

Today's Restaurant

THE FOODSERVICE INDUSTRY AUTHORITY

VOLUME 28

Appetizers

Great Greek Mediterranean Grill drives development



6

Big Rock Brands acquires Fish Consulting



10

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Click me to see if your company is eligible for ERC funds!



Two shows for one admission...

The Pizza Tomorrow Summit and Florida Restaurant & Lodging Show to be held together in Orlando – November 8-9

During the first week in November **The Florida Restaurant & Lodging Show**, the premier event for Florida's hospitality industry, sponsored by the Florida Restaurant & Lodging Association and **The Pizza Tomorrow Summit**, will bring together thousands of movers and shakers in the restaurant, pizza, foodservice, and lodging industries. One admission gives attendees access to both events on Wednesday and Thursday, November 8-9 at the Orange County Convention Center (OCCC) in Orlando, Florida.

"There is undeniable synergy between the Florida Restaurant & Lodging Show and Pizza Tomorrow Summit, and we are thrilled to offer industry suppliers unprecedented access to this combined group of highly qualified buyers in what is one of the

largest and rapidly growing food and beverage markets in the country," said Glenn Celentano, Founder, The

from several exciting special events and competitions."

The two events will sit side by side in the same exhibit hall, so registrants will have easy access to both shows. The combined exhibit halls will feature hundreds of leading vendors, demonstrating, and sampling products and services. Exhibitors include Sysco, Cheney Brothers, Roma brought to you by Performance Food Service, Bellissimo Foods, Fiero Group, Ken's Foodservice, Shadowspec Umbrellas, ACF Central Florida Chapter, RL Schreiber, and many more.

Each show will host their own competitions and demonstration stages open to all attendees. The **Center**

See **TWO SHOWS** page 4



Pizza Tomorrow Summit and Partner, Restaurant Events, LLC. "Restaurant, pizza, foodservice, and lodging professionals will find a convenient and efficient way to access top subject matter experts addressing key issues in cross over education, see a full range of products from leading vendors, and be inspired and entertained

Bagels & Co. targeting Florida and Pennsylvania for expansion



Ft Lauderdale, FL – Philadelphia-based Bagels & Co., known for its innovative flavors of cream cheese and Brooklyn style bagels, has announced expansion plans to open 20 locations throughout Pennsylvania and Florida.

"Our initial expansion will be in Florida and Pennsylvania which we believe offers incredible growth opportunities for the Bagels & Co. brand," said Philadelphia restaurant group Glu Hospitality COO Derek Gibbons, who is leading the expansion with business partner and former investment banker Mike Marsh. "Our future plans call for expanding beyond that to several states and eventually a national rollout. We appeal to a wide audience. After all, who doesn't like bagels and cream cheese, especially with the flavors we offer?"

The quick-serve, family-friendly cafés serve an eclectic spread of indulgent cream cheese flavors colorfully displayed like gelato in an ice cream parlor. Among the iconic flavors are bacon cheddar, birthday cake, black truffle, cookie monster,

See **BAGELS & CO.** page 12

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There were several Covid relief programs enacted to help businesses operate throughout the pandemic (Paycheck Protection Program, Restaurant Revitalization Fund, Employee Retention Credit, etc.). Initially, PPP loans appeared easier to qualify for but the IRS only allowed businesses to pick either ERC or PPP for relief - not both. Now, the ERC program remains available even if you already got PPP Loans and businesses are also eligible even if they didn't suffer a drop in revenue.

Businesses that meet certain ERC requirements can get up to \$26,000 per employee in fully refundable tax credits. Even businesses that only experienced partial shutdowns or didn't experience a loss in revenue are qualified to receive the credit - which is something that many payroll processing companies are inadvertently giving incorrect advice about.

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TRN Recovery

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Appell Pie

What to expect from advertising the first time

Howard Appell ♦ Today's Restaurant Publisher

When embarking on advertising for the first time, whether for a business, product, service, or personal brand, it's important to set realistic expectations and plan your approach carefully. Here's what you can generally expect:

Initial investment: Be prepared to invest time and money. Advertising, whether through digital channels like social media and pay-per-click (PPC) campaigns or traditional methods like print and TV, typically requires a budget allocation. Determine your budget based on your goals and target audience.

Research & strategy: Before launching any ad campaign, research your target audience thoroughly. Understand their demographics, interests, and behaviors. Develop a clear advertising strategy that aligns with your goals, whether it's brand awareness, lead generation, or sales.

Testing & optimization: It's unlikely that your first advertising campaign will be perfect. Expect to A/B test different ad creatives, targeting options, and messaging to see what resonates best with your audience. Regularly optimize your campaigns based on the data and feedback you receive.

Measurable results: One of the advantages of digital advertising is the ability to track and measure results. You'll have access to data like click-through rates (CTR), conversion rates, and return on ad spend (ROAS). Analyze this data to assess the effectiveness of your campaigns.

