



April 23, 2008

The Manitowoc Company, Inc. to Acquire ENODIS PLC for \$2.1 Billion

The Manitowoc Company, Inc. announced that agreement has been reached on the terms of a recommended acquisition of Enodis plc in a transaction valued at approximately \$2.1 billion, including the assumption of Enodis' net debt (approximately \$207 million as of September 29, 2007). The transaction, which was unanimously approved by both companies' Boards of Directors, provides for a cash payment of 258 pence per Enodis share. In addition, in advance of the closing of the transaction, Enodis will pay a dividend of 2 pence per Enodis share in lieu of an interim dividend in respect of the financial year ending September 30, 2008. The transaction is structured as a court-sanctioned scheme of arrangement under the laws of the U.K. and is expected to close in the fourth quarter of 2008. The transaction is subject to court approval in the U.K., the approval of Enodis shareholders, as well as regulatory approvals in various jurisdictions. Listed in London and operationally headquartered in Tampa, Florida, Enodis, a global leader in commercial foodservice equipment with a variety of premier brands, reported revenues of £0.8 billion (US \$1.6 billion) in the financial year ended September 29, 2007. Enodis is one of the world's leading suppliers of foodservice equipment, with products on the "cold" and "hot" sides of the industry. To date, Manitowoc Foodservice's focus has been on "cold" equipment. A combination with Enodis will allow Manitowoc to enter two major new market segments; hot foodservice and food retail equipment, as well as expand its cold-side businesses. Glen E. Tellock, Manitowoc president and chief executive officer said, "We have long recognized the value that a combination of the foodservice businesses of Enodis and Manitowoc would create. We believe the strategic benefits of the combination are substantial, and we are pleased to have reached an agreement for this transforming acquisition. "We believe the offer price provides good value to Enodis' shareholders while also allowing Manitowoc's shareholders to realize the benefits that the enhanced global business platform is expected to generate through deeper customer relationships, a more robust R&D process, and operating synergies," Mr. Tellock explained. Manitowoc believes that the successful integration of the two businesses will result in improved growth prospects and the opportunity to deliver significant synergies. Management currently estimates that by 2010 the transaction will generate annual synergies of more than \$60 million. Historical revenues for the combined companies for the most recently completed respective financial years exceeded \$5.6 billion. "We believe the expanded global footprint of the combined businesses creates an outstanding growth platform for Manitowoc Foodservice," said Michael Kachmer, president of Manitowoc Foodservice. "With the world's largest foodservice companies growing at rates well in excess of the overall industry, we should be well-positioned to partner with our customers in creating modern, efficient kitchens that deliver the dining choices that consumers want," Mr. Kachmer said. The proposed acquisition continues the company's history of creating global growth platforms through meaningful bolt-on acquisitions. In 2001 and 2002, the company acquired Potain and Grove to create one of the global crane industry's most complete product portfolios. In 2002, the company's Crane segment had pro forma revenues of less than \$1 billion. Since that time, Manitowoc has enhanced its service offering to include an industry-leading aftermarket support network, has introduced more than 100 new products, and now operates manufacturing and service facilities in more than 20 countries to serve its global customers and their specific needs. In 2007, the company's Crane segment had revenues totaling more than \$3 billion. "The acquisition of Enodis provides the opportunity to replicate the tremendous growth strategy that we employed in the lifting industry," Mr.

Tellock added. "The same elements are in place for this strategy to succeed again – industry leading brands, a global footprint to meet the specific needs of a global customer base, a commitment to technology, new product development and world-class aftermarket services, all supported by a team of the industry's most talented people." 2008 EARNINGS OUTLOOK: Manitowoc believes the acquisition of Enodis is consistent with the company's strategic and financial imperatives of profitable growth and value creation, driven by innovation, customer and people focus, and excellence in operations and services. Assuming a transaction close in the fourth quarter of 2008, the acquisition is expected to be EPS accretive in 2009 and EVA positive in 2011. For 2008, Manitowoc re-affirms its previous earnings guidance of \$3.20 to \$3.40 per share for the standalone business. The company continues to believe there will be incremental margin improvements in the second half of 2008 in the Crane segment and better than industry growth with Foodservice revenues in the mid-single-digits and improving margins in the mid-teens. ABOUT THE TRANSACTION: The transaction is subject to certain closing conditions, including the approval of Enodis shareholders, regulatory approvals in various jurisdictions and other customary closing conditions for a U.K. scheme of arrangement. Manitowoc has agreed to take the necessary steps to obtain these approvals. It is anticipated that this transaction will close by the fourth quarter of 2008. There are no financing conditions in the proposed acquisition.

