

New identity for franchise section of Retsol

Java Brands is the newly formed holding company for the development and management of well known brands Ola Milky Lane, Juicy Lucy, Chicken King and the newly introduced Java Heights Specialty Coffee brand.



Craig MacKenzie & Claus Kuhl

It has been formed through the restructuring of quick service restaurant group Retsol, from 1 February 2011 to split the management responsibilities between the Corner Bakery business and the franchise brands.

Craig MacKenzie who will head up Java Brands said that, with the growing diversity in the number of brand under the wider Retsol banner, it was imperative to revise the company's structure and create a highly focused management team.

MacKenzie, a pioneer in the fast food sector and a franchising guru, co-founded pizza giant Debonairs Piz in 1991. He believes the key to growth in this sector is constant innovation and strong management support for the growing network of Ola Milky Lane and Juicy Lucy, particularly with the ice cream franchise being rolled out across southern Africa.

He confirmed that Estelle Botha would remain as financial director while Shanon MacKenzie had been appointed standards director. She will apply her considerable operational skills across all platforms of the business with a view to optimising efficiencies. MD Claus Kuhl, who is recognised as a hands-on manager who leads by example will head the team, which has embraced the recent changes with enthusiasm.

Enterprise management

MacKenzie pointed out that this opportunity to create a more intimate company culture coincided with the introduction of a sophisticated web-based enterprise management system that would see the company migrating towards a completely paperless and seamless system within a very short space of time.

"It's highly automated and will ensure better management. This system allows for better reporting and evaluation and provides meaningful benchmarks, online training and examinations. For example, franchisees can do waiter tests online and get the results immediately. Franchise consultants can access reports immediately and present franchisees with online evaluations, as well as the ability to benchmark against other outlets."

Although others in the industry are beginning to introduce similar systems, the company is at the forefront of this technology in South Africa, according to MacKenzie.

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