



October 1, 2007

Pizza Hut® Names Brian Niccol Chief Marketing Officer

Pizza Hut, America's Favorite Pizza, announced that it has named Brian Niccol its Chief Marketing Officer. Niccol replaces Bill Ogle, who left the company to pursue outside opportunities after holding the post for nearly two years. "Brian is a great leader within the Pizza Hut organization," said Scott Bergren, Pizza Hut president. "During the past few years he has hired top-notch staff to guide our brand marketing efforts. Additionally, through his brand positioning and customer segmentation work he has laid the foundation for stronger and more effective marketing efforts. I have no doubt that he will do great things for Pizza Hut as our new CMO." Brian Niccol was previously the VP of National Brand Marketing and Strategy where he was responsible for the development of a mega brand strategy and the development of all national brand marketing programs. In this role, he helped lead Pizza Hut in 2007 to its highest share level in three years while delivering same store sales growth. Niccol joined Pizza Hut in 2005 as the VP of Strategy. In this role he created the brand strategy that has successfully re-positioned the brand for growth. Before joining Pizza Hut, Niccol spent ten years in various brand management positions at Procter & Gamble. He was recognized in an Advertising Age Special Report of "40 Under Forty" in 2007.

Source: Pizza Hut Inc.

Robert Towers Appointed President of Ark Restaurants Corp.

Towers has been appointed President of Ark Restaurants Corp. by Ark's Board of Directors effective September 17, 2007. With this new position, Mr. Towers will assume additional responsibilities related to the Company's performance and growth. Michael Weinstein, Ark's Chairman and Chief Executive Officer, stated that, "Through Bob's long tenure with Ark, he has become deeply respected throughout the organization and the industry and possesses a unique set of leadership capabilities for his new role. We are pleased to have him as the Company's President." Mr. Towers brings to the position a distinguished 24-year record of progressive responsibilities within the Company. He has been employed by the Company since November 1983 and was elected Vice President, Treasurer and a director in March 1987. Mr. Towers became an Executive Vice President and Chief Operating Officer in April 2001. Mr. Towers is also the Executive Vice President, Treasurer and Secretary of each of the Company's subsidiaries. He will retain the titles of Chief Operating Officer and Treasurer along with his new role.

Source: Ark Restaurants Corp.

Red, White and Brew Goes for Restaurant No. 2

Red, White and Brew is expanding its waistline with the opening of a second restaurant in Chandler. The restaurant specializes in homemade cuisine that is affordably priced. Menu items include chicken 'oregenata,' seafood scampi and brick oven pizza. Meat lovers and vegetarians also are welcome with daily specials that include pork tenderloin with caramel pine nut sauce, bourbon glazed salmon and spicy black bean veggie burgers. Red, White and Brew says it caters to the entire community welcoming guests from soccer team post-game pizza parties to teacher happy hours and couples on romantic date nights. Greg Freed, Tracy Gordon and Guido Russo are co-owners of the new location, 4850 S. Gilbert Road in the Chandler Heights Marketplace. The owners say they hope to have an outdoor celebration at the Chandler location next month to mark its grand opening and take advantage of the cooler weather.

