

**PRESS RELEASE**

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**Media Contact:**

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Laura Clenney

BenefitMall

(469) 791-3318

[laurac@benefitmall.com](mailto:laurac@benefitmall.com)

**DALLAS BUSINESS JOURNAL HONORS PRESIDENT AND CEO OF  
BENEFITMALL**

*Bernie DiFiore Business Person of the Year 2006 Runner-Up*

**DALLAS, TX-January 31, 2007**-Bernard DiFiore, President and CEO of BenefitMall, one of the nation's leading broker services companies, has been chosen as a RUNNER-UP for the Dallas Business Journal's Business Person of the Year.

Under DiFiore's leadership, BenefitMall has become one of the largest general agents in the country since separating from Humana in 1999. In the late 90's when the Internet was eliminating the need for a middleman in the sales cycle of many different industries, DiFiore believed in the continued existence of brokers and their role in selling group health and life coverage to small businesses. Today, BenefitMall works through a network of over 15,000 registered brokers and the need for a valued advisor in insurance continues to exist more than ever.

Throughout his career, DiFiore has not allowed himself to be swayed by outside influences. Regardless of the circumstance he's never shied away from doing what he believes is best for the company and their clients. "If you believe in it, you have to have the conviction of your beliefs to say, 'This is what we should do,'" DiFiore says. "That's the way I've operated." This rang true a few years ago after the fall of technology stocks hit. As the economy slowly began to recover, most companies were hesitant to re-enter the market, DiFiore, however, decided to push the company into growth mode. This move allowed him to purchase competitors and fold them into BenefitMall's business model.

This year marked the next step in BenefitMall's growth as DiFiore and his team raised \$175.6 million in private equity support for a nine-figure, management-lead buyout from the company's venture investors. In a move that made everyone happy and captured the attention of many including the Dallas Business Journal, BenefitMall's management received all of the firm's voting common stock, and control of the business, while its private-equity partner, Allied Capital Corporation, acquired nonvoting shares and debt.

Looking ahead, DiFiore plans to continue growing BenefitMall in order to further meet Broker and Carrier partner's needs. BenefitMall purchased three general agents in 2006

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and plans to use future acquisitions to both increase market share and expand their product offerings.

**About BenefitMall**

Headquartered in Dallas, Texas and in business for more than 25 years, BenefitMall is the nation's largest general agency supporting brokers in the selling of employee benefits to small businesses. Offering sales support in 33 U.S. markets serving 12 states, BenefitMall sells more than \$2 million in new premiums per day through a national network of more than 15,000 independent registered Brokers. With over 100,000 in-force groups, BenefitMall supports nearly two million employees and their dependents. BenefitMall offers small-business brokers thousands of plans from more than 100 leading insurance carriers, either directly through the Company's sales offices, or via its website, <http://www.benefitmall.com>.

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