



July 18, 2011

The Middleby Corporation Acquires Danfotech Inc.

The Middleby Corporation announced the acquisition of Danfotech Inc., a subsidiary of SFK systems A/S. Danfotech is a leading manufacturer of equipment for the food processing industry with annual sales of approximately \$5 million. Danfotech products include meat tenderizers, tumblers, presses and defrosting systems. With this acquisition, Middleby continues to add to its portfolio of leading brands and expand its food processing platform. Selim A. Bassoul, Middleby Chairman and Chief Executive Officer, said, "With this acquisition, we further broaden our innovative product offering to our food processing customers. The Danfotech line of products complements our existing portfolio of products under the Alkar, Cozzini, MP Equipment and Rapidpak brands. This acquisition further extends our ability to offer unique processing solutions that improve the efficiency and reduce costs of our customers' processing operations. We believe there are opportunities to significantly increase revenues of Danfotech products by leveraging the strength of our existing sales infrastructure and strong customer relationships." Statements in this press release or otherwise attributable to Middleby regarding its business which are not historical fact are forward-looking statements made pursuant to the safe harbor provisions of the Private Securities Litigation Reform Act of 1995. Middleby cautions investors that such statements are estimates of future performance and are highly dependent upon a variety of important factors that could cause actual results to differ materially from such statements. These risks are detailed from time-to-time in Middleby's SEC filings. -- Source: The Middleby Corporation

Golden Gate Capital Completes Acquisition of California Pizza Kitchen, Inc.

California Pizza Kitchen, Inc. and Golden Gate Capital announced the successful completion of the previously announced acquisition of the Company by an affiliate of Golden Gate Capital for \$18.50 per share in cash, or approximately \$470 million in the aggregate. On May 24, 2011, CPK and Golden Gate Capital announced that the Company and certain entities affiliated with Golden Gate Capital Opportunity Fund, L.P. had signed a definitive merger agreement. Pursuant to that agreement, CPK Merger Sub Inc. commenced a tender offer on June 8, 2011 to acquire all outstanding shares of the Company at a price of \$18.50 per share, net to the seller in cash. That tender offer expired at midnight, New York City time, on Wednesday, July 6, 2011. The depository has advised that, as of the offer's expiration, 21,586,341 shares of common stock of the Company had been validly tendered and not withdrawn in the tender offer, including 765,999 shares that had been tendered pursuant to notices of guaranteed delivery, which, when added to the shares to be acquired by CPK Merger Sub Inc. pursuant to the support agreements with executives, represent approximately 88% of the outstanding shares of the Company after giving effect to the transfer of shares pursuant to the support agreements. All of such shares have been accepted for payment by CPK Merger Sub Inc. -- Source: California Pizza Kitchen, Inc.

Wendy's Seals Deal to Sell Arby's, Change Name.

Wendy's has a new corporate name to go with an old corporate face. Atlanta-based Wendy's/Arby's Group Inc. is now known as the Wendy's Co. The company completed the \$430 million sale of Arby's to Roark Capital Group and will move forward with Wendy's as its only restaurant responsibility. With the name change, the red-pigtailed cartoon visage of Wendy herself, returns to the corporate logo. Wendy's continues to trade on the New York Stock

Exchange as WEN. Spokesman Bob Bertini said post-Arby's personnel and headquarters plans still are being finalized. With the sale of Arby's, the Dublin headquarters for Wendy's could see the return of jobs that left the suburb for the new Atlanta corporate offices in 2008. Bertini said Atlanta-based employees will continue to provide shared services in areas like accounting, information technology and human resources, for both brands for at least 90 days as part of the transition plan. -- Source: Business First

Subway Eyes Further China Expansion. Number of Sandwich-Maker Outlets Now Higher than McDonald's

After overtaking McDonald's Corporation in the number of its outlets globally, US fast food giant Subway now aims to more than double the figure in China over the next five years. It also wants to become more localized, capitalizing on China's huge urbanization program and the fast-growing catering industry. The sandwich maker currently has 220 stores in China and 73 in Beijing. "By the end of this year, we expect to have more than 90 stores in Beijing and nearly 300 in China. By 2015 there will be 180 stores in Beijing and well over 600 stores in China," said Alexander Moody-Stuart, Subway franchise's general agent in Beijing. "The total sales revenue for Subway in Beijing grew more than 40 percent year-on-year in 2010 and we expect to see similar rates of growth continue over the next two years," said Moody-Stuart. According to the agent, Subway's sales in Beijing increased by an average of 25 percent over the last five years. The US-based franchise brand started its business in China in 1995 with a few stores targeting areas with lots of foreigners. The brand began to grow more quickly from 2004, said Moody-Stuart, who was an accountant in London before becoming a Subway agent for Beijing in 2006. Subway has become very popular among many Beijing office staff. According to Luo Tian, a saleswoman in Beijing's Yinghua Dongjie store, she usually sells 200 sandwiches every Wednesday lunchtime, when the shop offers a "buy one, get one free" service. "People queue several meters outside the doors," she said. The outlets, which make sandwiches to order, attract many people who like to see their meal prepared in front of them from a diversity of ingredients and who can choose to eat in or take it away. "We also plan to open our first drive-through locations," Moody-Stuart added. Subway has entered 16 Chinese major cities. Moody-Stuart said the company has no clear plans to enter small cities or the countryside on account of cost considerations. China has become a competitive market for fast food brands because of the huge city populations brought about by rapid urbanization in recent years. YUM! Stores (China) Investment Company, which owns more than 3,000 KFCs and 500 Pizza Huts, received \$4.1 billion in sales revenue in 2010, which was about 36.5 percent of the group's global sales last year. "Fast food has become the first choice for 85 percent of Chinese city dwellers when they want to eat out," said Bian Jiang, vice-general-secretary of the China Cuisine Association, who is responsible for the fast food department of the organization. According to him, the size of China's fast food market is about 540 billion yuan and has been growing at a speed of 18 percent year-on-year. "I believe the next five years will be a crucial time for China's fast food industry because the urbanization progress is accelerating and more people have come to live in cities. They are often in a hurry but demand good hygiene standards," said Bian. -- Source: China Daily