Source: The Business Journal of Phoenix

Some Like it Hot -- and Spicy

New ownership takes over Bojangles' Cajun-style chicken chain after record year. It started with a simple Cajun-style fried chicken recipe. Now, 30 years later, Bojangles' has new owners, a new chief executive and ambitious plans to face growing competition from other restaurants and chicken vendors. "To be a part of Bojangles' now is exciting," new chief executive Randy Kibler said in an interview. "Bojangles' is an incredibly strong brand and has a really good future." Kibler, a fast-food veteran with nearly four decades of experience, this week replaced Joe Drury, who had led Bojangles' since he and his partners purchased it in 1998. The switch came less than a week after an ownership group that includes former Bank of America chief Hugh McColl Jr. and Carolina Panthers founder Jerry Richardson acquired a majority stake in the company. The group, led by Falfurrias Capital Partners, controls more than 60 percent of the company. Bojangles' was founded by Jack Fulk and Richard Thomas in July 1977. Before Falfurrias came in, Bojangles' had commitments for more than 300 new restaurants over the next five years, for a total of nearly 700. That's a record expansion rate for the company of 40 new restaurants annually. It is unclear whether the new leadership will maintain such elaborate plans. Executives say expansion is still on, but they are more concerned about doing it right rather than fast. Bojangles', which posted record sales of \$508 million last year, up from \$459 million in 2005, is not a small business. However, the company must maintain quality over quantity as it gets bigger, experts say. Rapid expansion in the 1980s led Bojangles' to close about 100 of its stores. The company is trying to re-enter markets it left while modifying the look of its buildings with larger seating areas, televisions and free Wi-Fi. "We've become a destination restaurant," said Chris Bailey, Bojangles' director of franchise development. "We need to stay attractive to our customers."

Source: The Associated Press

Arby's Expansion Detailed

Arby's Restaurant Group Inc. has inked development deals to open 35 new Arby's restaurants across the nation. The Atlanta-based franchiser of the Arby's restaurant system said the agreements include four new and 13 existing franchisees to develop Arby's restaurants in California, Delaware, Illinois, Indiana, Louisiana, Michigan, Mississippi, Tennessee, Texas, Utah and West Virginia. Arby's Restaurant Group owns and runs about 1,100 Arby's restaurants in the United States. "We continue to expand our footprint across the U.S. to meet our growing customers' cravings for fresh, premium ingredients they don't typically find in fast food," said Tom Garrett, president and chief operating officer of Arby's Restaurant Group. "Our existing franchisees remain committed to growing the brand as we continue to welcome new franchisees to the Arby's family."

Source: Atlanta Business Chronicle



Champps Entertainment Stockholders Approve Sale Transaction

Champps Entertainment, Inc. announced that Champps' stockholders had overwhelmingly voted to approve and adopt the merger agreement providing for the acquisition of Champps by F&H Acquisition Corp. Champps said that the holders of approximately 99.8% of the shares voted, representing approximately 81.6% of the total number of outstanding shares, had voted to approve and adopt the merger agreement. Under the terms of the merger agreement, Champps' stockholders (other than those who properly exercise their appraisal rights under Delaware law) will be entitled to receive \$5.60 in cash for each of their shares. As previously announced, Champps has agreed to provide F&H and its equity sponsors up to an additional three weeks to arrange financing for the transaction, and it is now expected that the merger will be completed on or before October 22, 2007.

Source: Champps Entertainment, Inc.

Viking Range Enters Commercial Appliance Category

Viking Range Corp. announced it entered the commercial cooking equipment arena with a new division, the Viking Commercial Products Division, which is headquartered in Fullerton, Calif. Daniel Garvin, formerly of The Montague Co., has been appointed vice president of the division, and Eric Deng, director of engineering. The Viking Commercial Product line will consist of a complete array of cooking equipment including ranges of all styles, ovens, broilers, griddles, salamanders, cheesemelters, induction units, island suites and undercounter refrigeration. Viking plans to preview its initial commercial products in May 2008 at the National Restaurant Association Restaurant Hotel-Motel Show in Chicago. Garvin, a 25-year foodservice industry veteran, previously served as vice president and director of sale and marketing for The Montague Co. In his new position with Viking, he will be responsible for steering the new commercial product line from concept to production as well as developing plans for the sales and marketing of the products.

