

Latest MasterIndex™ of Travel Forecasts Double-Digit Year-on-Year Growth in Outbound Travel for the Second Half of 2006

Hong Kong, 28 August 2006 – Asia/Pacific markets will continue to witness steady growth in outbound travelers, led by a significant increase in travelers from China and Malaysia according to the results of MasterIndex of Travel report released by MasterCard Worldwide today.

The forecast revealed that outbound travel for Hong Kong is predicted to show a significant jump in year-on-year growth from a less-optimistic 3.0% forecasted six months ago to an impressive 15%. Both Malaysia and China are likely to follow close behind with double-digit year-on-year growth at 12.5%.

“The continuing strength in the growth of outbound travel in Asia/Pacific further reinforces our view that personal travel is being entrenched as an integral part of the lifestyles of the expanding middle class in the region,” commented Dr. Yuwa Hedrick-Wong, economic advisor to MasterCard Worldwide in Asia/Pacific.

Malaysia is forecasted to continue to take the lead in the number of outbound travelers. Some 22.07 million Malaysians are expected to travel overseas in the months ahead. Key markets that would benefit from the continued increase in Malaysians travelling overseas would include Singapore, China, Indonesia and Japan. Forecasted to follow closely is China, with some 18.96 million outbound travelers expected to most likely visit Europe, Australia, Hong Kong, Canada, USA and Japan for personal travel and Hong Kong, Singapore and Japan for business travel.

NOTE TO EDITORS: *This news release is distributed with the table that shows the MasterIndex of Travel forecast by market.*

The full report, which details the individual market forecasts, can be found at the website www.mastercard-masterindex.com

The following chart shows the MasterIndex of Travel forecast for outbound travel for the second half of 2006.

	Outbound Travelers: Forecast for the 2nd Half of 2006	Year-on-year Growth
Australia	2.67 million	5.50%
China	18.96 million	12.50%
Hong Kong	3.25 million	15.00%

Indonesia	2.44 million	6.00%
Japan	9.44 million	3.80%
Korea	5.78 million	9.00%
Malaysia	22.07 million	12.50%
New Zealand	0.96 million	2.30%
Philippines	0.93 million	4.50%
Singapore	2.67 million	4.80%
Taiwan	4.42 million	5.30%
Thailand	1.59 million	6.70%

About the MasterCard MasterIndex™ Reports

The MasterIndex of Travel is one of MasterCard's MasterIndex suite of research products in Asia/Pacific. The other key MasterIndex research products include:

- The flagship MasterIndex™ of Consumer Confidence - the regions most comprehensive and longest running consumer sentiment survey. Now in its 13th year, the MasterIndex of Consumer Confidence has demonstrated its predictive precision and has proved to be an excellent barometer of the consumer pulse in this region. Today, the survey is much sought after by analysts, academics and decision-makers in financial institutions, government agencies and multinational organizations.
- The MasterIndex™ of Retail, which provides six-month outbound retail forecasts for the same 12 markets covered by the MasterIndex of Travel. This powerful predictive market intelligence is highly relevant to the retail, entertainment, food and beverage, travel and tourism sectors, as well as related sectors.
- The MasterIndex™ of Women's Advancement, an annual report which compares the socio-economic level of women to men in 13 Asia/Pacific markets using four key indicators: participation in the labor force, tertiary education, managerial positions and above median income.

MasterIndex information relates to travel and consumer economic trends only and does not constitute a projection of the business or financial performance of MasterCard Incorporated or its affiliates.

###

About MasterCard Worldwide

MasterCard Worldwide advances global commerce by providing a critical economic link between financial institutions, businesses, cardholders and merchants worldwide. As a franchisor, processor and advisor, MasterCard develops and markets payment solutions, processes close to 14 billion payments each year, and provides industry-leading analysis and consulting services to financial institution customers and merchants. Through its family of brands, including MasterCard®, Maestro® and Cirrus®, MasterCard Worldwide serves consumers and businesses in more than 210 countries and territories. For more information go to www.mastercardworldwide.com.

###

Contact:

Pamela So, Weber Shandwick, 852-2533 9916 / 852-9122-6168, ps@webershandwick.com
Catherine Yuen, Weber Shandwick, 852-2533-9915, cYuen@webershandwick.com