US Chain Selling 'Healthy' Mexican Plans European Expansion

The organic fast food chain Chipotle Mexican Grill is set to conquer Europe with its brand of "healthy" food. It has hired the property agent Michael Peddar & Co to search for sites in London and the UK. The US chain is listed and has 1,100 sites in the US and Canada. After a low key trial in London's Charing Cross last year, it is confident the chain will be a success.

It is also in talks to open restaurants in Paris and Munich. In London, it has just signed up for its second site – a 50-cover restaurant in Baker Street, formerly a building society, on a site owned by the Labour peer Lord Paul. Michael Peddar & Co is in the process of finding the next four to five sites for the chain this year. -- Source: The Independent, London, UK

Pizza Inn Lands in Arkansas

Pizza Inn is now available in Springdale, Arkansas. A new Pizza Inn delivery/carryout location opened at 1395 E. Henri De Tonti Blvd., and marks the fifth location for multi-unit franchise owner Flash Market Convenience stores. As part of a large travel center, the Springdale Pizza Inn is offering customers delivery and carryout service from a full menu, including large-sized pizzas made with fresh dough that can feed the whole family. "Pizza Inn allows us to offer more than the personal pan pizza people think of at a local convenience store," says Keith Brown of Flash Market. "Whether you need something delivered quickly, you want to pick up dinner on the way home, or you're traveling through town on the busy interstate, we are presenting a delicious experience in our travel center with

Pizza Inn's fresh ingredients and great prices." With the Springdale opening, Flash Market now operates Pizza Inn locations in Tennessee, Arkansas, and Alabama, and the company plans to open additional sites in the coming months. Flash Market stores also feature Subway, Quiznos, Baskin Robbins, and Dairy Queen franchises in their convenience stores and travel plazas. "This is a tremendous opportunity to introduce Pizza Inn to new customers in Springdale as well as busy travelers who want exceptional food," says Charlie Morrison, CEO of Pizza Inn. "Flash Market has a long history of success with high profile franchise brands and we are excited to be part of that success." -- Source: QSR.com



Hilton Plans to End Franchise Deal with Las Vegas Hilton

Is an iconic Las Vegas hotel brand name looking for a new home? It was looking more likely Wednesday after Hilton Worldwide notified the owner of the famed Las Vegas Hilton that it plans to terminate its franchise license agreement by the end of the year. Hilton Worldwide said that as of Jan. 1, its franchise agreement with Colony Resorts LVH Acquisitions LLC, owner and operator of the Las Vegas Hilton, will have been terminated, forcing the off-Strip hotel to give up the Hilton name and loyalty program. "We have been in discussions with other major hotel brands and may re-engage with Hilton in the coming months regarding a new franchise agreement," said Owen Blinksilver, a spokesman for the Las Vegas Hilton. "We expect to announce an affiliation with a major hotel chain before year's end." Blinksilver said Hilton's notification would not "impact the management, ownership, operations, employees, vendor or guest services at our hotel." "Pursuant to the license agreement, either party may terminate the agreement without cause at any time after Jan. 1, 2011. Unless the parties reach an agreement otherwise, the effective date of the termination will be Jan. 1, 2012," according to a Colony Resorts filing with the Securities and Exchange Commission. Neither Hilton Worldwide nor Colony Resorts would comment on the reasons for terminating what will be an eight-year business relationship at the end of the current contract. The current three-year license, signed in 2009, gives Colony Resorts the right to use the Hilton brand, and it links the property to Hilton's "Honors" loyalty program. -- Source: lvrj.com

Bob Evans Remodels 44 Michigan, Ohio Locations

Columbus, Ohio-based Bob Evans Farms Inc. announced plans to extend its "Farm-Fresh Refresh" renovation project to 44 locations in the Detroit and Toledo, Ohio, areas. The renovations are expected to begin in August 2011 and be finished by November 2011. The new stores will include a bakery, a carry-out area and a redesigned retail area. The stores also will feature murals in the entryway depicting the heritage of Bob Evans and an updated dining room with modern furnishings, light fixtures and brighter color schemes. During fiscal 2012, the company plans to remodel a total of 56 Bob Evans restaurants and complete six new locations. Currently, Bob Evans operates 563 restaurants in 18 states. -- Source: Display and Design Ideas Magazine

Darden gives Second Harvest \$750,000

Darden Restaurants Inc. donated \$750,000 to Second Harvest Food Bank of Central Florida for its \$15 million campaign to build a new headquarters. The campaign is intended to fund construction of a 100,000-square-foot building that will include a kitchen named the Darden Community Kitchen. Darden Restaurants Inc. Foundation donated \$500,000; The Capital Grille gave \$50,000 and Darden contributed \$200,000. "We see the needs of organizations like Second Harvest every day in the communities where we do business across the country," said Drew Madsen, president and chief operating officer of Darden, in a prepared statement. Second Harvest's new building will house the organization's main offices, a distribution center, volunteer workspace, freezer, cooler and

meeting space that can be used by other nonprofit groups. Besides providing high-quality, high-volume meals, the kitchen will provide nutrition education and training for the estimated 1.3 million jobs the restaurant industry is expected to create nationwide by 2020. -- Source: Orlando Business Journal