Source: FE&S

Two bidding groups emerge for Wendy's: report

A group involving title insurer Fidelity National Financial Inc and several private equity firms has emerged in the bidding for burger chain Wendy's International Inc., the Wall Street Journal reported on its Website. Fidelity National Chairman William Foley is a former chief executive of CKE Restaurants Inc., the parent of the Carl's Jr. and Hardee's fast-food chains, the article said. Also in the group are private-equity firms Thomas H. Lee Partners LP, Oaktree Capital Management LP and Ares Management, the report said. After entering a bid in the first round, the group plans to participate in the second round of bidding, which it expects will take place within the next 30 days, the article said, citing a person familiar with the situation. A second group includes David Karam, a Wendy's franchisee and president of Cedar Enterprises Inc., who told the Journal his bid is being backed by the private equity firms Kelso & Co and Oak Hill Capital Partners, the article said. Earlier this month, the Journal reported that more than a dozen parties have expressed interest in the sale process for Wendy's. Triarc Companies Inc., parent of the Arby's fast-food

chain, has previously expressed interest in making a bid for Wendy's. Wendy's, Fidelity National and Karam were not immediately available for comment.

Source: Reuters

Jack in the Boxes to Pop Up

Jack is back. Jack in the Box, the fast-food chain with the ping-pong ball-headed mascot, is returning to Colorado after an 11-year hiatus. The first restaurant is slated to open in Golden this November, followed early next year by a second in Arvada. The reprised Jack in the Box won't be quite the same as many Coloradans remember. The San Diego-based restaurant chain now offers more upscale fare like Chipotle Chicken Ciabatta sandwiches and blackberry ice cream shakes alongside its staple two for 99 cent tacos and seasoned curly fries. The decor is also more polished, featuring ceramic tile, fireplaces and flat-screen TVs to create an atmosphere that encourages customers to linger. "Jack in the Box has evolved so much" in recent years, said Eric Tunquist, the company's vice president of operations. "We're not like other fast-food restaurants anymore." Jack in the Box had eight locations in the Denver area until 1996, when its local franchisee pulled up stakes. The new restaurants will all be company-owned stores, and this time Jack in the Box is drawing on the experience of subsidiary Qdoba Mexican Grill for insights into the Denver market. Jack in the Box purchased Denver-born Qdoba in 2003, and the fast casual chain is helping in matters like site selection, recruitment and marketing. "We've learned a lot from Qdoba, not only about Denver," Tunquist said. Jack in the Box for the past several years has been expanding beyond its onetime core audience of budget-conscious young men, reaching out to the office lunch crowd with upgraded salads and commuters with an extensive breakfast menu. The effort is paying off, with Jack in the Box posting a 5.9 percent increase in same-store sales so far this year on top of a year-ago increase of 4 percent. Last year, Jack in the Box's sales surged 10 percent to \$2.76 billion. The results spurred the company to move into new markets, including Denver, for the first time since 1999. Jack in the Box joins McDonald's in reconfiguring its restaurants to resemble the cafe vibe of Starbucks or Panera Bread Co. The new restaurant in Golden is taking the redesign a step further, building the company's first open kitchen so customers can see their food prepared from inside the restaurant as well as through extra large windows along the drive-thru lane.

Source: Rocky Mountain News.com

Starbucks, Pepsi to Expand Bottled Coffee Venture

Starbucks Corp and PepsiCo Inc said Thursday they are expanding their bottled coffee business, with initial forays into China. Their joint venture currently sells bottled Frappuccino coffee drinks, Starbucks DoubleShot espresso drinks, and Starbucks Iced Coffee drinks in North America. Starbucks also sells ready-to-drink coffee drinks in South Korea, Japan and Taiwan through relationships with other companies. Its expanded deal with Pepsi will not affect those markets.