Source: The Manitowoc Company, Inc.

McDonald's Vice Chairman and Chief Executive Officer Jim Skinner to Keynote 2008 National Restaurant Association Restaurant, Hotel-Motel Show

Jim Skinner, Vice Chairman and Chief Executive Officer, McDonald's Corporation will deliver the keynote address at the 2008 National Restaurant Association Restaurant, Hotel-Motel Show® on Sunday, May 18, 2008, at 2:00 p.m. (Doors will open at 1:30 p.m.), in the Grand Ballroom, McCormick Place, Chicago. The event is open only to NRA Show attendees, exhibitors and registered media. The NRA Show is the industry's largest single gathering of more than 74,000 restaurant and hospitality professionals, and the number-one venue for networking, education, watching trends and building business-to-business connections and relationships. Jim Skinner was elected McDonald's Vice Chairman and Chief Executive Officer by McDonald's Board of Directors in November 2004. In his previous role as Vice Chairman, Skinner had management responsibility for Asia, Middle East and Africa (AMEA), and Latin America, in addition to overseeing most corporate staff functions. Since the beginning of 2004, he was accountable for McDonald's Japan Limited, McDonald's second-largest market with nearly 4,000 restaurants. Skinner has held numerous leadership positions in his tenure with the corporation, after starting as a restaurant manager trainee in Carpentersville, IL.

Source: The National Restaurant Association

Join FCSI at the NRA Show

FCSI is proud to announce a special partnership with the National Restaurant Association Show in Chicago on Monday, May 19. The following is a schedule of the day's events. 7:00 a.m. - 9:00 a.m. FCSI/SFM Annual Networking Breakfast. Mark your calendar for this exclusive breakfast! The FCSI/SFM Annual Networking Breakfast will be held on Monday, May 19, at the Four Seasons Hotel in Chicago. The cost for the event is \$50. You will start your morning with "Coffee & Conversation" from 7:00 a.m. - 7:45 a.m. followed by a seated breakfast from 7:45 a.m. - 9:00 a.m. This annual event continues to grow every year so make plans to attend. 12 Noon - 1:30 p.m. Two concurrent FCSI education seminars will take place at McCormick Place in room 402 A and 402 B respectively; Pre-Design Planning for Commercial Restaurants: A Win-Win Strategic Approach in room 402A, and Noncommercial Foodservice: The Value & Rewards of Strategic Pre-Design Planning in room 402B. 2:00 p.m. - 3:30 p.m. FCSI walk-through the Kitchen Innovation (KI) Pavilion; led by KI judges. 4:00 p.m. - 5:00 p.m. Round table discussions with KI companies about innovation. 5:00 p.m. - 6:30 p.m. As mentioned above, FCSI will host an industry networking reception at McCormick Place immediately following the show. Ask the Design Experts: As in previous years, FCSI will participate in the "Ask the Design Experts" clinic. Prior to the show and again,

during the show, operators will have the opportunity to schedule a 30-minute appointment for a free consultation with an FCSI Consultant.

Source: FCSI

Pizza Inn Announces Multi-Unit Agreement in Bahrain to Extend Chain's International Growth Strategy

Pizza Inn, Inc. announced the signing of a multi-unit development agreement to open up to 20 new units in the country of Bahrain over the next 10 years in a continuation of the brand's expansion throughout the Middle East. Pizza Inn has awarded a territorial franchise agreement to the Attyab Al Bahrain Catering Company and Eastern Retail Services Company W.L.L., both owned by the Sheikh Terki Al Khalifa Group of Companies. Initially, the group is converting its former Domino's Pizza(R) locations to Pizza Inn restaurants in Bahrain. The Sheikh Terki Al Khalifa Group of Companies is led by Sheikh Terki Al Khalifa, owner of the Crepe Cafe franchise & partner in Cementatia General Trading, UAE since 2006. "We are proud to partner with the Al Attyab Al Bahrain Catering Company in Bahrain," stated Ward Olgreen, Senior Vice-President of Worldwide Franchising. "Their experience in the pizza category combined with our commitment to quality and customer satisfaction makes this a very formidable partnership." "We are extremely excited about our future with Pizza Inn," stated Sheikh Terki Al Khalifa. "We know that families in Bahrain will love every aspect of Pizza Inn, whether they enjoy our made-from-scratch pizzas at home or in our restaurants." The new partnership with the Al Khalifa Group will also utilize the support services of United Food Company, Pizza Inn's master licensee for Saudi Arabia and Qatar and a part of the Abdulla Abunayyan Group of Companies.

