
RESOURCES

Philip Gay's Triple Enterprises Works with Growing Restaurant Concepts

California restaurant consultant and financial advisor **Philip Gay** says that Chipotle's meteoric rise is the standard bearer for many up-and-coming restaurant chains eager to ramp up growth. Unfortunately, for many young restaurant companies, they lack the basic back office resources to support growth. That's where Gay and his team comes in. His firm, **Triple Enterprises**, works with young, growing restaurant chains to establish a proper financial reporting system and then offers advisory services on everything from capital raising to real estate selection.

Gay's extensive restaurant background—the first CFO at CPK Restaurants in the late '80s to CEO at Los-Angeles-based Grill Concepts—gives him credibility with young entrepreneurs.

"The first thing that young companies look for is capital. The second is real estate. Yet, in many cases, the small upstart chains have no handle on their financial situation, which is a prerequisite to raising money and looking for sites," says Gay.

Gay's team works with companies to get their financial act in order. First, they implement a financial reporting system to provide daily and weekly financials. Once the financials are up to speed, Gay then advises clients on business plans, strategy and unit growth options. He is currently working with a number of young growth companies, including Giggles N' Hugs, a two-unit restaurant/play space that caters to parents and young children and serves organic and other healthy fare. A third restaurant is opening soon.

Gay also is in the process of repositioning the three-unit Fox Sports Grill that has units in Seattle, San Diego and Los Angeles.

For more information, contact Phillip Gay at 818-703-8300 or philip@tripleenterprises.com.

Lynette McKee Starts a Consulting Firm

Lynette McKee, a veteran of the franchise world who has spent time at some of the country's largest brands, is going out on her own. McKee recently announced the launch of McKeeCo Services, LLC, a franchise and development strategic advisory firm. The firm was officially launched in November. It offers clients a range of services, including strategic evaluations of mergers and acquisitions, franchise sales processes and franchisee recruitment marketing.

McKee has more than two decades of experience working with franchised companies, including Dunkin' Brands, Burger King, Denny's, Checkers and Metromedia Restaurant Group. "I've been fortunate to work with some of the franchise industry's most respected brands, and I'm excited to leverage this experience through the creation of McKeeCo Services," she said, adding that interest has been significant since she formed the company.

For more information, contact Lynette McKee at 407-333-3533.

Hiller Helps Restaurant Chains Negotiate Soda Contracts

Negotiating a new soft drink contract can be a daunting task for many chain restaurant operators. Plus, the stakes are high. Suppose you leave \$.01 on the table on a 1 million-gallon deal over five years. That's \$10,000. **George Hiller** formed **Hiller & Associates** six years ago to work with clients at restaurant headquarters to ensure the term and gallonage price offered by the soft drink companies is at fair market value.

"When you do a soda deal every five or six years and the beverage companies are doing them every day, you are at a disadvantage," says Hiller.

Hiller tries to narrow the advantage because he knows how the contracts are priced, having spent 20 years in the beverage business. He points out there are many factors that go into a soda contract, including contract term, estimated gallonage, rental equipment, price ceiling components and soft dollars for the chain's convention fund. In six years, Hiller has helped clients with new soda contracts having a total deal value of in excess of \$1.0 billion.

Restaurants already are at the high end of what they can charge for soda, and according to Hiller, commodity cost increases in high fructose corn sugar and petroleum are driving soda prices higher. "It's important to get the best deal you can. The average annual increase on national account pricing over the past 15 years has been about 4% annually," says Hiller.

Hiller & Associates work with companies on a flat fee basis or a percentage of the savings. For more information, contact George Hiller at 515-710-6805 or georgehiller5@gmail.com.

Former IRS Restaurant Expert Hofmann Forms Tax Consulting Business

J. Philip Hofmann, the Internal Revenue Service's restaurant expert, retired in January from the IRS after nearly 34 years at the agency. Hofmann spent the last 11 years at the IRS as the National Technical Adviser for Restaurants. Hofmann, a CPA, has formed a restaurant consulting business with an emphasis on tax compliance and controversy. SS&G, the restaurant accounting firm, also announced it plans to partner with Hofmann on certain client consulting engagements.

Hofmann was a member of the IRS Issue Management Team dealing with the deduction and capitalization of expenditures related to tangible property. He also provided guidance on the proposed and temporary tangible regulations which will affect many restaurants. In the last six months, Hofmann was also a key member of the IRS Retail Remodel Industry Issue Resolution project regarding the proper treatment of remodel expenditures.

For more information, contact Phil Hofmann at jphofmann@sbcglobal.net or 316-393-7445.