Competition: Depending on your industry and target market, you may face competition from other advertisers. Be prepared to stand out and differentiate your ads from the competition.

Ad platforms: Each advertising platform has its own rules, algorithms, and best practices. Whether you're using Google Ads, Facebook Ads, Instagram Ads, or any other platform, take the

time to understand how they work and adhere to their guidelines.

Creative elements: The visual and written components of your ads are crucial. Ensure your ad creatives are engaging, relevant, and aligned with your brand. High-quality images or videos and compelling ad copy can significantly impact your campaign's success.

Ad spend & budgeting: Determine your daily or monthly ad spend and budget accordingly. Be mindful of your spending to avoid overspending or exhausting your budget too quickly.

Patience: Building brand awareness and seeing a return on investment (ROI) often takes time. Don't expect instant results, especially if you're new to advertising. Be patient and give your campaigns time to gather data and optimize.

Feedback & Adaptation: Be open to feedback from your audience and adjust your campaigns accordingly. Customer feedback can provide valuable insights for improvement.

Legal & Ethical Considerations: Ensure that your advertising complies with all legal and ethical standards. Be aware of regulations related to advertising in your industry and location.

Learning Curve: Advertising has a learning curve. You'll likely encounter challenges and setbacks along the way. Use these experiences as opportunities to learn and refine your approach.

Consultation: If you're unsure about how to navigate the complexities of advertising, consider seeking advice from professionals or agencies with expertise in the field.

Remember that successful advertising is often an iterative process. It may take time to find the right combination of strategies and messaging that resonates with your audience. Stay adaptable, track your results, and continuously improve your advertising efforts based on the data and insights you gather.

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What's Going On

Important new products, corporate news and industry events

Happy Fall! Hotel Happenings:

Developer JDS is planning a mixed-use tower at 888 Brickell Ave in Miami. **The Dolce & Gabbana branded project** will include 259 fully furnished residential units, a 5-star hotel, multiple foot and beverage spaces along with over 250 parking spaces. ODP is the project architect, Studio Sofield the design architect with the interior design by Dolce & Gabbana founders Domenico Dolce and Stefano Gabbana. The project will be completed in 2027.

Penny Klingler, President of Carpigiani North America, an Ali Group company, recently announced that Jason Meredith has joined the group as Director of Sales. Meredith

will be responsible as the "face" to McDonald's operators, ensuring that customers' expectations are met while achieving customer relationships and sales opportunities. "We are eager to welcome Jason to the Carpigiani team. His 22 years of commercial foodservice sales experience will be a great asset for the Global Strategic



Jason Meredith

Accounts team," Klingler said. Established in 1946 in Italy and present in the North American market since 1963, Carpigiani offers top-quality products, customer service, education programs, and technological innovation. The company supports its equipment with a worldwide network of highly

Roland
EST 1934



Roland Foods, LLC, a purveyor of fine global ingredients for over 85 years and a portfolio company of Vestar Capital Partners, announced that it has acquired ifiGOURMET, a leading importer and master distributor of high-quality products for professional use in the bakery, pastry, confectionery, and ice cream industries. Terms of the transaction were not disclosed. ifiGOURMET will be combined with AUI Fine Foods, Roland Foods' sweet division, and ifiGOURMET's owner and CEO Rick Brownstein will remain with the company going forward. An importer of gourmet dessert products and ingredients from around the world, ifiGOURMET serves more than 1,500 in-store bakery, restaurant chain and foodservice customers nationwide. It operates two distribution centers in Chicago, IL, and San Francisco, CA.

skilled sales and service technicians. The premier brand name in frozen-dessert machines, the company has built a reputation as the essence of quality, education through their Carpigiani Gelato University and Frozen Dessert University and service in the foodservice industry.

Eco-Products® released its 10th annual report on its social and

environmental responsibility efforts — now known as its Impact Report — detailing the company's progress to



date and highlighting its ambitions moving forward. The new report outlined a variety of successes for Eco-Products in

2022, including helping more foodservice operators divert waste from landfills, advocating for composters nationwide and offering a variety of new compostable plates, bowls and trays made without added PFAS. The full report is available at www.ecoproducts.com/impact-report-2022.

The renowned **85°C Bakery Cafe**, a Taiwanese Bakery Cafe has more than 1,000 stores worldwide, and is now heading to the East Coast. The eatery for stores in New Jersey, New York and Pennsylvania. A new location in Cherry Hill is slated for the opening Mid 2024.