Source: Pizza Inn, Inc.

Buffalo Wild Wings® Inc. Announces Retirement of Kenneth H. Dahlberg from Company's Board of Directors

Buffalo Wild Wings®, Inc. announced the retirement of Kenneth H. Dahlberg from his position as a member of the Company's Board of Directors. "We are grateful for Ken's long and lasting contribution to Buffalo Wild Wings," said Sally Smith, CEO of Buffalo Wild Wings, Inc. "During his 14 years as a member of the board, Ken provided great insights into operations, franchising and the overall management of the Company and has left an indelible mark that will be felt for years to come. On behalf of the Buffalo Wild Wings family, I would like to thank Ken for his dedication and valuable service to our company and its shareholders."

Source: Buffalo Wild Wings, Inc.,

Ruby Tuesday, Inc. Provides an Update on the Status of the Amendments to Its Credit Facilities

Ruby Tuesday, Inc. reported that, while the Company has agreed in principal on the terms of amendments to its Revolving Credit Agreement and Private Placement Notes, the final documentation of the amendments will take additional time to complete. The Company previously obtained waivers of its debt covenant ratios through April 18, 2008. However because the actual ratios fell within allowable limits, such waivers were unnecessary and no further waivers are being pursued at this time. It is anticipated that the documentation of the amendments will be completed within the next several weeks. Sandy Beall, Founder and CEO, commented, "We appreciate the cooperation of our bank group and private placement holders as we continue to work through the documentation process for these amendments. We believe the terms are fair, allowing for covenants at levels better aligned with our expected future results and providing for variable interest rates based on our leverage ratios. With the completion of our remodeling initiative, our repositioning investments and expenditures, and the temporary suspension of new restaurant openings, our focus is firmly on sales, profits, and cash flows. As we discussed on our recent conference call, our plans

provide for substantial levels of positive free cash flow to service and reduce debt, allowing us to strengthen our company over the coming quarters.”

Source: Ruby Tuesday, Inc.

BURGER KING® Restaurants Revamp Kids Meal Packaging with New 100 Percent Recycled Bags Highlight Green Action Tips for Kids

Burger King Corp. announced a green makeover of Kids Meals packaging in the U.S. Beginning in July, Kids Meals will be packaged in bags made from 100 percent recycled materials. In addition, the beverage cups ordered with Kids Meals will be made from 10 percent recycled materials. The new packaging will feature information on recycling and other steps kids can take to make a positive impact on the environment. “We’re taking advantage of our ability to move quickly to introduce 100 percent recycled bags and improve the profile of our cups,” said Brian Gies, vice president of marketing impact for Burger King Corp. “Burger King Corp. is always looking for ways to reduce waste and promote sustainability. Our recycling efforts will be one part of our corporate social responsibility program that is currently under development. We are happy to take this positive step to help preserve the environment.”

Source: Burger King Corporation



Le Cordon Bleu College of Culinary Arts Miami Launches the First Culinary Diploma Program Taught Fully in Spanish