Joel Bulger is Named Church's Chicken Senior Vice President, Brand Marketing

Church's Chicken announced that Joel Bulger has joined the company as Senior Vice President of Brand Marketing for the quick service restaurant chain. Mr. Bulger's responsibilities will include brand positioning and management, advertising and promotions. "Joel's solid track record and expertise in QSR, casual dining and fast casual restaurants will be invaluable as we position our brand for future growth," said Mel Deane, CEO, Church's Chicken. Bulger joins Church's from Focus Brands where he was vice president of brand marketing for Moe's Southwest Grill. In that role he was responsible for all national marketing, advertising, media and targeted consumer research for the 430 unit brand. Prior to Focus Brands, Mr. Bulger held various positions at Darden Restaurants, Inc., Wendy's International and The Coca-Cola Company. -- Source: Church's Chicken®

Red Bluff Restaurants Welcome Stricter Regulations

Food safety practices are nothing new, as every diner expects to have meals prepared properly and under sanitary conditions. For a few years, the state has required at least the owner or an employee of restaurants and businesses that serve food to have a food safety certification. Now the requirement is being extended to all employees who handle or serve food. Local restaurant owners welcome the law saying it only further helps them gain trust with customers and reinforces the practices they already have in place. Tremont Cafe and Creamery Owner Jennifer Smith, who has been in the food service business for more than 30 years, remains up to date on her training and recently sent her staff of about 15 to a certification training. While the training course covered practices that the staff was already implementing it served as a reminder for them to follow the rules, Smith said. It made them more conscious of avoiding bad habits that could lead to cross contamination. "We do this every day, so sometimes we're not aware that customers are watching us and they can see everything we do," Smith said. "It makes us aware of the things and habits that we have, like touching our face or our hair, and makes us realize we can't do that when we're working around food." Crystal Potter, owner of Hal's Eat 'Em Up, said while customers don't typically ask workers if they are certified, knowing that everyone has to be certified provides customers with assurance that their food is being properly handled. "It's really a good law because our customers know that everyone who is touching their food has proper knowledge on safe food handling," she said. Her staff of 10 are all certified, she said. Those who want to get certified will have to attend a training provided by an accredited trainer, which includes passing a test at the end of the session. The certificate, or food handler card, is valid for three years before it has to be renewed. Most employers will pay for their employees to be certified, so the new requirement should not be a burden to those seeking employment in the food service field, said Roberto Reyes, owner of Los Mariachis. "We want people who want to work," Reyes said. "Just because they're not certified does not mean they're not going to get hired. We'll work with them to help them get their certificate." -- Source: MercuryNews.com

McDonald's Expands in 'Untapped' NZ

Fast food chain McDonald's plans to develop nine new restaurants in New Zealand and hire an extra 4000 people. Brett Watson, McDonald's development director, told the Property Council's retail conference in Auckland yesterday about its big growth strategy and how the global business viewed New Zealand as having untapped potential. McDonald's is planning to open one of the nine outlets around Britomart in Auckland in time for the Rugby World Cup, he said. Simon Kenny, McDonald's national communication manager, could only disclose two of the new locations. "We have the new Balmoral and Britomart restaurants scheduled to open in the next two to three months. The Britomart site is at the bottom of the Mercure Hotel on the corner of Galway St and Queen St. "The others are commercially sensitive at the moment but 170 restaurants by the end of 2012 is a target," Kenny said. The past few months have already seen big expansion, mainly in the North Island. McDonald's opened a free-standing outlet at Albany this month. In May, it opened at Lunn Ave, Mt Wellington. Last year, it opened in Taumarunui, Paeroa, Whangaparaoa, Frankton at Queenstown, Bunny St in Wellington, Te Puke, The Base in Hamilton, Mt Maunganui, Te Ngae in Rotorua, Constellation Drive on the North Shore and Richmond at Nelson. McDonald's will soon introduce a new breakfast offering, Watson said. Franchisees needed about \$1 million cash to establish a McDonald's. That would allow them to purchase the business for about \$350,000 and have enough money to establish and run it. McDonald's looked for a 20-year commitment from franchisees. It wants to grow the restaurant

numbers per franchisee. Watson described how McDonald's keeps an eye on the franchises, sending "mystery shoppers" to outlets to check standards, speed, greetings and experience. McDonald's sought locations with high visibility, easy access, busy trade, high traffic volumes and prominent signage. Properties fall into three classes: drive-throughs of varying store size to reflect different markets; instores with high pedestrian counts such as Britomart and Wellington's Bunny St; and foodcourts in malls. But wage rates were a concern, Watson said. Unite Union began negotiating with McDonald's and Burger King in March, seeking \$15 an hour from McDonald's and better conditions including extended security of hours, recognition of full-time positions and pay allowances for graveyard shifts. -- Source: nzherald.co.nz