Source: Reuters

HL2 Advertising and Marketing Craves Foodservice Pursuits

The convergence of two West Coast advertising and marketing agencies has resulted in a veritable tour de force in foodservice and franchise marketing. Seattle-based HL2 purchased Orange County-based AMP Sept. 7 and realized a combined client roster with such enviable brands as Seattle's Best Coffee, Baja Fresh, Coca Cola, Cinnabon, Dry Fly Distilling, and past work with Taco Del Mar among others. Now that they're bigger, they're ready to put more on the plate. "With the purchase of AMP Marketing in Orange County, we found a direct complement to the food, beverage and hospitality work we've been doing in the Northwest and nationally," Matt Ramerman said, HL2's principal and COO. "Now we're able to nimbly serve these national brands with an extended West Coast team, and poise our firm for growth in the industries we know and help fluently." Now 100 employees strong between its Seattle and Orange County offices, HL2 plans to build upon its foodservice work in pursuit of related multi-unit, retail and hospitality

industry clients. Speaking to its foodservice expertise, John Pietro, Managing Director for HL2-OC, has more than 40 years experience in marketing and sales initiatives, new business development, agency search and foodservice marketing. He has worked extensively with Mr. Steak Restaurants, Baker's Drive-Thru and Baja Fresh and with global brands such as Wendy's International, Hardee's, Coca-Cola, Minute-Maid, Burger King, Denny's and Cinnabon. Ramerman has worked 15 years in multi-unit foodservice, hospitality and retail industries with clients such as Cinnabon and Seattle's Best Coffee, among other brands, tackling everything from brand re-positioning to complex programs requiring an integration of advertising, design and interactive services.

Source: Wilson Public Relations

Atlanta Restaurateur Wins Industry's Humanitarian Award

The National Restaurant Association has named Buckhead Life Restaurant Group CEO Pano Karatassos of the 2007 Cornerstone Humanitarian. Karatassos picked up the award and a \$5,000 prize during the association's annual Public Affairs Conference in Washington, D.C. on Sept. 25. The association said its award celebrates the philanthropic spirit of the restaurant industry and serves to inspire others to actively get involved in their communities. Karatassos serves as the founding Atlanta chairperson for the national Share Our Strength Taste of the Nation event, for which he is one of the country's leading fundraisers and organizers. His efforts have brought in more than \$5 million for Share Our Strength. Karatassos also helped developed the country's first freshly-prepared food program for hunger relief and he was instrumental in recruiting other restaurants and wholesalers to join him. Karatassos will donate the \$5,000 Restaurant Neighbor Award prize money to Share Our Strength's Atlanta chapter. "Pano Karatassos has a true passion for our great industry, and an equal passion for serving his community," said Peter Kilgore, CEO of the National Restaurant Association. "His commitment to hunger relief and other causes is unparalleled, and he serves as a source of inspiration for all of us. We are honored to present Pano with our Cornerstone Humanitarian award." Buckhead Life Restaurant Group owns and operates the Atlanta Fish Market, 103 West, Pricci, the Buckhead Diner, Chops, Lobster Bar, The Club at Chops, Veni Vidi Vici, Buckhead Bread Company & Corner Café, Nava, Bluepointe, and Kyma. This year, Karatassos opened a Chops Lobster Bar in Boca Raton, Fla., and will open Central Fish Market in Boca Raton in early 2008.

Source: Atlanta Business Chronicle

133 Hotel Projects Are in Pipeline in South India to Be Completed by 2010

As many as 133 hotel projects are in the pipeline in South India, of which 30 are planned in Karnataka in the 3-star and 5-star categories, 61 in Kerala, 20 in Andhra Pradesh in the 3-star category, 18 in Tamil Nadu primarily in the 2-star and 3-star categories and four in Pondyicherry in the heritage category. These would involve an investment of Rs 5,000 crore and are expected to add about 4,000 rooms. Chennai alone is expected to reach 2,700 rooms from 1,200 rooms in the 5-star category during the same period. In view of the continuing boom in the hospitality sector, the South India Hotels and Restaurants Association (SIHRA) has asked the Tamil Nadu government for grant of industry status. Benefits from industry status include 50 percent allowance in construction and 50 percent capital subsidy, Secretary General of SIHRA R Rangachari told media persons on Saturday. Justifying the demand, he said land prices had skyrocketed and high cost of acquisition was making hotel projects unviable. SIHRA president P Purushothaman said that while Andhra Pradesh was auctioning land and Pondyicherry was granting subsidy to hoteliers, Tamil Nadu and Karnataka offered no such benefits. Highlighting the industry's problems, he explained that while hospitality was a large consumer of power, under the commercial status it was paying Rs 6.10 per unit while industry was paying a lower Rs 2.85 per unit. He also called for revamping of legislation for administration of liquor in hotel bars. Purshothaman said that the average occupancy in South Indian hotels ranged between 80 and 85 percent, primarily occupied by business travellers with the peak period being Monday to Friday.