The old **Great Southern Box Co. building** on the corner of Princeton Street and North Orange Blossom

See **WHAT'S GOING ON** page 8

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Two shows coming to Orlando from page 4

Stage Culinary Demonstration Theater will feature local chefs presented by the American Culinary Federation Central Florida Chapter and two exciting competitions. The **Rapid-Fire Challenge: Hot Sandwich and Sides Competition** will be held on Wednesday at 3 pm and judged by Food Network's Shaun O'Neale and others. On Thursday the **Hip Sip: Battle of the Modern Bartender Competition Bourbon Edition** sponsored by Savage & Cooke Distillery will take place at 3 pm. Hip Sip is judged by Art Sutley, Hospitality & Nightlife Expert, Savage & Cooke Distillery; and

Bar Rescue's Mia Mastroianni, and Phil Wills, The Spirits in Motion.

The Pizza Tomorrow Summit will feature the **Galbani Professionale Pizza Cup**, a high-powered pizza-making competition, and the **U.S. Pizza Team Acrobatic Finals**, a pizza acrobatics spin-off. The winner of the 2023 USPT Acrobatics Champion will have the chance to compete in the World Pizza Championship next year in Parma, Italy.

Attendees to both the Florida Restaurant Show and Pizza Tomorrow Summit will have access to thirty free education sessions providing immediate

actionable solutions and ideas, from industry subject matter experts focused on People, Process and New Technology; How to Lease Restaurant Space; Growing Your Restaurant Through your Chamber of Commerce, Building a Team, How to Recognize Talent and Develop Leaders and much more.

Attendees to both the Florida Restaurant Show and Pizza Tomorrow Summit will have access to 30 free education sessions...

In addition, all attendees are invited to register for the **Restaurant Management 201 Workshop** led by Darren Denington and Alison Anne who will guide the entire management team through the process of becoming a cohesive team with strong leadership. Attendees will gain the knowledge, skills, and systems needed for a team to properly run a business' daily operations, while still having the time and focus to manage the business details that will drive you to success. For more information and to register, visit <https://www.flrestaurantandlodgingshow.com/educational-workshop>.

The Florida Restaurant & Lodging Show, a reinvented event serving a

refocused foodservice industry, is sponsored by the Florida Restaurant & Lodging Association and produced and managed by Restaurant Events, LLC. For exhibitor information for the Florida Restaurant & Lodging Show contact Joe Carlino at (484) 823-9611 or joe@therestaurantevents.com.

The Pizza Tomorrow Summit, now in its 2nd year, will once again provide independent pizza operators with an immersive and fun experience, a wide range of products, a robust conference program, plus entertaining and informative pizza competitions, and demonstrations. Attendees will have the opportunity to explore hundreds of exhibitors and have access to new companies, products, ideas, and initiatives that will help propel this evolving industry into the future. For exhibitor info about the Pizza Tomorrow Summit contact Dave Kellogg at 203-788-3794 or david@pizzatomorrow.com.

Attendee registration is \$30 until October 10, 2023, admission includes access to all exhibits, sessions, demonstrations and competitions.

The Florida Restaurant & Lodging Show and Pizza Summit Tomorrow are owned by Restaurant Events and sponsored by the Florida Restaurant & Lodging Association. Restaurant Events, LLC also produces the International Restaurant & Foodservice Show of New York, which will be held March 3-5, 2024 at the Javits Center in New York City and the 2024 Western Foodservice & Hospitality Expo to be held August 25-27 at the Los Angeles Convention Center. 

Don't miss these great companies at the shows!

Company	Booth	Company	Booth
Broward Nelson	842	ITD Food Safety	228
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TWO SHOWS.**



The Great Greek Mediterranean Grill drives franchise development amid ongoing success



West Palm Beach, FL – The Great Greek Mediterranean Grill®, the fine fast-casual Mediterranean concept, announced that it has achieved significant franchise development success so far in 2023 with the opening of eight new restaurants, including its first in California, and the signing of 26 new franchise agreements to develop locations in states including Florida, Texas, and Alabama. The brand now has 31 locations in 11 states with an additional 280 units in its development pipeline, 20 of which are projected to open before the end of 2023.

Over the past year, The Great Greek Mediterranean Grill has narrowed its focus on its online customer journey and implementing innovations to enhance overall experience and exceed expectations. This initiative has driven impressive sales success for the brand, including an increase in year-over-year same-store sales and average unit volume (AUV) and double-digit increase in year-over-year systemwide sales. It has also translated into increases in customer loyalty and satisfaction.

“Our year-to-date results serve as a testament to not only the strength of our concept and the commitment we have to our guests, but also the dedication of our outstanding franchise owners who make our brand what it is,” said Bob Andersen, President of The Great Greek Mediterranean Grill. “As we embark on the second half of 2023, we have never been more confident in the trajectory of our brand and our success on the horizon.”

