marketplace which allows small, medium and large companies to purchase and sell indirect goods and services. For more information please visit Asista at www.asista.com.

About Banorte

Grupo Financiero Banorte has its main offices in Monterrey, N.L. México, and has 453 branch offices covering the 32 states of the Republic of Mexico. Banorte has 100 years of banking history in Mexico, and currently occupies the number 5 spot in terms of size of assets with a 9.1% share of the banking system. Banorte has 1,365 ATM's and more than 9,000 POS terminals and also has a state of the art Call Center. In addition to banking, the Group is involved in other financial activities through its subsidiaries, including: a Brokerage House, Insurance, Afore, Annuities, Leasing Factoring, Bonding, and Warehousing. Since 1997, it has been partnering with the prestigious Italian firm, Assicurazioni Generali, in its Insurance, Afore, and Annuities businesses. Banorte currently offers its clients a broad range of services via the Internet targeted to both businesses and individuals, and in this area it is one of the most advanced in Latin America. More than 50% of all Mexican virtual stores use Banorte's payment solutions. For more information, please visit www.banorte.com.mx.