Source: newindpress.com

International Sushi Chain Hitting US Markets

Sushi Itto, a Japanese restaurant chain with 100 units in Mexico, Central America and Spain is hitting the US, executives said at the ICSC Western Division Conference. The Mexico City-based company was one of many chains here at the event looking for sites in the region. Sushi Itto, which blends Japanese dishes with ingredients from the Western Hemisphere, currently has two US locations in San Diego. The chain would like to add about 20 new units next year, throughout California, Nevada and Texas, says Alberto Romano, Sushi Itto's owner and president. Los Angeles-based Infinity Realty Group, headed by president Steve Berck, is handling the US expansion. "We have all of the factors in our control, so we can work out our expansion," Romano says. The chain is looking for locations in a variety of real estate, including food courts in malls, urban streets and lifestyle centers. Its restaurants average 2,200 sf. Romano says he is not sure yet how many Sushi Itto units he will open in the US, but is planning a major roll out. "If Mexico and Central America can support 100, you could multiply that by five," he says. For the initial rollout, Romano says that he will not franchise out his restaurants. "It's easier for me to have control of what I'm doing," he explains. The average check at Sushi Itto for dinner is \$24. Romano says that he chose San Diego for the first US locations because of the city's diversity with immigrants, tourists, upscale consumers and US Navy employees.

Source: GlobeSt.RETAIL

Lone Star Chain's New Chief Looks to Revamp the Restaurants

The once hard-charging Lone Star Steakhouse & Saloon is searching for a way back to stronger growth and profitability. The Wichita-based steak chain sold last year for more than \$600 million to a private equity firm after several years of shrinking margins and stagnant sales. New chief executive Marc Buehler plans to revive the chain by renovating its menus and restaurants. To fund the changes, he will need to find millions of dollars.

"There's no question: The Lone Star concept is in turnaround mode," he said. Buehler joined Lone Star in July, sliding over from the chief executive's chair at Tony Roma's, another restaurant chain. He will work and live in Dallas, but most of the chain's executives and corporate staff will remain in Wichita. The new owners, Lone Star Funds of Dallas, have put Buehler in charge of the company's 211 casual dining Lone Star and Texas Land & Cattle restaurants. Longtime Lone Star executive Mark Mednansky is the top executive of the company's 23 high-end Sullivan's and Del Frisco's steakhouses. Lone Star Funds approached Buehler in April and offered him the chief executive job. He wavered, but took it and went to work at Lone Star in July. Buehler brings a real talent for bringing worn-out restaurant concepts back to life, said Ken Myres, the current chief executive of Tony Roma's, who worked under Buehler for five years. "He has a phenomenal vision for really adapting concepts to what needs to be current today," Myres said. Buehler said he and the other executives at Lone Star will take several lines of attack. Lone Star's menu and stores haven't really been updated since the mid-'90s, Buehler said. Updating it will take an eye for detail, starting with the look of the restaurants. "It's what you experience when you walk in the front door," he said, "from the greeting, to the seating, to the silverware, to the type of booth you sit at, to the plateware, to the lighting, to the video, to the experience in the restrooms. All of that plays into... whether they are going to come back."