Performance and success figures, along with other brand updates, were announced at The Great Greek Mediterranean Grill 2023 convention which gathered executives, suppliers, franchise owners and their employees. The two-day event held in Orlando, Florida included workshops and team-building activities, networking opportunities, and a vendor showcase. Featured speakers were Nick Della Penna, co-founder of The Great Greek Mediterranean Grill, and Ray Titus, CEO of United Franchise Group™ (UFG), of which The Great Greek Mediterranean Grill is an affiliated brand. Other keynotes were given by

business experts Danny Snow and Zack Oates, who spoke on the value of the guest experience and how to improve it.

“It was a pleasure to attend this year’s convention and reconnect with such a talented and passionate group of franchise owners. You can tell they truly love and believe in this brand which is so important in developing a healthy franchise system,” said Ray Titus, CEO of UFG. “It’s been thrilling to watch The Great Greek Mediterranean Grill pave its own path in the fast casual and Mediterranean spaces and we’re looking forward to all that the brand will achieve in the years to come.”

The event wrapped up with an awards ceremony recognizing the brand’s top performers, including:

- ◆ MVP Award: Mike Fardo us (Detroit, MI)
- ◆ President’s Award: Scott Willis (Charleston, SC)
- ◆ Circle of Excellence Inductees: The Colony, TX; Winter Garden, FL; Port St. Lucie, FL; Troy, MI; Lake Nona, FL; and Shelby Township, MI
- ◆ Team Player: John David and Alexia Budko (Rancho Cucamonga, CA) and Kevin Carmean (Orlando, FL)
- ◆ Rookie of the Year: Lakena & Andrew Van Vleet (Maple Grove, MN)
- ◆ Overall Sales & Achievement: The staff of Shelby Township, MI
- ◆ Customer Experience: The staffs of Shelby Township, MI; Rocky River, OH; West Bloomfield, MI; and Lake Nona, FL
- ◆ Local Store Marketing: The staff of Mount Pleasant, SC
- ◆ Community Service: The staff of Aurora, CO
- ◆ Quality: The staff of Charleston, SC
- ◆ Store Appearance: The staff of Mount Pleasant, SC

About The Great Greek Mediterranean Grill:
The award winning Great Greek Mediterranean Grill® - thegreatgreekgrill.com - is a leading franchise within the Greek, Mediterranean, and Middle Eastern fast-casual restaurant industry, offering a vivacious and flavorful menu inspired by foods in the Mediterranean diet. Every dish is made fresh, in-house from authentic recipes passed down generation after generation. Co-founded by two culinary trained, third-generation restaurateurs, Nick A. Della Penna and Trent Jones, The Great Greek Mediterranean Grill is now among the Starpoint Brands™ constellation of trusted companies representing the very best in their industries.



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- Two days of competitions with the U.S. Pizza Team and the Galbani Cup.
- 30 Hours of Complimentary Education across 3 on-the-floor learning theaters
- Center Stage Culinary Demonstration Theater featuring renowned chefs
- Rapid-Fire Single Skillet Culinary Competition with a \$1,000 prize to the winning chef
- Hip Sip Battle of the Bartender Competition sponsored by Savage & Cooke Distillery
- Restaurant 201 ½ day workshop presented by Darren Dennington (additional fee)

And with our co-location with the **Florida Restaurant and Lodging Show**, you'll be sure to find everything you are looking for this November!



Our Family
of Foodservice Shows

What's Going On from page 3

Trail in Orlando, is being preserved and repurposed into a 22,000-sq ft food hall featuring an elevated plaza with outdoor green area. Hospitality HQ, by award-winning Chef Akhtar Nawab, whose restaurant Alta Calidad in Brooklyn earned a Michelin Bib Gourmand in 2018, has been selected to operate the hall with vendors focusing on different types of cuisines.

◆◆◆◆
A new dining experience called Craft is set to launch on the Hillsborough River in Tampa this Fall. This unique concept is Tampa's first dining river cruise and will be operated by **Yacht Starship Dining Cruises.** The ship, measuring 130-feet in length and 11-feet in air draft, will be the largest commercial vessel on the Hillsborough River. It can accommodate up to 150 passengers and features an open kitchen concept with a gas grill and stove, three dining options, and a bar made from a 1914 vintage wooden cruiser. The menu will be curated by Executive Chef Allison Beasman, who specializes in blending innovation with traditional cuisine.

◆◆◆◆
Swig The Home of the Original Dirty Soda™ announced a significant



milestone in the company's growth with the successful signing of 250 franchise units across seven new markets: Florida, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, Arkansas, Missouri, and Idaho — with the first Arkansas, Idaho and Missouri stores opening later this year. This achievement marks the halfway point toward Swig's ambitious goal of committing 500 franchise units by the end of the year. It only launched multi-unit franchising about six months ago. Rian McCartan is the CEO of Swig and they are based in Utah. Swig has been Home of the Original Dirty Soda since 2010, specializing in fast service and drinks and sweets. Home of the dirty soda, Swig, puts a unique twist on a soda fountain favorite.

