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# NEWS RELEASE

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## **THE EAST COAST RETAIL INVESTMENT TEAMS' WHITNEY KNOLL HAS RIGHT ANSWERS TO REAL ESTATE QUESTIONS AT ICSC 2010 OPEN AIR CONFERENCE IN ORLANDO**

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**ORLANDO, Fla.** --- "Who really has the money and what do they want to buy this year?" That's one question most commercial property owners are asking these days as the U.S. economic recession continues to erode property values and turn tenants into risks.

Whitney Knoll has the answers. Knoll, one of the most successful retail property brokers in the southeast with more than three billion dollars in transactions to his credit, led the expert panel discussion on Retail Capital Markets at the recent International Council of Shopping Centers (ICSC) 2010 Open Air Conference which closed March 12 in Orlando.

The East Coast Retail Investment Team (ECRIT), as part of Lavista Associates, Inc., is one of the leading investment sales brokerage teams in the industry. A partner at Lavista Associates, one of the top commercial brokerage companies in Atlanta, Knoll did some first-hand research before chairing the panel: he queried his clients and colleagues.

"We serve many of the most prominent retail property investors and owners in the southeast, and we keep tabs on every major retail property transaction in the region," Knoll explained. "We have a strong knowledge base." So who's in the acquisition mode?

"Pension Fund Advisors rank at the top of the list," Knoll said. "As a group they tend to be the most knowledgeable, and all their professional skills are attuned to finding the best investment opportunities for their clients," he said.

There are plenty of investment opportunities in retail commercial properties, Knoll said.

"The economic downturn hit housing the hardest and that has impacted retail spending, which in turn is reflected in retail property values, though not nearly as much as the office and industrial sectors," Knoll said.

And most investors know that when the economy rebounds, retail spending is one of the first things to regain its luster. "That adds up to substantial values on the market today for investors," Knoll said. "The key question is when will the economy regain its strength?"

Public and private REITs and foreign capital---especially European, Middle Eastern and Korean investors---round out the list of capital resources, Knoll said, along with Wall Street firms and Life Insurance Companies.

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*Serving Atlanta for over 37 years, Lavista Associates, Inc. is one of Atlanta's leading commercial real estate companies, representing clients in the sale and leasing of a broad spectrum of commercial, industrial, office and retail properties. The firm's goal is excellence of service to its clients resulting in the highest value for their real estate holdings.*

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