Carl's Jr. Marks 70th Anniversary, Plans Indonesian Growth

CKE Restaurants Inc.'s Carl's Jr. brand is commemorating its 70th anniversary this month with celebrations and online giveaways. Carl's Jr. is rewarding customers through a variety of social media channels. Guests who sign up to receive email offers from Carl's Jr. by July 14 will receive an email with a printable coupon for a 70-cent Famous Star, redeemable one day only, July 17. Fans can also take a nostalgic tour on Carl's Jr. social media sites. A 70th anniversary video can be viewed on the Carl's Jr. YouTube channel, while vintage photos and memorabilia will be featured on the brand's Facebook and Flickr pages. Fans are encouraged to post their photos, videos and fond memories of Carl's Jr., as well. Followers on Twitter can win random giveaways including commemorative 70th anniversary T-shirts or free food items. Commemorative T-shirts, featuring the brand's iconic Happy Star mascot through the years, are also available on The Wheel of Awesome. A 70th Anniversary party will be held from 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. July 15, on the corner of Florence and Central in Los Angeles, the site of Carl Karcher's first hot dog cart. The Carl's Jr. food truck, the Star Diner, will be on hand serving chili dogs, just as Karcher did on the same site 70 years ago. An additional celebration will be held on July 17, at the site of Carl Karcher's star on the Anaheim/Orange County Walk of Stars from 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. in Anaheim, Calif. "Carl's Jr. has a rich history, loyal fans and an innovative spirit," said Andrew F. Puzder, CEO for CKE Restaurants. "We're proud to take a look back at our history and bring it to life in a modern way that gets fans involved in the celebration. We're asking fans to share their stories and photos showing their favorite Carl's Jr. memories." The company began in Los Angeles when an Ohio farmer's son named Carl Karcher was delivering baked goods. Seeing how well business was doing at one of his stops – a hot dog cart at the corner of Florence and Central – Carl and his wife, Margaret, borrowed \$311 on their Plymouth automobile and added \$15 in savings to purchase the business. From their new cart, they sold hot dogs, chili dogs and tamales for a dime, and soda for a nickel. On his first day of business, July 17, 1941, Carl N. Karcher took in \$14.75. Last year, his namesake CKE Restaurants Inc. earned revenues of more than \$1.3 billion. Carl's Jr. plans Indonesian expansion Carl's Jr. expects to have an expanded presence in Indonesia throughout the next six years. According to the Jakarta Post, the chain plans to open 25 new units in the country, focusing mostly on Jakarta, Bandung and Bali. The company recently opened its fourth store in Indonesia. The first unit opened there in 2010. Carl's Jr. Indonesia restaurants feature all-you-can-drink beverage bars and partial table service. Source: -- QSRweb.com

Publix Completes Crispers Sale

Publix Super Markets has finalized its sale of Crispers LLC, a Lakeland-based fast-casual restaurant chain, to Healthy Food Concepts LLC. Founded in 1989, Crispers operates 36 locations across Florida. Publix announced in May that it had signed a deal to sell the fresh salads, soups and sandwiches restaurant company, which it purchased in February 2007. Terms of the deal were not disclosed. Healthy Food Concepts is a new company formed by Boyne

Capital, a private investment group. The company said it hopes to grow Crispers in Florida, as well as outside the Sunshine State. Crispers said it will offer all Publix employees a 10 percent discount. Lakeland-based Publix had 2010 sales of \$25.1 billion, and currently has 1,034 stores in Florida, Georgia, South Carolina, Alabama and Tennessee. -- Source: South Florida Business Journal

Bankruptcy for NYC Eatery Selling \$175 Burgers. Into the Meat Grinder Goes Wall Street Burger Shoppe, Whose Extra-Pricey Blend of Kobe Beef, Black Truffles and Foie-Gras Apparently Failed to Grab Customers

The Wall Street Burger Shoppe made international headlines several years ago when it put a \$175 burger on its menu. Today, the 112-seat joint in the financial district is closed, filing for Chapter 7 bankruptcy protection on Tuesday, just three years after opening. Chef and owner Kevin O'Connell, who launched a number of other notable eateries, including Pop Restaurant, Pop Burger, Pizza Bar and Veranda, did not respond to a request for comment. His lawyer, Tanya Dwyer, said the restaurant, at 30 Wall St., was not profitable. Mr. O'Connell is the sole owner of Burger Shoppe, having bought out a business partner earlier this year. There were other partners in the restaurant as well, Ms. Dwyer added, but they were "not able to make a go of it," and pulled out of the business earlier. Mr. O'Connell has worked under prominent chefs Daniel Boulud, David Burke and Patrick Clark, according to a website for his eponymous consulting business. The bankruptcy filing for his Burger Shoppe listed liabilities of up to \$500,000 and assets of up to \$50,000. The restaurant's biggest creditors appear to be its landlord and the New York state Department of Taxation and Finance, although a more detailed bankruptcy document will be filed next week and disclose more information about the restaurant's problems, Ms. Dwyer said. The restaurant made a splash shortly after it opened with the ultra-pricey burger made out of Kobe beef, black truffles and foie-gras. Called the Richard Nouveau Burger, it was offered in the more upscale upstairs dining room of the restaurant, which had a quick-service counter on the ground floor. The Burger Shoppe's demise, however, does not reflect New Yorker's waning appetite for burgers, said restaurant guide publisher Tim Zagat. "The economy has been driving this trend for the past three years," said Mr. Zagat. "And I don't see that disappearing yet." -- Source: Crain Communications Inc.

Yogurt Mountain Opens 32nd Self-Serve Frozen Yogurt Store in Bradenton, FL

Yogurt Mountain, LLC, today announced that America's Favorite Yogurt Store™, Yogurt Mountain®, has opened a new store in Bradenton, FL, at the Cortez Plaza shopping center. The new location is at 1562 Cortez Road West, Bradenton, FL 34205. "Bradenton marks our 32nd store," commented David Kahn, President and CEO of Yogurt Mountain, LLC. "We are establishing a significant footprint in the Florida market and are excited to be adding our 7th frozen yogurt location in the area." -- Source: Yogurt Mountain®