Source: The Kansas City Star/The Wichita Eagle



Grill Concepts Announces Plans for New Grill on the Alley Restaurant to Open At The Promenade at Westlake in Summer 2008

Making further progress on its accelerated growth strategy, Grill Concepts, Inc. announced plans for the company's sixth flagship Grill on the Alley restaurant to open in The Promenade at Westlake, located in Thousand Oaks, CA, in the Summer of 2008. Construction for the Westlake Grill on the Alley, which will accommodate up to 200 guests in 7,700 square-feet of indoor and patio dining space, is budgeted to exceed \$3.0 million, before tenant allowances. Grill Concepts signed a 10-year lease on the restaurant property, with one five-year option. Located on the corner of Westlake and Thousand Oaks Boulevard, the Westlake Grill on the Alley will serve a classic American menu of prime steaks, chops, fresh seafood, pasta and freshly prepared salads using home-cooking techniques and with fresh ingredients purchased daily. "We are very excited to confirm the opening of our next Grill on the Alley in the Conejo Valley, northwest of the greater Los Angeles area," said Philip Gay, chief executive officer. "Highly acclaimed for its classic American grill fare, the original restaurant opened in Beverly Hills in 1984 and has become a staple of the power lunch scene. Celebrated as one of the Conejo Valley's most enjoyable retail centers, The Promenade at Westlake is a prime location with great demographics for us to extend our well-known, fine-dining restaurant concept. "The Grill on the Alley is a premier restaurant that is very selectively expanding its locations," said Rick Caruso, president and chief executive officer of Caruso Affiliated. "It is an ideal fit as The Promenade at Westlake is at the center of a thriving community where discerning consumers seek fine dining opportunities." Developed by Caruso Affiliated in 1996, The Promenade at Westlake has won multiple design awards, including 1997 Gold Nugget Award for the "Best Commercial Project for Retail," and the 1998 International Council of Shopping Centers 22nd International Design and Development Award for "Innovation Design and Construction of a New Project."

Source: Grill Concepts, Inc./BusinessWire

GLM and DMG World Media Finalize Acquisition Agreement

dmg world media and George Little Management, LLC (GLM®) have finalized an acquisition agreement - seven years after their initial partnership and three years ahead of dmg world media's option to purchase a majority interest - to make GLM a wholly-owned subsidiary of the global exhibition and publishing company, as of October 1, 2007. "I am so pleased to announce this acquisition today as GLM is a very important part of the big picture of dmg world media," said Mike Cooke, CEO, dmg world media. "After seven years of working together successfully, we know each other pretty well so to take advantage of the strong and effective management arrangement, it's only logical to combine the dmg world media gift shows with GLM's shows under a single management structure." George F. (Jeff) Little, II, president of GLM, said, "Our original agreement with dmg world media envisaged a phased acquisition strategy, with GLM becoming majority owned by dmg world media in 2010; but we agree with their thinking and share their desire to accelerate the acquisition so that we can start seeing the benefits sooner of having an integrated group of leading trade shows." As part of the agreement, William E. (Will) Little, Jr. grandson of GLM founder George F. Little, will retire and Mike Cooke, dmg world media Chief Executive Officer, will assume the role of GLM Chairman and Co-President. Aside from Cooke's installation as Chairman and Co-President, GLM's executive staff will retain their current titles and responsibilities. George F. (Jeff) Little, II, also a grandson of GLM's founder, will be Co-President; Alan E. Steel and Jack Withiam are Executive Vice Presidents; Philip D. Robinson is Senior Vice President; and Richard Pasternak is Senior Vice

President and Treasurer. Mike Cooke, CEO of dmg world media, said, "Through this acquisition, we expand our gift portfolio to include ownership of the New York International Gift Fair®, which is the premier gift and home accessories market in the United States." The company's gift portfolio consists of market leading events throughout Canada, New Zealand and the U.S. and trade publications serving the wholesale gift industry - The Gift Directory in the UK and Gift and Home Preview in the U.S.

If you would like to have news about your company, please send all editorial contributions to Mario Schacher: mschacher@ariteam.com

Thank you for reading The Global Foodservice E-newsletter from American Recruiters!

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