



NEWS RELEASE
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**JD FORD & COMPANY ANNOUNCED AS FINALIST FOR
THE M&A ADVISOR MIDDLE-MARKET
M&A AWARDS GALA**

Denver, Colorado, October 22, 2008—The M&A Advisor, a leading information publisher for middle-market mergers and acquisitions and finance, announced the 2008 finalists for the 7th Annual Middle-Market M&A Awards Gala. JD Ford & Company was named a finalist in the Corporate/Strategic Acquisition of the Year; Retail Manufacturing/Distribution Deal of the Year; and Consumer and Retail Products Deal of the Year categories, for its role in facilitating General Mills' acquisition of Lärabar and Gitanjali Gems Limited's acquisition of Rogers Jewelers.

The Middle-Market M&A Awards Gala honors the deal-teams and deal-makers whose successful transactions set the standard for the industry. 220 finalists representing 66 firms were chosen in 35 categories. Like the Academy Awards, winners will be revealed at the gala, which is being held on Monday, December 15th at the historic Hudson Theatre in New York City.

“It is an honor to recognize the achievements and accomplishments of JD Ford & Company,” said Roger Aguinaldo, CEO and Publisher of the M&A Advisor. “They have set an industry standard for their influential deals in the middle-market industry.”

“JD Ford & Company is honored to have worked with the first-rate Companies in these significant transactions”, said Joseph Durnford, CEO and Sr. Managing Director at JD Ford & Company. “It is a great pleasure,” he adds, “to have the opportunity to serve

highly successful entrepreneurs like those involved with Lärabar and Rogers Jewelers. We take pride in our goal of helping great business owners transition their companies and their lives into new stages.”

JD Ford & Company is a specialized Investment Bank offering sophisticated solutions to privately-held companies in a variety of industries including consumer products, specialty retail, building products, and specialized services. Since the Firm’s founding in 1996, JD Ford & Company has consistently provided clients operating throughout all phases of the business cycle with a wide variety of professional services, including: Strategic & Financial Advisory Services, M&A Transaction Services, Business Valuation Services, and a wide array of Financing Solutions. JD Ford & Company serves both private and publically held companies throughout the United States. JD Ford & Company, leverages its extensive experience and proprietary processes, vast network of connections and diverse expertise to guide business owners through a variety of transitional events. For more information please visit www.jdford.com.

The M&A Advisor’s 7th Annual Awards Gala, which immediately follows the 17th Middle-Market M&A Conference, honors excellence in deal-making for transactions between \$10 million and \$1 billion in deal-value (or enterprise value). The gala is one of the biggest and most exclusive networking events in middle-market M&A. The all-day conference will explore opportunities and challenges for the year ahead. Both take place at the historic Hudson Theatre on Monday, December 15th in New York City. For more information on finalists, the gala, the conference, speaking opportunities, sponsorships, journal ads, or tickets visit www.maadvisor.com or call 1-877-99-MERGE.

Since 1998, The M&A Advisor has been connecting professionals in the mergers and acquisitions, distressed investing and related financial industries through its leading conferences and awards galas, M&A Alerts newsletter and online community.

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