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Published: June 18, 2009

### theWit: Electrifying the Windy City with an Extraordinary New Lifestyle Hotel Experience

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CHICAGO - (BUSINESS WIRE) - Located just a few blocks north of what was considered the busiest intersection in the world in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, **theWit - A Doubletree Hotel** has proudly opened to grace the Chicago skyline and reinvigorate the continuing rebirth of the city's Loop District.

This 27-story, new-build hotel represents an inspired sense of style that redefines the downtown Chicago hotel experience. Located at the corner of State and Lake, theWit offers travelers and residents alike impeccable service, outstanding dining options, sophisticated comfort and an array of unique event

facilities. Just two blocks from Michigan Avenue and Millennium Park, hotel guests are a short walk away from the Ford Center, Chicago Theatre, Oriental Theatre, the Art Institute, the Chicago Cultural Center, the Civic Opera House and dozens of other legendary Chicago cultural and entertainment venues.

The developer of theWit, Scott Greenberg president of the ECD Company, took full advantage of the neighborhood's rich cultural offerings when laying the groundwork for his hotel concept. Starting with its playful name, theWit is a contemporary hotel with personality, its impishly chic sense of humor in evidence at every turn. The hotel's forward-thinking structure was designed by breakout Chicago architect Jackie Koo, with interiors by world-renowned designer Cheryl Rowley.

"We are extremely proud to introduce theWit as part of the rebirth of Chicago's State Street during an incredible moment in the city's history," said Greenberg. "The nearby Block 37 mixed-use development is nearing completion, and the neighborhood recently celebrated the opening of The Joffrey Ballet's new Tower. New retail stores, residential towers, theatres and attractions abound nearby. Our iconic lightning bolt on the front of our hotel symbolizes how we've harnessed the energy and excitement of some of the best architects and designers in the country to create an incredible gathering place for leisure and business travelers in one of the most dynamic cities in the world."



Progressive edge mingles with contemporary flair throughout guest rooms and common areas at theWit. Chandeliers that appear held aloft by white angel wings hover near the soaring lobby ceiling, and mirrored elevator walls and hallway carpets are tattooed in bold floral cutout patterns. Edison-esque lightbulbs hang above boardroom tables, and pops of vibrant color throughout add surprise and whimsy to the sexy, dark color palette.

Highlights of the \$100 million project include:

#### • Guest Rooms & Suites

theWit features 238 queen and king guest rooms on floors 6-20 and 60 spacious one- and two-bedroom suites on floors 21-26. Floor-to-ceiling windows showcase downtown architectural gems, with east-facing panoramas of Millennium Park, northward cityscapes of the Thompson Building and the Chicago River, and west-facing scenes of bustling State Street.

The stylish appointments include 42-inch flat-screen TVs in all rooms, and 60-inch screens in select suites. Easily accessible connection center provides plug-ins for computers, phones, iPods and other electronics. The Doubletree brand's signature Sweet Dreams by Doubletree Sleep Experience offers a specially designed mattress, high thread count linens and an abundance of plush pillows. Custom furniture includes plush chaises and electric blue velvet sofas. Clever artwork is anything but mundane,



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with inspiring red-and-gray felt "walls of kisses" above the beds; artwork featuring Monopoly boards alongside Shakespeare's face on the cover of *Esquire*; and framed wordplay referencing the wittier quips of some of history's greatest thinkers.

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In the suites, fully equipped kitchens are stocked with refrigerators, microwaves, and convection ovens. Super-sized bathrooms with separate showers and deep soaking tubs (many with outdoor views) are a virtually irresistible place to relax after a long day. The latest energy efficient HVAC innovations are put to use, with smart thermostats that use motion detectors to determine when guests are in the room and push air in specific directions to eliminate hot and cold spots. Instead of chocolates on their pillows after standard turndown service, guests will find calorie-free brain teasers to keep them entertained: puzzles and games along with cards bearing witty statements.

- **Conferences, Meetings & Events**

Floors three and four at theWit offer 7,000 square feet of meeting facilities, with a 2,523-square-foot dividable ballroom and conference rooms named after notable wits Lincoln, Dickinson, Churchill and Wilde. Ideal for educational, business or social events, the rooms are fully wired and outfitted with state-of-the-art audiovisual equipment.

- **SCREEN**

Rivaling the luxury of many Hollywood screening rooms, SCREEN, theWit's \$1 million digital high-definition multimedia theater, aspires to become the venue of choice for Chicago's film aficionados, as well as for businesses and organizations that are looking for a one-of-a-kind space to host a special event.

SCREEN can accommodate up to 40 guests which features luxurious gray electronic recliners, cozy couches and club chairs, which are situated on multiple levels to offer ideal sightlines to all viewers. Adjoining tables make it easy to enjoy premium food and beverages, and reception areas can be reserved for pre- and post-screening soirees or other special events. Designed by the renowned James Bond of Full Aperture, SCREEN is soundproof, lightproof and offers some of the most sophisticated, pristine projection and audio technology available. [www.screenatthewit.com](http://www.screenatthewit.com).