◆◆◆◆
 Filippo Berti, Chairman and CEO of the Ali Group, has announced that **Ryan Blackman has been named VP of Marketing and Communications for the Ali Group,** effective immediately. In this role, Blackman will be responsible for all of the Ali Group's marketing, communications, branding, media and public relations in North America. He will remain managing editor of the



Ryan Blackman

company's annual Aliworld magazine, and will also continue to oversee the company's online presence. In 2010, he was named Director of Marketing and

Communications for the Ali Group, a position he held until 2022, when he was promoted to Senior Director of Marketing and Communications. "Ryan's commitment and knowledge of marketing strategies have been instrumental in helping the Ali Group grow and become what it is today," Berti said. Blackman will continue to report directly to Filippo Berti.

◆◆◆◆
Kelly's Roast Beef opened its last month to its first of many restaurants planned in Collier and Lee counties. Headquartered in Boston, launched its first Naples location in Founders Square.

◆◆◆◆
The Georgia Restaurant Association has named Stephanie Fischer as its new president and CEO. Fischer succeeds Karen Bremer, who recently announced that she would retire early next year. According to a press release, Fischer joined the GRA board of directors in 2017 and was elected to the executive committee two years later. She served as chairman of


the board in 2022. (This is from Rough Draft Atlanta)

◆◆◆◆
Uncle Sharkii, a leading fast-food franchise specializing in poke bowls, has announced its partnership with the nation's leading retailer, Walmart. This collaboration is set to redefine the fast-food industry and revolutionize the poke market, offering exciting opportunities for franchise buyers across the nation. "This is a breakthrough for the industry! We really are on a mission to bring affordable poke bowls to the masses," said Raymond Reyes, Co-Founder & COO of Uncle Sharkii. "We want to change the way America eats by providing healthier options that taste great and is priced affordably. "Our partnership with Walmart marks an exciting chapter for Uncle Sharkii and a huge differentiator for our franchise buyers," said Fen Reyes, Founder & CEO of Uncle Sharkii. "We are delighted to join forces with America's leading retailer to bring our exceptionally fresh poke bowls to a wider audience." Uncle Sharkii's is the only national poke restaurant franchise with a Hawai'i local, born and raised, Co-Founder at the helm.





◆◆◆◆
Big Whiskey's is headed to Orlando as part of an expansion deal inked with Whiskey's Florida LLC, a subsidiary of


See **WHAT'S GOING ON** page 14



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How metrics can transform your restaurant's performance

David Scott Peters ♦ Today's Restaurant Contributor

Have you heard the term KPI? K-P-I stands for key performance indicator, which is a number you measure to measure your success. It's a target number you use to help you know what's working and what isn't. KPIs are also great for setting expectations with your managers and employees.

In the world of restaurant systems, you start with your current results in an important area you need to see improvement. Then you implement a system to affect change in that area, then measure again after the system has been used for a set amount of time. If your number has changed in the right direction, then your KPI is trending in the right direction, and everyone can celebrate.

Let me share with you a handful of KPIs I teach my members that basically allow them to hit a 15-20% profit margin.

#1 You must create a budget. Your budget is your plan for success. Taking the past 12 months and knowing that if you operate the next 12 months the same way you, you can see what you're likely to make or lose. Then you decide what systems to put in place that can help you lower costs and increase revenue, how quickly you can get each system in place, and who to train and hold

accountable to your timely goal. Just about every KPI you put in your restaurant is derived from your budget.

#2 When it comes to cost of goods sold (COGS), you have budget targets, and you need to be calculating your actual and your ideal COGS. Why? Because they're going to give you different measurements. Your budgeted COGS is what you need to hit to make money. Your actual COGS is based on beginning inventory plus purchases minus ending, which is use - or what left the shelves. Use divided by sales is food cost. Set a budget target to make money and then you measure it. Are you making the money you're supposed to?


A lot of people stop there, but I teach restaurant owners to measure their ideal to actual. An ideal food cost is based on accurate, up-to-date recipe costing cards. What you sell each item for and what your customers actually purchased, tracked in your POS system, tells you your ideal food cost, or what it would be if you had no waste, no theft, no spoilage and ran a perfect restaurant. Of course, perfect isn't going to happen, but the truth of the matter is that's where your number should be. So, you compare your ideal to your actual to see if your menu even gives you a chance to make money. More importantly, ideal

to actual tells you how good your chef or kitchen manager are doing. If your ideal is 30, and they run at 32, they're a rock star. Most restaurants run seven to nine points above ideal so when you have one that comes in two, maybe even three points above ideal, you know they're doing a great job. Then you take your ideal food cost and compare it to your budgeted food cost and if your chef or kitchen manager are getting it this close, maybe there's room to do even more.