Chick-fil-A, In-N-Out Rank Tops with Customers, According to Survey

Chick-fil-A ranks as the nation's top chicken chain for both food and service, according to a survey of fast food diners by Consumer Reports. But the survey revealed dissatisfaction with some of the country's biggest fast food brands. McDonald's joined Burger King, KFC and Taco Bell at or near the bottom of the rankings for burgers, chicken and Mexican food, respectively. All were dinged for uninspiring food and mediocre service. No more than 11 percent of patrons rated the food at those chains "excellent." Other major chains with relatively low scores included Arby's, Quiznos, Domino's Pizza and Pizza Hut. Many restaurants posted better scores for speed and politeness than for food in the online survey of nearly 37,000 subscribers. In-N-Out Burger was No. 1 among all 53 fast-food chains and in the burger category. Chipotle Mexican Grill topped the Mexican category, Papa Murphy's Take 'N' Bake Pizza led pizza chains and Jason's Deli ranked best in the sandwich/sub category. Low prices allowed fast-food restaurants to push through the recession with less damage than full-service restaurants. More than half of survey respondents said they picked a particular fast-food restaurant because of low prices. But fewer than one in five said they got excellent value. "Chains like McDonald's and Taco Bell boast supersized values, but consumers don't necessarily think they offer much bang for the buck," said Tod Marks, senior projects editor for Consumer Reports. College Park-based Chick-fil-A topped seven other chicken chains, posting "outstanding scores for politeness of staff, and high marks for food, value, and speed of service," Consumer Reports said. The rankings were released the same day a major trade group said the restaurant industry's outlook deteriorated in May. The National Restaurant Association reported slower traffic, softer sales at established restaurants and an erosion of optimism among operators. Fast food companies have added low-calorie options, but the survey showed diners are reluctant to try them. Only 13 percent said they had eaten a healthful meal during their most recent visit. At pizza

establishments, the figure dropped to 4 percent. -- Source: The Atlanta Journal-Constitution

Salsarita's New Growth Strategy. New CEO Phil Friedman Says he Will Grow Salsarita's Presence in Existing Markets Rather than Expand to New Territories

New CEO Phil Friedman says he will grow Salsarita's presence in existing markets rather than expand to new territories. A week after the announcement that he'd acquired Salsarita's Fresh Cantina, former McAlister's Deli CEO Phil Friedman says his plan for the fast casual is to saturate its existing markets. Friedman says his strategy is to "exploit" Salsarita's presence in the Southeastern U.S., where the majority of the chain's 80 stores are located. "We want to create even greater brand awareness and brand commitment in our existing markets," says Friedman, who purchased Salsarita's from founder Bruce Willette for an undisclosed amount. An industry veteran, Friedman has a reputation for big brand expansion, having grown McAlister's from 27 to 300 restaurants during his tenure. After leaving McAlister's in 2010, Friedman formed an acquisition company and began searching for opportunities in the fast-casual sector. "I started to get the word out that I was looking for small franchise chains, preferably with the founder in place, that needed a sense of professional experience and leadership skills to take what had been developed and really exploit it," he says. In Salsarita's, Friedman says he found his "prototype acquisition"—a young franchise company that was established in several markets but seemed to need the guidance of experience to reach its potential. Despite the high level of competition it faces from other fast-casual Mexican chains like Chipotle and Moe's Southwest Grill, Friedman says Salsarita's category, brand, and clientele all made it an appealing acquisition. "I liked the orientation of the brand, which is fresh, made-every-day food, and the variety of the menu," he says. "I also liked traveling around and seeing the clientele. It's a great young-professional demographic, very similar to McAlister's." Friedman says he also saw "significant potential" at Salsarita's to apply his skills to taking the company to the next level. One aspect he intends to focus on is Salsarita's franchise support system. "We believe it is always easier, more efficient, and smarter to grow in the markets where the consumer already knows you and to deepen the opportunities that are there." "I very much believe in and rely on franchise relationships," says Friedman, who visited eight franchisees in five different markets in his first week of ownership. "I think [the franchisees] pretty well know there's going to be a big change. That change is we're committed to their success. We, the owners, only win if the franchisees win." In addition to Friedman, former CEO and president of Fresh Concepts Larry Reinstein, another fast-casual veteran, will join Salarita's executive team as president and COO. In step with Friedman's expansion goals, Reinstein says there is "tremendous opportunity" for Salsarita's to grow in its existing markets. "We believe it is always easier, more efficient, and smarter to grow in the markets where the consumer already knows you and to deepen the opportunities that are there," he says. "We see ourselves ultimately continuing to grow everywhere in the United States. But we believe our best approach for right now is to get our [existing] franchisees to grow with us." Salsarita's will open new corporate and franchise locations, Reinstein says, but will also make a big push to open nontraditional locations across the Southeast. "Of our 78 franchise locations, 20-plus are in nontraditional locations, in universities, in businesses, and in airports," Reinstein says. "We see continual growth going on in that category, as well as in the traditional franchise locations." The emphasis on nontraditional locations—particularly college campuses—is a smart way to earn brand loyalty among young consumers, says Todd Semrau, owner of Atlanta-based Urban Eats Consulting Group. "Clearly there are a lot of competitors in our category," Reinstein says. "I see the challenge as an opportunity. Our goal is to be the best." -- Source: QSRmagazine.com

TableTop Media, LLC., Names Timothy Leslie as Vice President of Client Services. The Brinker International Veteran Will Apply His More Than 20 Years of Experience with Chili's Restaurants to Maximizing Client Success Through the Implementation of TableTop Media's Ziosk

TableTop Media, LLC, creators of the Ziosk™, the first pay-on-demand and digital promotion device for the restaurant industry, announced the appointment of Timothy Leslie as Vice President of Client Services. Mr. Leslie is charged with leading and managing TableTop Media's client programs within the restaurant. He will focus on deployment, training and operational excellence. "We are excited to have Tim on our team. Tim is a tough critic and the fact that he has chosen to come aboard should let everyone know we have a terrific product. He will stop at nothing short of excellence." Jack Baum, Chairman and Chief Operating Officer of TableTop Media, stated, "Tim understands the restaurant business from the guest's perspective as well as the restaurant's perspective. He shares our passion for innovation and improving guest satisfaction. He knows that guest satisfaction is the ultimate benefit of our Ziosk solution and it leads to increased frequency and a win-win for both the restaurants and their guests." Mr.