In an industry first, Le Cordon Bleu College of Culinary Arts Miami announced the launch of its culinary diploma program designed exclusively for Spanish-speaking students. Solidifying a commitment to the Hispanic community, LCB Miami launched a 30-week culinary program identical to its program taught in English. The program emphasizes the skills necessary to participate, communicate and advance within the U.S. hospitality industry. “We are the first location in the U.S. to offer Spanish-speaking students the opportunity to learn Le Cordon Bleu’s world-renowned methods and traditions while also learning English language skills that will help those students be competitive in the industry,” said Le Cordon Bleu College of Culinary Arts Miami president Kelly Bozarth. “We are excited to offer this opportunity to prepare students for the dynamic field of culinary arts.” Every culinary course is taught fully in Spanish. In addition, English-language classes offering basic interpersonal and conversational skills are included in the curriculum to prepare students to compete in the U.S. job market. “Our goal is to provide Spanish speaking students with the same exceptional educational quality we offer English speaking students,” said Bozarth. “We are also starting these students on the path to English language skills and conversation to broaden their career options.” In December of 2007, the Pew Hispanic Center released a study on assimilation that said ninety one [91] percent of Hispanic adults born in the United States of immigrant parents are fluent in English. This reflects a rate of assimilation in exact pace with previous generations of non English speaking immigrant(s). The same study also found, however, that 28 percent of Hispanic immigrants said they speak only Spanish in the workplace, signaling some enclaves where English is spoken little in the United States. “Our vision is to lead the educational community in offering innovative programs to a diverse student

population,” said Bozarth. “We appeal to those who speak only Spanish and also to those who wish to improve their skill sets in English-speaking communities.”

Source: Le Cordon Bleu College of Culinary Arts Miami

Culver’s® Launches Movement Built on Irresistible Goodness, #1 Burger Chain Plans to “Culverize” the Nation

Fast-growing Culver’s® restaurants has sparked a new movement by serving fresh, tasty food with a great big side of nice and by being committed to doing it right for its guests. “Culverization” of the nation is about spreading the irresistible goodness and warm hospitality that are part of the Culver’s dining experience. “Culverization means truly treating everyone like an honored guest. Our goal is for you to walk out of Culver’s feeling better about yourself and your day,” explains President and Chief Operating Officer Phil Keiser. “Once you’ve been Culverized, you’ll know what I mean.” Culver’s, which was voted the #1 Burger Chain in America in the 2007 Consumers’ Choice in Chains Awards by Restaurants & Institutions™, has unofficially been Culverizing guests for 24 years by providing fresh, delicious food, fantastic service and genuinely warm smiles. Now, this experience can be articulated with humorous sayings that embody the Culver’s way of life, known as “Culverisms.” For example, “Happiness is measured by the scoopful” or “A kind word might make someone’s day. A kind word and a ButterBurger® definitely will” are some of the playful sayings designed to reflect Culver’s commitment to satisfaction.

Source: Culver’s restaurants

BAB, Inc. Waives Initial Franchise Fee for Xpress Units

BAB, Inc. announced its intention to aggressively pursue expansion of its new Xpress concept with a unique incentive. Beginning immediately, BAB Inc. will waive the initial franchise fee for the next twenty-five Xpress franchise agreements. This offer will expire on July 31, 2008. As previously announced, the Xpress model, including Big Apple Bagels® Xpress and My Favorite Muffin® Xpress was developed by BAB Inc. to allow other concepts to add a breakfast daypart to their existing menu. Restaurant chains or other concepts may select from a variety of BAB Inc.’s branded products including its Big Apple Bagels®, My Favorite Muffin®, and Brewster’s Coffee®. A Big Apple Bagels® Xpress just recently opened in a new SUBWAY® restaurant. Anthony Cervini, Director of Development states, “We have a system that can work in a variety of locations with a menu designed to enhance the host concept and maximize the productivity of your location without cannibalizing existing offerings.” Focused entirely on breakfast, the Xpress model allows operators to expand their hours of operation with a branded breakfast program.

Source: BAB, Inc./Big Apple Bagels®/Food Business Review

Baja Fresh to Focus on Expansion with New Prototype

Baja Fresh Mexican Grill has announced that future immediate franchise growth would be targeted to three of the most heavily populated U.S. markets: New York City, Boston and Atlanta. The new drive to franchise in these markets is being spearheaded by James Walker, Baja Fresh’s chief development officer. Expansion within these new markets will feature a new smaller footprint, less expensive prototype designed to increase speed of service.

Source: FastCasual.com



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Del Taco Restaurant Chain Coming to Minnesota

Del Taco is coming to the Twin Cities. The fast-food chain featuring Mexican-style food said today that it plans to open 32 restaurants in the Minneapolis-St. Paul area. Del Taco's restaurants are primarily on the West Coast. Recently, Del Taco opened new restaurants in Indiana and Ohio. A new restaurant in Janesville, Wis. will open in May. The chain offers tacos, burritos, quesadillas and nachos as well as hamburgers, fries and milk shakes. Founded in 1964 in California, Del Taco operates or franchises more than 500 restaurants in 16 states. It is owned by Nashville-based Sagittarius Brands Inc., which also owns the Captain D's seafood restaurant chain.