#3 Budget your labor. If you don't run a restaurant on a budget, I can guarantee you're running your restaurant labor cost on an incorrect number. There's no way to know where your labor cost should be without a budget. That's because some months require more staff during high traffic times while you might have low traffic times and can't have any fewer staff on the schedule, so your labor cost is all about balance. One of the things you want to do when it comes to budgeting for labor is go into the week on budget using a system I teach called the Restaurant Payroll Guardian. It budgets labor hours and dollars so your managers know how to schedule the following week. This way when they're using that fancy scheduling software and they see they're 14 hours over budget in the kitchen, they can figure out how to start trimming hours before the money has been spent. You also need to start tracking labor on a daily basis. When you follow my systems,

you're going to have a different labor target by day of the week so now you can be on the same page with your management team.

#4 Based on your budget targets, you need to be tracking your operating expenses such as occupancy costs, paper supplies, restaurant supplies, janitorial supplies, comps, credit card discount rates, and much more. With a budget and your KPIs, you're now in a position to say that which we measure improves. Tracking your KPIs allows you to do things like adjust your menu prices before it's way too late, change your menu to reduce the number of prep hours needed, know when to add or subtract employees from your roster and much more. Collecting data can be as simple as a yellow tablet, a pen and a calculator. Creating spreadsheets can do the trick for most of it, but I want to be very clear that for big things like food cost, you're going to need software.

I don't think I can overstate the importance of creating and measuring your KPIs. The potential benefits of using the data will help you make informed decisions for your restaurant success and that's priceless. 

David Scott Peters is an author, restaurant coach and speaker who coaches restaurant operators how to stop being prisoners of their businesses and to finally financial freedom. His first book, Restaurant Prosperity Formula: What Successful Restaurateurs Do, teaches the systems and traits restaurant owners must develop to run a profitable restaurant. Thousands of restaurants have worked with Peters to transform their businesses. Get his three principles to restaurant success at <http://www.davidscottpeters.com>.



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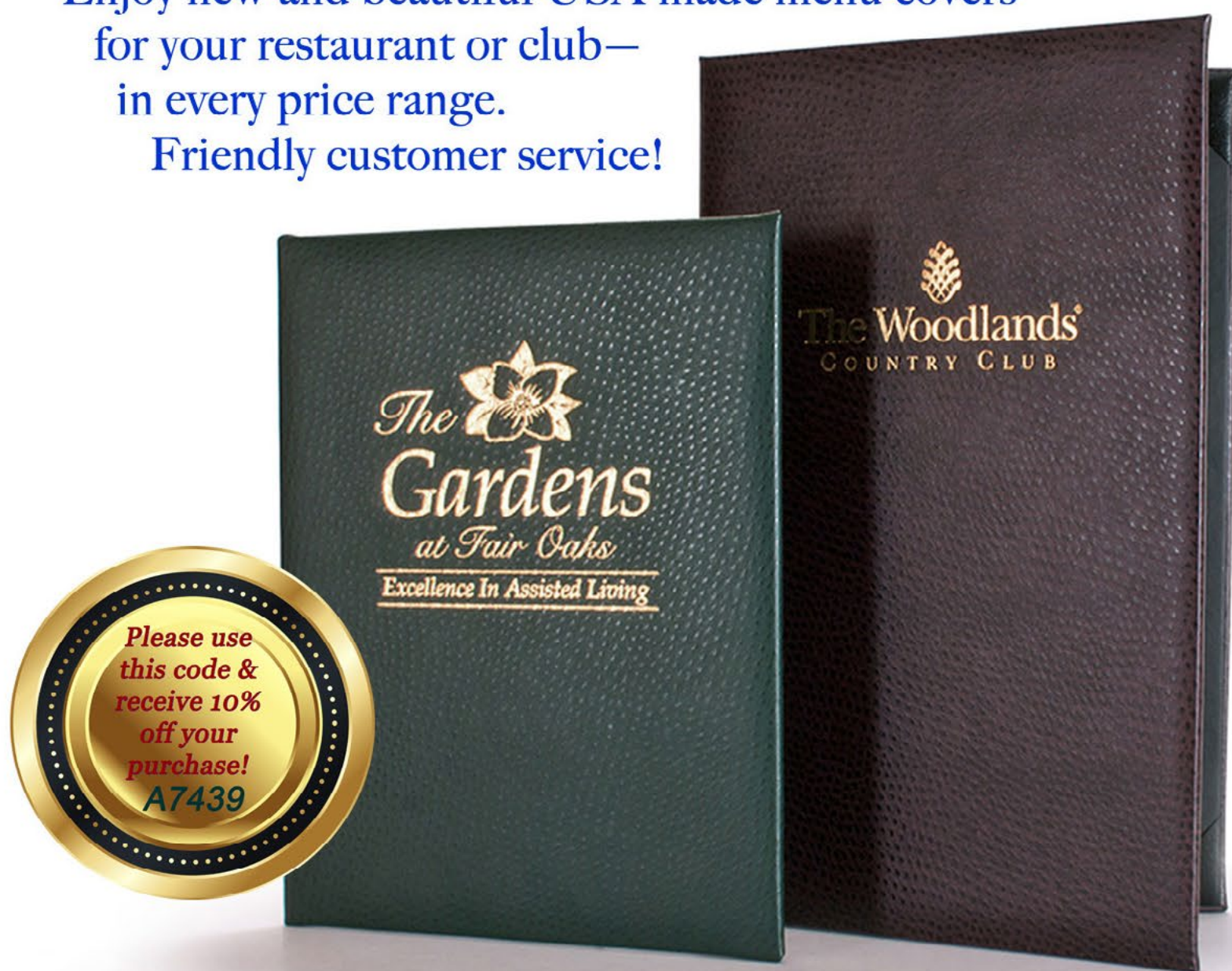


