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**AMERICAN EXPRESS HONORS MARATHON TRAVEL & CRUISE SHOPS  
WITH REPRESENTATIVE EXCELLENCE AWARD**

**NEW YORK, March 11, 2004**—American Express recently named Marathon Travel & Cruise Shops as a winner of its *Representative Excellence* award.

The *Representative Excellence* award honors the accomplishments of outstanding members of the American Express US Representative Travel Network who have achieved superior sales results in support of preferred cruise and tour suppliers. The roster of preferred cruise and tour suppliers includes some of the best-known and most respected names in the travel industry, companies with reputations for providing excellent customer service and travel experiences.

“It took determination, focus and a lot of hard work to attain the level of performance required for this recognition,” said Ellen Bettridge, vice president of the Representative Network. “American Express is pleased to honor Marathon Travel & Cruise Shops for its extraordinary achievements in 2003.”

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Marathon Travel joined the American Express Representative network in 1997 and was ranked as one of the country's two fastest growing American Express travel agencies in 1999.

“Our continuing partnership with American Express creates a win-win situation for our clients and Marathon Travel,” said John Rose, President of Marathon Travel. “Our clients expect the best in expertise, service and value. Marathon Travel’s affiliation with American Express gives our customers access to the best in national travel services.”

Founded in 1949, Marathon Travel and Cruise Shops is Central Wisconsin’s largest chain of travel agencies, with branch offices in Stevens Point, Wisconsin Rapids, Plover, Wautoma, Clintonville, Schofield, Wausau, and Marshfield. In 1987, Marathon Travel became a member company of the Noel Group. Today, Marathon Travel is an American Express Travel Services affiliate and is uniquely qualified to provide all of its leisure and corporate customers with an unparalleled level of personal and responsive service.

American Express entered the travel agency business in 1915 and today is one of the world's largest travel agency networks. The company has more than 1,700 Travel Services locations worldwide in more than 130 countries. \*

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\*Not all services available at all locations.