Source: Pioneer Press

McDonald's Offers 'Free Latte Friday'

McDonald's will up the ante in the coffee wars by offering free lattes during breakfast hours in the Seattle market. "Free latte Friday" will last four weeks, every Friday morning until 10:30 a.m. To correspond with the Western Washington launch, McDonald's has created a Web site: unsnobbycoffee.com. The promotion coincides with Starbucks Corp.'s offering of its latest brew, Pike Place Roast. Starbucks launched the roast nationwide with free coffee on Tuesday.

Source: The Seattle Times Company

Quiznos Founder, Wife Start Homeless Effort

To help the homeless, Rick Schaden wants to put some of the profits from national businesses into the hands of local nonprofits, a plan he calls America's Road Home. The new Denver-based foundation, launched Thursday by the Quiznos founder and his wife, Cheryl, will funnel profits from product sales and new businesses to 300 cities with 10-year plans to end homelessness. Schaden said market research shows that people would donate to groups that help the homeless if given a direct way to do it. "We saw it as a big opportunity to help," Schaden said. "We believe we can take our marketing skills and business skills and go about what we call the 'business of giving.'" The family's concern about homelessness stems from personal experience: In the last couple of years, relatives of both Schaden and his wife have lost their homes, he said. Philip Mangano, executive director for the United States Interagency Council on Homelessness, said America's Road Home "is unique because it concentrates on developing sustained revenue sources, which allows organizations already engaged in the fight to focus on solutions and not on fundraising."

Source: Rocky Mountain News

Chicago's Rosscoe's is Rosscoe's no more.

A trademark infringement lawsuit over two like-sounding restaurant names took one step toward resolution Wednesday. Darnell Johnson, owner of Chicago's Rosscoe's House of Chicken and Waffles, agreed to change the name of his Bronzeville restaurant to Chicago's Home of Chicken and Waffles. The restaurant has no affiliation with Roscoe's House of Chicken 'n Waffles, a well-known chain out of Southern California. The agreement came one day after a federal lawsuit was filed in Chicago by Herb Hudson, the longtime owner of Roscoe's in Los Angeles. Steve Rosenfeld, attorney for Hudson, said he intends to seek damages for infringing on a federal trademark. Johnson has agreed to remove all signage and menus that contain the Rosscoe's name by the close of business next Wednesday. "I'm happy as a chicken eating waffles," Johnson said. Said U.S. District Judge Samuel Der-Yeghiayan at the conclusion of the hearing Wednesday: "I see that both parties understand the issues and facts of life and none of the parties are waffling on the issue."

Source: The Chicago Tribune

Villeroy & Boch Signs on as Sponsor of the International Restaurant & Hotel Awards

Villeroy & Boch has signed on as a sponsor of the International Restaurant & Hotel Awards, which are being presented at a gala ceremony, Friday, June 13, at The Beverly Hilton in Los Angeles. The 260-year-old china company is creating a custom show plate that will help set the tables for the 1,200 industry guests who are expected to attend the inaugural award presentations. The International Restaurant & Hotel Awards were founded to celebrate the world's finest value, moderate and luxury hotels and restaurants that are committed to the highest standards of quality service and to promote the global appreciation of travel, dining and cultural exploration. With Mark DeCarlo, host of the Travel Channel's "Taste of America," emceeding, more than a dozen awards will be doled out in salute to the world's crème-de-la-crème hotels and restaurants, new and old, large and small. A Lifetime Achievement honor plus recognition of the most Eco-Friendly Hotel and Best Spa are planned, as well "Villeroy & Boch is pleased to be alongside other world-class brands such as Michelin, L'Occitane and Fodor's to sponsor what promises to be the hospitality industry's own version of the Oscars," said Mike Coggins, vice president sales and marketing, Villeroy & Boch Hotel & Restaurant Division. "There really is no other acknowledgment of achievements in our field with such an international scope."