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Big Rock Brands acquires Fish Consulting

Leading PR agency joins 919 Marketing within the Big Rock Brands agency portfolio

Raleigh, NC – Big Rock Brands, a private-equity owned holding company specializing in serving the marketing needs of the franchising sector, has announced the acquisition of Fish Consulting, LLC, a Ft Lauderdale-based national communications firm. With the acquisition, Big Rock Brands adds to its growing portfolio of agencies dedicated to providing a full suite of integrated marketing solutions to emerging and established franchisors, franchisees, and other multi-location businesses.

The acquisition of Fish Consulting marks the fourth by Big Rock Brands since it was created in 2020, with the goal of building a portfolio of marketing agencies that leverage data-driven marketing solutions to help franchise brands and non-profit organizations achieve their business goals.

“We are thrilled to welcome Fish Consulting into our family of award-winning marketing partners,” says Michael Kessler, Chairman of Big Rock Brands. “Fish is a respected thought-leader in the franchising sector, renowned for creative public relations strategies that drive business results. The combination of Fish’s innovative storytelling with our data and analytics platform is certain to deliver strategic insights for our current and future clients.”

Fish was founded in 2004 by Lorne Fisher after working for nearly a decade



at Ketchum and served in client-side roles at Visa U.S.A. and The Absolut Spirits Company. Fisher previously served on the International Franchise Association’s Board of Directors and is a Former Chairman of the Association’s Supplier Forum Advisory Board. Fish has been recognized extensively over its 19 years as a Best Place to Work by national business, local and trade media including Inc. Magazine, PR Week, PProvoke Media, Forbes, among others. The firm currently has team members in 10 U.S. locations and London.

With the acquisition of Fish, Big Rock Brands has grown to 130 employees working from 18 states. Fish will continue operating as an independent brand under Big Rock Brands and remain headquartered in Fort Lauderdale. Fisher will continue to lead Fish and serve on Big Rock Brands’ Board of Directors.


Big Rock Brands was formed in 2020 when investment partners Greens

Farms Capital LLC and Landon Capital Partners LLC acquired 919 Marketing, Inc., one of the nation’s fastest growing content marketing agencies, in partnership with 919’s CEO and Founder David Chapman.

“I’m immensely proud of the results our team has delivered for our valued partners over our nearly two decades in business. As we look forward, it has become increasingly more important as an agency to enhance our data insights that fuel our work and offer an integrated offering that includes digital marketing,” said Lorne Fisher, CFE, President of Fish. “We’ve partnered with the 919

team over the years, and with the creation of Big Rock Brands, the opportunity to leverage their resources for our clients and team members is very attractive for Fish as we continue to serve the franchise community.”

According to David Chapman, CEO of 919 Marketing, “Big Rock Brands acquisition of Fish Consulting is far more than a strategic business decision; it is a game-changing move that will send ripples through franchise marketing. By bringing together two nationally recognized, trusted, and proven marketing leaders under the Big Rock platform, we will set a new standard by which franchise marketing agencies are judged.”

The full range of services under the 919 Marketing brand -- along with the capabilities gained through the acquisition of Fish Consulting -- makes Big Rock Brands the leading data-driven, integrated marketing agency platform company in franchising. 919 Marketing also specializes in providing marketing services tailored to governmental and non-governmental non-profit organizations. 

Bagels & Co. from page 1


S’mores, sriracha scallion, roasted garlic, vegan tofu spreads and more. When the company opens in a new city, seasonal cream cheese flavors will be added to reflect that city, local sports teams and more.