Leslie joins TableTop after serving as Research and Development Director at Brinker International. At Brinker he provided leadership in taking innovation projects from incomplete ideas to practical and efficient initiatives. Mr. Leslie developed and implemented sustainable, scalable operations solutions for both the Chili's and On the Border restaurant brands. As part of TableTop Media, he will manage client relationships and assist clients in developing effective strategies. Mr. Leslie will also execute programs that drive operations and best practices with the Ziosk and ensure that TableTop Media clients realize tremendous ROI results. Mr. Baum added, "We are excited to have Tim on our team. Tim is a tough critic and the fact that he has chosen to come aboard should let everyone know we have a terrific product. He will stop at nothing short of excellence." -- Source: TableTop Media, LLC



Jay-Z Brings 40/40 Restaurant Franchise to London

U.S. rapper Jay-Z plans to bring his 40/40 restaurant and bar franchise to London next year in a deal which will team him up with England and Chelsea soccer player Ashley Cole. The NVA Entertainment Group, which brokered the multi-million pound (dollar) deal, said that The 40/40 London will be the first project of a partnership between Jay-Z and Cole that will include a number of new ventures. "London is one of the most vibrant and exciting cities in the world and the perfect location for our new venue," Jay-Z said in an NVA statement emailed to Reuters. "I'm excited about working with Ashley and NVA Entertainment Group on a range of new projects and The 40/40 London is going to be the hottest place in town." The management team will be appointing a top chef to deliver a modern American-themed menu for the restaurant/bar that will feature top DJ's and A-list artists. A shortlist of three potential sites is now under consideration with a final decision on location expected in August, NVA said. The 40/40 London will give first option on jobs to talented, long-term unemployed young people. Each month a percentage of profits from the project will go to local youth charities for music and sport projects in deprived communities. "I am delighted to be working with Jay Z I have grown up listening to his music and now to be doing business with him is amazing and the projects we do will be delivering much needed funds back into sport and music on a local community level as well as helping talented young people get back to work," Cole said in the statement. -- Source: Reuters

Le Meridien Unveils Innovative Lobby Concept 'Le Meridien Hub'

Le Méridien Hotels & Resorts introduced its lobby concept, "Le Méridien Hub," which re-interprets the hotel brand's lobbies as social gathering places for creative people to converse, debate and exchange. The Hub concept further builds on Le Méridien brand's award-winning Arrival experience and coffee culture, which have both been implemented successfully worldwide. The Hub offers both guests and locals a creative atmosphere where contemporary, curated artwork sets the environment. Members of LM100, a group of cultural innovators of mixed generations and interdisciplinary artistic fields, identified by Le Méridien Cultural Curator Jerome Sans, have contributed their creativity to enhance the Hub experience. "Starwood has long been an innovator in the transformation of the traditional hotel lobby," said Eva Ziegler, Global Brand Leader, Le Méridien and W Hotels Worldwide. "More than 12 years ago when Starwood launched the W brand, our lobbies became Living Rooms, and soon after, Sheraton brought people together with the Link@Sheraton. Most recently, the Aloft brand's lobbies have been designed to draw people out of their rooms through open floor plans and modular, flexible seating. Today, we are proud to reveal Le Méridien brand's Hub concept, which will further evolve our new brand direction, designed to appeal to the creative class." Le Méridien Barcelona is the first hotel to fully execute the Hub experience, while other Hubs will launch throughout the year in Le Méridien hotels globally. Designed to promote dialogue, awaken curiosity and stimulate thinking, the Hub can be divided into three experience zones: Arrival Experience; Interaction Zone, and Latitude Bar. -- Source: Le Méridien

Burger King Canada Opens Three New 20/20 Locations

As part of Burger King's expansion plan, Burger King Restaurants of Canada Inc. has announced the grand opening of three new restaurants at the Highway 401 service centers featuring the company's new 20/20 global restaurant design. The locations are Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) Silver certified, and are operated by HostKilmer Service Centres, a partnership between HMSHost and Kilmer Van Nostrand. "These new 20/20 Burger King restaurants are just the beginning for our ambitious expansion plans throughout Canada," said Raj Varman, general manager, Burger King Restaurants of Canada Inc. Throughout the next three to five years, Burger King Restaurants of Canada Inc. will open 150 new 20/20 locations across the country, adding to the chain's current 300 restaurants in the country. The 20/20 image has distinctive graphics and a variety of self-seating options for guests. -- Source: QSRWeb.com

Salad Creations Expands to Florida Campuses

Salad Creations is expanding its presence on college campuses with ARAMARK, an award-winning, global food services company. Under the partnership, a new Salad Creations opened in January 2011 on Florida State University's campus and a subsequent University of Florida location is scheduled to open in August 2011. Additional campus locations are also in development. "Salad Creations is the ideal solution for the student, faculty member or guest who is tired of typical fast food and is searching for a delicious, quick and nutritious alternative," said Jeff Levine Salad Creations CEO and president. "Our guests should feel good about what they eat, which is why we only use the freshest seasonal ingredients possible." In addition to a "Create Your Own Salad" option, Salad Creations offers more than 21 chef-inspired salads and wraps, plus a variety of daily soup specials. A number of locations also offer Panini sandwiches and a weekly rotation of frozen yogurt flavors. "We know from our proprietary research that 60 percent of college students are looking for healthy dining choices," said Ann Marie Solomon, ARAMARK's vice president of National Brand Partnerships. "We are excited to work with Salad Creations to offer a fresh and relevant option across our campus dining portfolio." -- Source: FstCasual.com