Source: Villeroy & Boch

Burger King Whopper to Be Feted

Burger King Holdings Inc. plans to start building a new version of its restaurants this year called the Whopper Bar that will sell a wider variety of its signature hamburger in a hipper setting. The menu and size of the Whopper Bars will be smaller than a typical Burger King, but they will sell Whoppers not typically available at all times in the chain's traditional restaurants. Executives say they haven't finalized the menu, though it could include as many as 10 types of Whoppers, such as the Western Whopper, the Texas Double Whopper and the Angry Whopper, a version topped with spicy onions. One menu sketch has a section called "Pimp Your Whopper," where patrons can choose from additional toppings like jalapeno peppers, bacon and barbecue sauce. Russ Klein, Burger King's president, global marketing, strategy and innovation, said he began thinking about the concept about four years ago when he visited a Burger King in Germany that had knocked out the back of the restaurant and created a bar section. Mr. Klein said the Whopper Bar is akin to McDonald's Corp.'s creation of McCafe coffee bars, except that it is built around the chain's signature sandwich. "It's our way of stepping into the future," Mr. Klein said. The Whopper "is arguably a trademark that is bigger than Burger King itself." That was recently reinforced by an experiment where Burger King told some customers it had gotten rid of the Whopper just to see how they would react. Many customers became upset, and Burger King used the hoax for an ad campaign. The Whopper Bars' look will be distinct from a typical Burger King. Workers will place toppings on the burgers in front of the customers "to put a little more theater into it," Mr. Klein said, representing a shift for a company that has always

hidden food preparation from patrons. Early design plans call for the bars to have chrome, wood, exposed brick and plasma-screen televisions with images of fire playing on them to evoke Burger King's flame-broiled motto. Burger King plans to build Whopper Bars in places like casinos, airports and other venues with limited space. The company won't say how many it will open and where they will be. Mr. Klein said he hopes to break ground on the first location before year end. Mr. Klein said it isn't "unthinkable" that Burger King would offer beer at the Whopper Bars, particularly in some overseas markets where it already sells alcohol. "But it's premature to make any assumptions regarding the U.S. prospects," he said. Executives say the trick will be figuring out just how narrow to make the menu. Some are concerned they will irk customers if patrons can't get an item they usually get at Burger King in a Whopper Bar. "I just don't want people to walk away unhappy," said John Schaufelberger, the company's senior vice president, global product marketing and innovation. While much of the restaurant industry is struggling to lure customers, Burger King and several of its direct competitors have been increasing their sales steadily for the past few years, thanks in part to having cheap items, sharper marketing and a slew of new products that expand well beyond hamburgers into chicken, salad, snacks and dessert. Mr. Schaufelberger said Burger King, the nation's No. 2 hamburger chain by sales behind McDonald's Corp., has looked at lattes and cappuccinos but has no plans to put new equipment in the company's U.S. restaurants to offer the drinks despite McDonald's plans to do so. "Suddenly having baristas in the restaurants ... that's just not who our customer is," he said.

Source: Burger King Holdings Inc.



Moe's Expanding its Burrito Business in Baltimore Area

Moe's Southwest Grill plans to open as many as 13 new locations in Greater Baltimore by 2013. If successful, Atlanta-based Moe's would take its place alongside Chipotle, Qdoba Mexican Grill and Baja Fresh as the largest franchisors of Southwestern fare in this market. Lured by Baltimore's affluent population and the success of Moe's in Cockeysville and Annapolis, representatives of Focus Brands, which bought Moe's in August 2007, said they are looking for franchisees to operate new spots inside the beltway and along Interstate 95 between Baltimore and Washington, D.C. "After looking at how we've already done in that market, it was clear that Baltimore is a place we think we can grow," said D'Wayne Tanner, Moe's vice president of franchise sales. Tanner would not disclose sales or revenue figures for the Baltimore-area Moe's. Known for its employees' hearty "Welcome to Moe's" greeting for each customer and its quirky menu item names such as the Homewrecker burrito, Moe's has carved out a large share of the Southeast market, said Rhonda Sanderson, president of Chicago-based small-business marketing firm Sanderson & Associates Ltd. Now the company, which has more than 370 locations throughout the U.S. and Canada, is scouting the mid-Atlantic and Northeast for its latest expansion, Tanner said. In Greater Baltimore, Moe's faces competition from Chipotle and several other chains that comprise the burgeoning Southwestern fast-casual restaurant industry. Chipotle has nine area locations, while Qdoba has eight stores, Baja Fresh has six and California Tortilla has five. Qdoba and Chipotle posted U.S. sales growth of 42.9 percent and 26.2 percent, respectively, in 2007, according to Technomic Inc.'s annual report of the top U.S. restaurant chains. "There's a huge call for that segment," said Sanderson, who credited the chains' healthier food choices for their growth. "Chipotle, people love it. But there is room for a competitor."

