

September 27, 2007

Levy, Schussler ink restaurant partnership

CHICAGO (Sep. 27) Levy Restaurants has agreed to operate the theme restaurants of Schussler Creative Inc., creator of the Rainforest Cafe and T-Rex concepts, the parties disclosed Thursday morning.

Levy, a Chicago-based restaurateur and sports concessionaire owned by the contract management giant Compass Group, also agreed to craft the menus for Schussler's creations.

Terms of the arrangement were not disclosed.

Earlier this year, Minneapolis-based Schussler entered into a national partnership with RED Development LLC to develop themed restaurants in RED's shopping centers. Those establishments would then be operated by Levy, a one-time partner with film director Steven Spielberg in a submarine-theme restaurant called Dive! in Los Angeles.

Schussler, Levy and RED plan to develop such concepts as Hot Dog Hall of Fame; America's RoadHouse, which will feature barbecue; Aerobleu, which will feature jazz; Sorcerer's Kitchen, a magic-theme place featuring such items as rotisserie chickens, smoked meats, oven-roasted corn on the cob, stone-oven pizzas and steaks; Winter Wonderland, which will feature cold-weather food; Musical Gardens, a white-tablecloth restaurant; and Dynasty, an Asian-fusion concept.

Steven Schussler, chief executive and founder of Schussler Creative, said: "In May 2007, we entered into a partnership with RED Development to create new attractions, restaurant, and retail stores, approaching the endeavor with passion, imagination and creativity. Adding Levy's innovation to this formula is the icing on the cake for us."

Andy Lansing, president and chief executive of Levy Restaurants, said: "We couldn't be more excited to partner with Steve Schussler and his amazing team. Steve is an icon in the industry and we are thrilled to match up our passion and innovation with his."

Levy's portfolio includes restaurants such as Spiaggia, Bistro 110 and Fulton's on the River in Chicago, and Fulton's Crab House, Portobello Yacht Club and Wolfgang Puck's at the Walt Disney World Resort in California. It also manages foodservice operations at such sports venues as Wrigley Field in Chicago; Lambeau Field in Green Bay, Wis.; the Staples Center in Los Angeles; and the American Airlines Arena in Miami.

RED Development LLC, formed in 1995, has co-headquarters in Kansas City, Mo., and Phoenix. It leases, manages or owns more than 30 shopping centers throughout the nation. The company focuses on open-air lifestyle centers and destination retail and entertainment developments.