Whataburger Taps New CEO to Oversee Restaurant Company

Whataburger Restaurants LP is promoting Preston Atkinson to chief executive officer of the San Antonio-based hamburger chain. Atkinson, who is currently president and chief operating officer, will assume the CEO duties effective Jan. 1, 2012. Current Chairman and CEO Tom Dobson is relinquishing his CEO responsibilities but will remain chairman of the board. Whataburger was founded by Harmon Dobson as a small roadside hamburger stand in Corpus Christi. Tom Dobson, along with his sister, Lynne, and brother, Hugh, still control the family-owned business. Atkinson has worked for Whataburger for more than 15 years. Throughout his career, he has held the positions of senior vice president of development, chief development officer, and executive vice president and chief operating officer. In 2007, he became president and chief operating officer. San Antonio-based Whataburger operates 720 stores in 10 states and has annual sales of more than \$1 billion. The company has 20,000 employees. -- Source: San Antonio Business Journal

Ruby Tuesday Appoints Steven Becker and Matthew Drapkin to the Board of Directors

Ruby Tuesday, Inc., Becker Drapkin Management, L.P. , and Carlson Capital, L.P. announced that Steven R. Becker and Matthew A. Drapkin have been appointed as independent members of the Board of Directors of Ruby Tuesday, effective June 30, 2011. In connection with the appointment of Messrs. Becker and Drapkin to the Board of Ruby Tuesday, Becker Drapkin has agreed to withdraw its separate nomination of Mr. Becker, Mr. Drapkin, and Michael Brodsky to the Board of Directors and to vote in favor of each of the Board's nominees for election at the 2011 Annual Meeting of Shareholders. The Company will increase the size of its Board from eight to nine members with the appointment of Messrs. Becker and Drapkin, and the vacancy of one Board seat. Current Board member R. Brad Martin has retired from the Company's Board of Directors effective June 30, 2011. "I would like to express our gratitude to Brad for his commitment to our Board over the last three years, including his contributions which have helped shape many of our current strategies," said Founder, Chairman, and CEO Sandy Beall.

Beall also added, "Steve, Matt, and I recently met in person, and have subsequently worked quickly and cordially to reach a win/win scenario which we believe is in the best interests of our shareholders. I am pleased to welcome both Steve and Matt to our Board of Directors and look forward to their future contributions to Ruby Tuesday as we continue to make progress on our strategic plans to create long-term value for our shareholders. Steve's and Matt's appointment to the Board will further enhance the quality of our corporate governance, in addition to bringing potential new ideas to the table given their previous Board experiences." "We appreciate the hard work Sandy and the Board put forth to reach a fair and expeditious settlement. We believe that Ruby Tuesday has a unique set of valuable assets and we look forward to working with Sandy, his team, and the Board to deliver shareholder value," said Mr. Becker. -- Source: Ruby Tuesday, Inc.

Jack Truong Appointed Head of Major Appliances North America at Electrolux

Jack Truong is appointed new President and CEO of Electrolux Major Appliances North America and Executive Vice President of AB Electrolux, succeeding Kevin Scott, who will leave Electrolux after eight years with the company. Truong will report to Electrolux President and CEO Keith McLoughlin and be a member of Group Management. Truong previously held the position of Vice President and General Manager, Global Construction and Home Improvement Division of 3M Company. Jack Truong has held this most recent role since 2009. He enjoyed a successful career with 3M over the past 22 years and held several senior management positions based in the US, Europe and Asia. 3M is a global leader, active in a wide variety of markets from health care and personal safety to office products and electronics. Truong, born in 1962, holds a Ph.D. in chemical engineering from the Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute in Troy, New York. Kevin Scott joined Electrolux in 2003 as Vice President and General Manager of the Consumer Services Group in Major Appliances North America. He transitioned in 2006 to Vice President and General Manager of the refrigeration business. Scott was responsible for the establishment of the Group's largest refrigerator factory in Mexico and was instrumental in the launch of the Electrolux brand in North America. In 2009, Scott was appointed President and CEO of Major Appliances North America and Executive Vice President of AB Electrolux. "We are pleased to welcome Jack Truong to Electrolux. At 3M he demonstrated the ability to accelerate growth by applying innovative technologies and marketing to meet the ever-changing consumers' needs. His experience and track record will be crucial in helping to ensure our long-term growth with an intense focus on strong brands, high-impact new products and cost efficiency – all of which are key elements of the Electrolux strategy," says Keith McLoughlin, Electrolux President and CEO. "We also want to thank Kevin Scott for his important contributions to Electrolux. He has strengthened our business and our team in North America, and has successfully pursued our efforts to more effectively operate as a single company within the region." -- Source: Electrolux Press Hotline

Indian Pizza Huts Growing – Literally

Pizza Hut is getting bigger in India. According to India Retailing, all recent and any future Pizza Hut locations will be up to 50 percent larger. "We now have 3,000-square-foot stores compared with our older stores that are 2,000 square feet," said Sandeep Kataria, chief marketing officer for Pizza Hut parent company Yum! Brands Inc. Delhi-based Devyani International India runs the Yum! -owned Pizza Hut in India and has 170 outlets of the food retailing brand across the country. The focus for Yum! in India is on expanding Pizza Hut through two formats: home delivery outlets and casual dining formats, Kataria said. It plans to open 300 Pizza Hut Delivery outlets and 150 Pizza Hut restaurants by 2015. -- Source: PizzaMarketPlace.com