More than a dozen bagel varieties are baked fresh daily onsite, including French toast, cheddar habanero, seasonal flavors and such classics as everything, blueberry, cinnamon raisin, whole wheat and more. New York roasted coffee, tea and other coffee-based beverages as well as high quality made-to-order sandwiches, including egg, chicken and tuna salad, grab and go items, parfaits and pastries are also on the menu. Gluten free and healthy food options, along with vegan tofu spreads, are also available.

Bagels & Co. cafés create a sense of energy and vibrancy from the moment guests walk in the door. The aroma of freshly baked bagels complements the eye catching, colorful display of over 30 cream cheese flavors. The interior décor is highlighted by natural lighting, white subway tile walls, warm gray wood walls and white quartz marble countertops. Digital menu boards feature daily and weekly specials. There is indoor seating and, in some locations, outdoor patio seating.

“Bagels & Co. is a true neighborhood café that appeals to everyone, whether you are on your way to work or school, grabbing a quick bite, coming home from a workout or spending time with the family, we are ready to serve, and all of our sandwiches are fresh and made-to-order,” said Marsh, who grew up in South Florida where eight additional locations are planned before a statewide rollout. Marsh, a venture capitalist, helped the company raise millions in funding to elevate Bagels & Co. to compete on a national scale.

Bagels & Co. supports local communities in the cities where the company has a presence, partnering with local non-profit organizations as part of the company’s philanthropic initiatives. First responders, including police, firefighters and EMTs, nurses, doctors, teachers, veterans and active military personnel who come to Bagels & Co. in uniform or present their work ID will always receive 10% off their orders.

Bagels & Co. is one of the restaurant brands from Philadelphia restaurant group Glu Hospitality. Currently there are four Bagels & Co. locations open in Philadelphia with three more set to open in 2023, including one near Temple University and one in South Philly, and two locations set to open in South Florida in Ft Lauderdale and Wilton Manors. 

About Bagels & Co.: Philadelphia-based Bagels & Co. – thebagelsandco.com - bakes Brooklyn-style bagels and brews Costa Rican coffee roasted in NY. The first four locations are in Philly, but the concept is now expanding into South Florida and plans to open cafés nationally with a near term focus on 5 additional states. Bagels & Co. is the result of bringing together a coffee roaster and a local hospitality group to craft the perfect neighborhood café. More than a dozen varieties of Brooklyn-style bagels, including creative seasonal flavors, are baked fresh on-site along with over 30 varieties of cream cheeses and spreads, including birthday cake, lox, black truffle, za’atar, jalapeno cheddar, chipotle, maple bacon and honey nut. Among other offerings are made-to-order sandwiches, parfaits, and pastries.

About Glu Hospitality: Glu Hospitality is a quickly growing restaurant group based in Philadelphia. Co-founded in 2020 by CEO and partner Tim Lu and COO and partner Derek Gibbons. Glu Hospitality currently operates 10 restaurants, bars and venues in Philadelphia — Figo Italian, Izakaya Fishtown, Añejo Philadelphia, Bagels & Co., Brewerytown Foodhall, 1225 Raw, Leda’s Cocktail Lounge, and Vesper Center City Philadelphia. The company plans to expand its footprint in Florida and several additional states in the near future. gluhospitality.com.



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What's Going On from page 8

Nosnaws Corporation, according to a press release. "The group already has their sights on expansion to the Tampa and Orlando areas in the near future," the press release further states. No locations have been mentioned yet.



Fat Brands will develop 20 new Johnny Rockets restaurants in Texas over the next 10 years in partnership with franchisee Brame Holdings, with the first location set to open in 2024. Taylor Wiederhorn is the Chief Development Officer of FAT Brands. FAT Brands (NASDAQ: FAT) is a leading global franchising company that strategically acquires, markets and develops fast casual, quick-service, casual and polished casual dining restaurant concepts around the world. The Company currently owns 17 restaurant brands. Online at Fatbrands.com.

frozen soup offerings under the new Campbell's® Culinary Reserve line to provide operators with an easy one-stop shop for premium soup available in both 4-pound frozen pouches of ready-to-eat or ready-to-cook soup and 4-pound frozen tubs of condensed soup. Campbell's® Culinary Reserve frozen soups are crafted by chefs with operators in mind. "We launched the Campbell's® Culinary Reserve line to make it easier for operators to shop our more than 60 frozen soups under one portfolio," said Melanie Preston, Senior Brand Manager, Campbell's Foodservice North America. "Our Campbell's® Culinary Reserve soups are made with high-quality ingredients and frozen at peak freshness to capture the fullest flavor, delivering convenience and long-lasting quality." Visit the company online for more information at Campbell'sfoodservice.com.



Campbell's Foodservice launched Campbell's® Culinary Reserve — a repositioning of its frozen soup portfolio featuring more than 60 chef-inspired soups. Campbell's Foodservice consolidated its Signature and Reserve

To submit your information for the What's Going On column, email your company, product or event information to terri@trnusa.com.

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