Source: Atlanta Business Chronicle

Denny's Announces Organizational Changes; Appoints Chief Operating Officer

Denny's Corporation announced changes in its senior management structure, as part of the company's business model evolution to create a best-in-class restaurant operator and franchisor. Under the new structure, four positions will now report directly to the Chief Executive Officer and President. The direct reports now include Chief Operating Officer, Chief Financial Officer/Chief Administrative Officer, Chief Marketing Officer and Chief Brand & Concept Innovation Officer. Janis Emplit has been appointed to the position of Chief Operating Officer with responsibility for company and franchise operations as well as human resources. Emplit previously served as Denny's Senior Vice President of Sales and Company Operations. In announcing the COO appointment, Denny's Chief Executive Officer and President Nelson Marchioli said, "Janis has provided strong leadership as we successfully realigned our field management structure and continue to implement operational excellence initiatives that are focused on inspiring and motivating our people to satisfy our guests, so they come back again and again." The company also announced Mark Wolfinger, Chief Financial Officer, has assumed the additional role of Chief Administrative Officer with responsibility for legal and procurement/distribution. Additionally, Mark Chmiel, Chief Brand & Concept Innovation Officer, will serve as acting head of marketing, until a permanent appointment is made.

Source: Denny's Corporation

Uno® Restaurant Holdings Corp. Names New CFO

Uno® Restaurant Holdings Corp., has named Louie Psallidas senior vice president and chief financial officer (CFO), beginning April 7, 2008. "Louie is that rare finance executive who grew up in the restaurant business and knows it inside and out," said Frank W. Guidara, the company's chief executive officer. "He understands first-hand that Uno is as much about great food and extraordinary hospitality as it is about performance and bottom line results." In his new post with Uno, Mr. Psallidas will be responsible for all aspects of the company's financial operations, including transactions related to enhancing capitalization and long-term company growth. This is familiar terrain, as these are activities he oversaw in his previous post as senior vice-president and CFO of PGHC Holdings, Inc., the parent company of Papa Gino's and D'Angelo brands. Mr. Psallidas did, in fact, grow up in the food business. His family owned three successful Dunkin' Donuts franchises. He has worked with Fuddrucker's and Champ's brands, among others. "I'm delighted to join the team at Uno, especially under the direction of Frank Guidara, who is known as an industry visionary and innovator," said Mr. Psallidas of his new employer. "Uno has made tremendous strides over the years, and I'm looking forward to contributing my talents to such a dynamic organization."

Source: Uno Restaurant Holdings Corp.

Grill Concepts to Debut in Florida with the Grill on the Alley Restaurant in Aventura Mall, Fall 2008

Grill Concepts, Inc. announced plans for the company's seventh flagship Grill on the Alley restaurant in the internationally renowned Aventura Mall located in northeastern Miami-Dade County, Florida. Slated to open in the second half of 2008, the Aventura The Grill on the Alley will be ideally located at one of the main entrances to the mall and serve up to 250 diners with 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, all with uncompromising service. The 7,000-plus square-foot restaurant will feature both indoor and patio seating, and construction for the new restaurant is budgeted at \$3.5 million. "We look forward to debuting our flagship The Grill on the Alley restaurant in the Florida market, and we could not be more delighted with the site selection," said Philip Gay, chief executive officer. "The Aventura mall is ranked as the number one shopping destination among international visitors and is noted to be one of the top five highest grossing malls in the country in sales per square foot. Voted the Best Local Shopping Destination by the Miami Herald's 'Hot List,' Aventura Mall is esteemed as one of the most popular malls

in the region for its unrivaled balance between fine shopping and fine art, and we believe a perfect location for our celebrated fine-dining restaurant concept."

Source: Grill Concepts, Inc.

