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For Immediate Release
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**New Lightology Showroom Dazzles Passersby with Unique Selection
of High-Quality Contemporary Lighting in Airy, Glass-Walled Showcase**

Grand Opening Set for Thursday, October 24, at 215 W. Chicago Avenue

CHICAGO, IL (October 8, 2002)—"Awesome" and "fabulous" are some of the spontaneous comments from passersby dazzled by the unique, three-story, glass-enclosed Lightology showroom at 215 W. Chicago Avenue.

Lightology, the largest importer and distributor of high-quality contemporary lighting in the United States, will host a grand opening, Thursday, October 24, to officially flip the switch on all three airy, color-filled floors.

The store, which has roots in the Tech Lighting group (established in 1983), is the largest contemporary lighting showroom in North America, and the oldest one of its kind in Chicago—boasting 15,000 square feet of space packed with gleaming modern fixtures, hanging, standing and wall mounted. Many of the fixtures feature low-voltage halogen lighting, which the store pioneered in the U.S., wrapped in bold hues of clean-lined Venetian glass.

"There's certainly nothing like this showroom in the country," says Gregory L. Kay, Lightology's founder and president. "What makes it unique is that it's entirely contemporary, and has a lot of imported fixtures that aren't found anywhere else in the U.S. I just haven't seen another store where you can walk around to an atrium and see product like this.

"I want people to walk in here and talk about it," he adds. "It should be an experience—an event—not just shopping. All our sales representatives are lighting specialists who have to take American Lighting Association tests. We sell a high-end product and a technical product, so one has to have professional knowledge and sales skills."

Lightology is designed on three levels, with two rooftop gardens scheduled to open in the Spring of 2003. Just inside the front door, visitors walk into a light-filled atrium, greeted with a profusion of colorful glass, gleaming metals and illumination in various degrees of intensity. Overhead, two product-filled catwalks offer a stunning visual feast as they wrap around the atrium.

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The ground floor opened to the public in December 2001, while the top two floors will be accessible only to architects, designers, builders and contractors—although clients, of course, may come in with their design or building professional. Despite the fact that Lightology was only 30 percent open, sales doubled from February to April. Prices range from a sleek \$75 halogen desk lamp to an intricate, hand-blown, Murano glass chandelier at \$5,000. To date, sales have split almost 50/50 between consumer purchases and architect/designer volume.

When complete, the building will offer 5,000 additional square feet amidst two rooftop gardens designed to showcase outdoor lighting and provide dramatic meeting spaces for professional groups and customers. Lightology also has a 24,000-square-foot warehouse and office space at 1718 West Fullerton Avenue.

From Electrician to Designer and Entrepreneur

A native of Detroit, Greg Kay became a master electrician in 1979, and in 1983 moved to Chicago, opening Tech Lighting (Superior and Franklin streets), the first all-contemporary lighting showroom in the city. “We had 1,500 square feet,” he remembers, “and it was our showroom, warehouse and world headquarters! It was an exciting time. The crowds were amazing. People were just lined up outside.”

The lighting showroom initially imported fixtures from Europe, but the European low-voltage cable systems provided troublesome in the U.S. market due to different codes, junction boxes and listing requirements, so Tech Lighting began manufacturing in 1988. Greg Kay’s background as an electrician and his passion for lighting design led to the introduction of revolutionary new low-voltage systems designed for the U.S. market: First KableLite, then TwinRail, MonoRail, 2-circuit MonoRail and FreeJack. Fixtures for all systems were and are interchangeable, marking Kay as a true innovator.

Greg Kay also was instrumental in helping to change the National Electric Code to recognize this type of lighting, permitting his systems to obtain UL or ETL listing—and making low-voltage lighting systems available in the U.S. market for the first time.

Tech Lighting became the largest American manufacturer of low-voltage halogen systems, controlling over 60 percent of the market. After parlaying his \$2,000 investment into a business doing \$36 million in sales, Kay sold the manufacturing component in 2001 but retained the retail showroom and warehouse. “I sold the manufacturing business because I just didn’t want to be mayor of a little city,” he says. “You really have to deal with a lot of issues besides designing lights. Also, I planned on retiring early. Instead, I created this place, which was my dream.”

Numerous Awards Honor Kay’s Design Innovation

Greg Kay has received numerous awards and honors, including the prestigious Edwin F. Guth Award of Excellence in Lighting Design—one of the first Guth Awards ever presented to a Chicago-based lighting designer—in 1988. Other recognition includes the 1999 Lightfair International Award for Best New Product

Design (Kay's hand-bendable "Symphony" chandelier), the IESNA International Illumination Design Award of Merit for both the kitchen and bathroom in his own home (1997), the Chicago Lighting Institute Award of Merit for Lighting Excellence (1994) and the Chicago Athenaeum Good Design Award for Johnny and Wishbone KableLite fixtures (1992).

Not one to rest on yesterday's accomplishments, Kay is hard at work creating a multilevel roof deck, featuring a Japanese garden, waterfall and extensive landscaping elements designed to showcase outdoor lighting installations set to open in Spring of 2003.

Evolution of Light Museum Coming in 2003

Also early next year, Kay plans to open a unique mini-museum, the Evolution of Light Museum, utilizing floor, wall and ceiling planes along the back stairwell leading from the first to second and third floor.

"We're envisioning the museum as both educational and fun," Kay says, "with one display exploring kelvin temperature and color mixing, another featuring the morphous room, in which light can be altered to change the room from one color to another. The multiple-purpose room affords a private room for meditation, an entertainment room or a unique experimentation room for prospective lighting projects," he explains. "We'll also focus on the 'AC/DC wars' between Thomas Edison and his adversary, Nikola Tesla."

For professionals out in the field and customers who can't get to the showroom, a unique product Web site, showing real-time inventory, is also in development.