Teriyaki Experience Splashes into Puerto Rico

Teriyaki Experience has made an international splash over the past nearly 25 years with customers who are seeking quick and healthy Japanese fast food. On the heels of the company's worldwide expansion plans, the concept is getting ready to break into Puerto Rico by opening two restaurant locations in San Juan this summer. The first location, which is scheduled to open late summer, will be located inside the main hospital complex at the Hospital Auxilio Mutuo. The second restaurant will open soon after at 221 Ave Juan Ponce De León on The Golden Mile (Milla de Oro). The new restaurants are part of a local growth initiative to develop 12 locations throughout Puerto Rico over the next five years. "Asian cuisine has become popular in Puerto Rico and our two new locations will provide families and business professionals the opportunity to stop in for an affordable meal that they can bring home to their family," says Rafael Perez, Teriyaki Experience's area developer for Puerto Rico. "Teriyaki Experience offers customers flavorful and convenient meals that are great for anyone who is on-the-run," Perez says. "The hospital and The Golden Mile will be perfect spots to serve customers who are seeking a quick meal." While Teriyaki Experience prepares meals with its signature Asian cooking sauce, the QSR concept also offers customers the option of cooking their food with water to minimize calorie and fat content. Using the teppanyaki griddle to prepare meals fast and fresh, sizzling meals are prepared in less than three minutes and right before customers' eyes. The menu features a selection of rice and noodle meals, soups, wraps, salads, and sushi. Most menu items have less than 10 grams of fat and contain less than 600 calories. Each meal combines garden fresh vegetables with all-white meat chicken, beef, shrimp, or tofu and a choice of Japanese steamed rice, yakisoba, or udon noodles and topped with the customer's choice of Sweet Chili, Pan-Asian Temptation, or the famous signature Teriyaki sauce. The growth of the restaurant industry has presented Teriyaki Experience with an ample opportunity for growth. Industry experts expect industry sales to reach more than \$600 billion in 2011. "Over the next few years, we will be working diligently in order to successfully position ourselves as the industry leader in Puerto Rico," says Nick Veloce, president and COO of Teriyaki Experience. -- Source: qsr magazine.com



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Caribou Coffee CEO Sees 100 New Stores in Atlanta

Mike Tattersfield wants to put a lot more Caribou Coffee under your nose. Tattersfield, the Minneapolis-based chief executive of the country's second-largest gourmet coffee retailer, says he expects Atlanta to be a major growth market in the near future, with the potential for 100 locations in the metro region in the next five to ten years. Caribou has 11 locations in the Atlanta market now, and might consider working with franchisees, a relative rarity, to make the rapid growth happen. "Atlanta is a great market. I have a lot of faith in it," Tattersfield said in an interview with The Atlanta Journal-Constitution. "It's not a big store base right now. But Atlanta is really our anchor for expansion in the southeast of the United States." Tattersfield wants Caribou to make deeper inroads into grocery stores such as Kroger and Publix. Caribou Coffee is now sold in almost 8,000 stores including Saks Fifth Avenue, Macy's and Bed bath & Beyond. Expanding in Atlanta is the key to spreading deeper into "SEC territory" such as northern Florida, as well as expansion in Raleigh, Charlotte and Chapel Hill, Tattersfield said. "We need to fill out those markets," he said. Since taking the helm of Caribou Coffee in August 2008, Tattersfield has pushed the chain to expand into oatmeal and breakfast sandwiches to round out its menu. It is testing a grilled cheese sandwich for lunch, primarily in Minnesota and Chicago, and might consider expanding its brunch options with stuffed croissants or quiche. In Atlanta, Caribou is dwarfed by Starbucks, which lists more than two dozen locations in Atlanta. McDonald's, with 35 restaurants in the Atlanta market, also has a rejuvenated coffee and beverage lineup that is driving much of its growth. Tattersfield, who once competed against McDonald's as president of A&W All-American Food Restaurants, is well aware of the Golden Arches' heft. But Caribou's customers are looking for

something different when they come into the log cabin-themed coffee shops, he said. "We know our brand can compete well against larger competitors," he said. -- Source: The Atlanta Journal-Constitution

Domino's Passes \$1million in Mobile Sales In One Week

Domino's Pizza Enterprises Ltd ("Domino's") is fast becoming one of Australia's top e-commerce companies with more than \$1million in mobile sales recorded in one week. This milestone comes just one week after the official launch of Domino's Mobile Ordering Site which can be used to order pizza from any internet enabled mobile device. Domino's CEO Don Meij said topping the \$1million in sales milestone in such a short space of time was an incredible achievement. "Our focus on the digital side of our business and commitment to ensuring portability for our customer is already showing fantastic results," Mr Meij said. "To achieve more than \$1million in sales through mobile devices in one week is a huge milestone! We didn't think we would achieve this so soon after the launch of our dedicate Mobile Ordering Site. "This really shows our customers love the ability to order their favorite pizza while on the go. It's like a personalized Domino's store in your pocket, accessible anywhere, anytime." Domino's new Mobile Ordering Site is the most advanced Quick Service Restaurant (QSR) mobile ordering site in Australia. The launch pushes Domino's even further ahead in its drive to offer customers more ways to order their favorite pizza. Recently, Mr. Meij said that over the next three years Domino's will have more than 50% of sales coming from the digital side of our business. The launch of the Mobile Ordering Site follows the hugely successful launch of Domino's iPhone App in November 2009, which was an Australian first. -- Source: Voxy.co.nz

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