Chains find Baltimore Hot Spot Even in Cooler Market

P.F. Chang's China Bistro Inc. will invest \$12 million in three new restaurants in Greater Baltimore, including one at the White Marsh Mall to open in June. And Stoney River Legendary Steaks signed a lease this month for a 220-seat eatery that will join the expanding Towson Town Center. As some business owners brace for an economic slowdown, chain restaurants' appetite for new locations in Greater Baltimore shows little signs of shrinking. The Baltimore area is still untapped compared to other regions and has appealing demographics. Chain restaurants are not immune to consumers' frugal spending habits. But their new stores are part of a long-term growth strategy planned before any shift in the market, analysts and restaurant operators say. "Right now, it's a better time to be a chain," said Bob Goldin, a food industry consultant at Technomic Inc. Sales at chain restaurants grew 4.3 percent last year, compared with 2.6 percent in 2006, according to the Chicago firm. Casual chain restaurants fared even better. Their business increased 5.3 percent last year, more than twice the rate of independent restaurants. One of the reasons P.F. Chang's is expanding in the Baltimore area is because its year-old downtown restaurant is doing well, said Steve Marr, the company's chief development officer. The Inner Harbor store is located in a Pratt Street retail complex called Lockwood Place. Marr declined to cite revenues of individual restaurants. But he said the company's presence in Maryland and the Northeast is small compared with other parts of the country. The company has three restaurants in Maryland -- in Bethesda, Columbia and Baltimore. "We don't have a large presence in the area so we're correcting that," Marr said. P.F. Chang's has seven restaurants in its home state of Arizona. The restaurant will also open stores at Annapolis Towne Centre at Parole and Towson Town Center as part of a national plan to open 17 new restaurants this year.

Source: Baltimore Business Journal

IHG Begins Roll Out of New Style Holiday Inn Hotels Globally

IHG announces the first European Holiday Inn hotels to open as part of the US\$1 billion global re-launch of the Holiday Inn brand family. 11 Holiday Inn and Holiday Inn Express hotels across Europe, Middle East and Africa (EMEA) - plus 19 in the United States and six across Asia Pacific - have been chosen to road-test the changes to the world's biggest hotel brand, which includes new bedding, new shower experience and, for the first time, a signature scent and sound package. The first two to open in Europe, both in the UK, are the Holiday Inn London Heathrow and the Holiday Inn Farnborough. These will be followed by hotels in Germany, Italy, France, the United Arab Emirates (Dubai), China, Thailand and Australia. Following customer feedback and extensive staff training over the next few months, the hotels will be fully re-launched by July. Of the 19 hotels road-testing the changes in the US, 16 are already open, including hotels in New York, Washington and Los Angeles. The first hotels will showcase the new brand hallmarks and signage in order to gather owner and guest feedback, prior to the full global roll-out, scheduled for completion by the end of 2010. All Holiday Inn hotels will be required to implement the re-launch program to create a more contemporary brand image, increase quality and drive consistency. The re-launch will incorporate new service standards, redesigned entrance and reception areas as well as refreshed guestrooms. The new brand signage will be installed at hotels only once they have implemented the re-launch program. All 4,000* Holiday Inn hotels are expected to have implemented the re-launch program by the end of 2010. By better delivering on guest needs and expectations, IHG expects the re-launch program to allow Holiday Inn hotels to generate significantly higher revenue per available room (RevPAR), and secure an enhanced return on investment for their owners. Together with IHG, owners and franchisees will invest up to US\$1 billion over a three year period to carry out the brand re-launch to meet the required service and quality levels. IHG will invest US\$60 million as part of this to support the launch. Speaking at IHG's EMEA conference in Farnborough this week - attended by more than 1,500 hotel owners, managers and investors - Kirk Kinsell, President IHG EMEA, said: "After all the meticulous

planning and detailed dialogue with owners, it was a fantastic moment when the old Holiday Inn signage came down at both the London Heathrow and Farnborough Holiday Inns - and the new signage went up. "This is a pivotal point in a mammoth journey for the world's largest hotel brand; throughout Europe, Middle East and Africa alone we have more than 500 hotels, with more than 120 in development. The size of this task cannot be underestimated; nor the skills and expertise of everyone involved. "Stepping into one of the new reception areas, seeing, hearing and smelling the new brand is a powerful experience; one which heralds the beginning of a new era for the world's most iconic hotel brand."

Source: Holiday Inn Hotels/InterContinental Hotels Group/Ehotelier.com



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

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