- **Dining at theWit**

theWit's food and beverage partner, Concentrics Restaurants, has created three distinct dining experiences throughout the hotel. With striking interiors by Atlanta's Johnson Studio, each venue offers its own compelling argument for becoming Chicago's newest, hottest culinary destinations:

#### **cibbo matto**

theWit is proud to present the fine dining of cibbo matto ("crazy food" ) scheduled to open in late summer 2009. The menu is modern Italian driven by seasonal ingredients, and the interior features a 30-foot ceiling fresco by Chicago-born artist Todd Murphy. Pale gray leather booths; a dramatic circular wine cooler; several communal dining tables (including a chef's table adjacent to the open kitchen) and a glass-enclosed private dining room are some of the highlights to come in this culinary treasure.

#### **STATE AND LAKE**

Its name an ode to its exact location, STATE AND LAKE is a contemporary gastropub on the ground floor of theWit. With a menu of artisan American cuisine and inviting decor punctuated by an amber-lit bar, cork floors, and rich mahogany leather banquettes, STATE AND LAKE is the perfect place to cozy up and unwind after long day of work in the Loop.

#### **ROOF**

Perched 27 stories above the hum of the Loop sidewalks, the nightlife experience at the 7,000-square-foot lounge ROOF can be defined in a word: View. The scene from the deck and out the windows of ROOF is breathtaking; gaze in one direction to see the Bean at Millennium Park, another way to see a slice of the Chicago River, and any which way to take in the up-close details of architectural icons standing sentry in every direction. Long fire pits lined with bar stools, a large projection screen on an outdoor wall, and a high-quality telescope to appreciate architecture of surrounding landmarks all part of the sensory experience at ROOF. A menu of 20 small plates is executed from ROOF's own full-service kitchen, with a pizza oven in the main bar area.

- **Beauty & Health: Spa@theWit**

Managed by industry leader WTS and offering a range of facial, nail and body treatments, **Spa@theWit** does away with traditional beige, beige and more beige in favor of a striking color palette

that invigorates as much as it soothes. Spacious treatment rooms outfitted in enveloping black and cream are injected with splashes of hot pink, and textured tone-on-tone wallpaper lines the halls. In the adjoining fitness center, some of the latest Precor treadmills and elliptical machines face out windows with downtown views of the L train and sidewalk action below.

As part of Doubletree and the Hilton Family of Hotels, members of the [Hilton HHonors](#) guest reward program may earn Points & Miles<sup>®</sup> for every qualifying stay at theWit. Hilton HHonors is the only hotel program that allows members to reap Double Dip and earn both airline miles and hotel points for every stay at more than 3,200 hotels worldwide\*. And with No Blackout Dates or capacity controls, any time a standard room is available for purchase, HHonors members can redeem points for it.

"theWit is truly a new landmark for Chicago and hospitality," says Lou Carrier, Chief Brand Officer for theWit/ECD Company. "The location itself is hallowed ground in the greater urban American landscape—creating something that respects both its location as well as its statement within the world of hospitality was done with generational forethought. It's smart, it's hip, it's fun and it's timeless. We say theWit is, 'more experience than hotel' because we've focused so much attention on providing opportunities to engage our guests with unique, joyful experiences. We want the senses in full use when you're here with us!"

Operated by Chicago-based ECD-Great Street, LLC, under a franchise license agreement with a wholly owned subsidiary of Hilton Hotels Corporation, theWit becomes the 10<sup>th</sup> Doubletree hotel to open in the greater Chicagoland area and the brand's 10<sup>th</sup> city center hotel opening in the past year. The hotel is managed by locally headquartered First Hospitality Group, Inc.

"Doubletree encourages the world's travelers to enjoy theWit, an incredible addition to our brand's worldwide portfolio of fine, full-service hotels," said Rob Palleschi, global head of Doubletree Hotels. "theWit joins Doubletree city center locations from Minneapolis to London and Boston to Beijing that each bring a distinctive blend of architecture and design to create a refreshingly unexpected hotel experience."

For more information or to make reservations at theWit, please visit the hotel's website at [www.thewithhotel.com](http://www.thewithhotel.com) or the hotel directly at (312) 467-0200.

#### **About Doubletree Hotels**

With a growing collection of contemporary, upscale accommodations in more than 200 gateway cities, metropolitan areas and vacation destinations worldwide, Doubletree Hotels, Guest Suites and Resorts are distinctively designed properties that provide true comfort to today's business and leisure travelers. From the millions of delighted hotel guests who are welcomed with the brand's legendary, warm chocolate chip cookies at check-in to the advantages of the award-winning Hilton HHonors guest reward program, each Doubletree guest receives a satisfying stay wherever their travels take them.

Doubletree is part of Hilton Hotels Corporation, the leading global hospitality company, with more than 3,200 hotels and 545,000 rooms in 77 countries, with more than 135,000 team members worldwide. The company owns, manages or franchises some of the best known and highly regarded hotel brands including Hilton, Conrad<sup>®</sup> Hotels & Resorts, Doubletree, Embassy Suites Hotels<sup>®</sup>, Hampton Inn, Hampton Inn & Suites<sup>®</sup>, Hilton Garden Inn, Hilton Grand Vacations, Homewood Suites by Hilton, Home2 Suites by Hilton and The Waldorf=Astoria Collection.

To make reservations at any Doubletree hotel, travelers can visit our website at [www.doubletree.com](http://www.doubletree.com), contact their preferred travel professional or call 1-800-222-TREE in the U.S. and Canada.

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