

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**Walther® Celebrates 125<sup>th</sup> Anniversary**  
*Firearms Company Founded in 1886*

SPRINGFIELD, Mass. (January 18, 2011) – Smith & Wesson Corp., the legendary 159-year old company in the global business of safety, security, protection and sport and the exclusive North American distributor of Walther® products, today congratulated Walther on the company's 125<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2011. In Germany and throughout the world, Walther firearms have earned the trust of law enforcement professionals, recreational shooters and athletes. Whether used by police specialists in Europe or for international competition, the Walther brand is deeply rooted in the psyche and history of the firearm industry. Walther will begin the celebration of its 125<sup>th</sup> year by attending the annual 2011 Shooting Hunting & Outdoor Trade (SHOT) Show in Las Vegas, Nevada.

History and legend are woven together throughout the story of the company and its founder, Carl Walther. A skilled rifle maker, Walther founded the company in the autumn of 1886. Assisted by his son Fritz, the pair broke new ground in firearm technology with the design of the first usable German self-loading pistol with the release of the "Walther Model 1." Later, Fritz would continue this innovative thinking with the introduction of the first pistol with a single/double action trigger – the Walther Model PP – and shortly thereafter, the widely recognized compact model PPK.

In 1953, the Walther family constructed a new factory in the city of Ulm, Germany, where most of today's Walther production continues to take place. After its centennial anniversary as a family enterprise, Walther entered into a new era of globalization by merging with Umarex in 1993. Under the current management of Wulf-Heinz Pflaumer and Franz Wonisch, Walther has flourished not only in the development of new law enforcement weapons but also in replica firearms, air rifles and other sporting arms. Walther's tradition of innovation and superior quality is demonstrated in recently introduced models such as the Walther PPS and PK380, this year's much anticipated PPQ polymer pistol in 9mm and .40 S&W and a reintroduction of the company's best selling .22 LR pistol, the P22.

"Throughout our long history and through our innovative products, Walther firearms have had a hand in shaping our industry," said Wulf-Heinz Pflaumer, President of Carl Walther GmbH. "Today, our firearms are relied upon by police agencies, target shooters, amateur and Olympic athletes and citizens around the world. The scope and impact of our work is not lost upon the employees here, as each takes tremendous pride in their job, holding it to the highest standards. We are very pleased to spend our 125<sup>th</sup> year at the annual SHOT Show, visiting with our partners, customers and friends in the industry. We expect more big things to come this year and would like to say a special thanks to all of our partners around the world for their continued support."

In 1999, the company opened a new chapter in its history when it announced a joint strategic alliance with Smith & Wesson. Under the terms of the alliance, the Springfield, MA, based firearm manufacturer would distribute Walther firearms and accessories in the United States.

Since this announcement over ten years ago, both companies have worked together on marketing and distribution, as well as on the design and manufacture of some of today's most popular models.

“It is with great pleasure that we extend a hearty congratulation to our friends and partners within the Walther organization,” said Michael Golden, CEO of Smith & Wesson. “To be able to celebrate an anniversary of this caliber speaks greatly about Walther's commitment to high quality products and dependable service. We are proud to support the iconic Walther brand and we wish the company all the best in their ongoing success.”

Attendees of the 2011 SHOT SHOW are encouraged to stop by the Walther booth (#14556) to see the latest line of products, including the new PPQ pistol, as the company celebrates its 125<sup>th</sup> anniversary.

#### About Walther

Since 1999, Smith & Wesson has been the exclusive distributor of Walther firearms in the United States. The traditions of both companies surpass 260 combined years of quality workmanship and leadership in the firearms industry. For additional information on Walther products or to find the location of the nearest Walther retail outlet, write to Walther at 2100 Roosevelt Ave., Springfield, MA 01102-2208, call toll free 1-800-372-6454 or visit the Walther website at [www.waltheramerica.com](http://www.waltheramerica.com). For more information on Smith & Wesson, log on to [www.smith-wesson.com](http://www.smith-wesson.com).

#### **About Smith & Wesson**

Smith & Wesson Holding Corporation (SWHC) is a U.S.-based, global provider of products and services for safety, security, protection and sport. The company designs and constructs facility perimeter security solutions for military and commercial applications, and delivers a broad portfolio of firearms and related training to the military, law enforcement and sports markets. SWHC companies include Smith & Wesson Corp., the globally recognized manufacturer of quality firearms; Universal Safety Response, a full-service perimeter security integrator, barrier manufacturer and installer; and Thompson/Center Arms Company, Inc., a premier designer and manufacturer of premium hunting firearms. SWHC facilities are located in Massachusetts, Maine, New Hampshire, and Tennessee. For more information on Smith & Wesson and its companies, call (800) 331-0852 or log on to [www.smith-wesson.com](http://www.smith-wesson.com); [www.usrgrab.com](http://www.usrgrab.com); or [www.tcarms.com](http://www.tcarms.com).