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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

BNI® Reopens U.S. Franchise Opportunities, Fueling Small Business Growth

Charlotte, N.C., March 26, 2025 – For the first time in nearly ten years, BNI® (Business Network International)—the world's largest business referral network—is bringing franchise opportunities back to the U.S., creating new pathways for entrepreneurial success and small business growth.

For 40 years, BNI has helped business owners expand through its proven networking system, fostering referral-driven success in communities around the world. In the past 12 months alone, BNI Members have exchanged 16.8 million referrals, generating a record-breaking \$25.4 billion USD in business revenue¹—a milestone that underscores the power of structured networking.

"This is an exciting moment for entrepreneurs who want to make a real impact in their communities," said Mary Kennedy Thompson, CEO of BNI. "With franchise opportunities returning to the U.S., business leaders now have the chance to take charge of their future, build thriving professional networks, and drive lasting economic success. BNI is more than a business—it's a movement of shared success and community-driven progress."

BNI franchise ownership provides entrepreneurs and business leaders with access to a globally recognized brand, a time-tested business model, and comprehensive training, coaching, and marketing support. This is more than just a business investment—it's an opportunity to achieve financial independence while making a lasting impact on local businesses and economies.

BNI's leadership team is comprised of highly experienced franchise professionals dedicated to the success of its franchisees. The U.S. team includes Dr. Lisa Renz, President of BNI US; Michael Walchonski, Chief Development Officer; Adam Petersen, VP of Franchise Development; and Dave Collins, Chief Operating Officer—each bringing extensive expertise in business growth and franchise excellence.

BNI is led by CEO Mary Kennedy Thompson, a distinguished franchise leader with a proven track record of success. As the 2025 Chair of the International Franchise Association (IFA), Mary is recognized as an influential voice in the franchising industry. She previously served as the COO of Neighborly®, a global franchisor of home service brands, and was herself a successful franchisee of Cookies by Design.

Mary and the U.S. team bring invaluable insight and leadership to BNI's franchise expansion, ensuring that franchisees have the tools, resources, and support they need to thrive.

With BNI's structured referral system and global support network, franchise owners gain the tools to expand their influence, foster meaningful business relationships, and build a foundation for long-term success.

This announcement comes at an exciting time for BNI, as the organization continues to expand its impact after 40 years of empowering entrepreneurs through referral networking. Additionally, the upcoming BNI US & Canada National Conference, taking place April 2-4, 2025, at The Woodlands Waterway Marriott Hotel & Convention Center, will provide an opportunity for business leaders and entrepreneurs to connect, gain insights, and celebrate the growth of BNI's global network.

Take the Next Step Now is the time to seize this opportunity. Discover how BNI franchise ownership can help you grow a thriving business while transforming your community. Contact the BNI Franchise Development Team at franchise@bni.com or visit our website at www.bnifranchise.com today.

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1. This information is based on historical BNI Member self-reported data as of March 4, 2025, and represents collective results from BNI Members worldwide over the last 12 months. Errors in the self-reporting of data or in subsequent analysis are possible. Therefore, the information herein should only be viewed as representative in nature.

About BNI®

BNI (Business Network International) is the world's largest and most successful business networking organization. Today, BNI has over 335,000+ Member-businesses participating in over 11,200+ BNI Chapters that meet in-person, online, or in a hybrid format each week in 76 countries around the globe. Since inception in 1985, BNI has proudly helped 2.2 million businesses garner over \$215 billion USD in revenue². To learn more about BNI and how you can visit a Chapter, go to www.bni.com.

2. The information is based on BNI Member self-reported data as of December 24, 2024, and represents the collective results from BNI Members worldwide since its inception January 8, 1985. Errors in the self-reporting data or in subsequent analysis are possible. Therefore, the information herein should only be viewed as a representative nature.