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Bearclaw Coffee, Mr Pita to open co-branded locations

• 29 Jul 2009

Bearclaw Coffee Co. has formed a strategic co-branding alliance with Askar Brands, parent company of Papa Romano's Pizza, Mr. Pita Sandwiches, Stucchi's Ice Cream and CJ's Brewing Company.

Under the agreement, the two Michigan-based companies will allow their franchisees to co-brand two or more of the brands in one location.

Askar Brands has nine co-branded units in southeast Michigan, Denver and Houston that have successfully co-branded Mr. Pita sandwiches with Papa Romano's, said Gary McCausland, chief development officer of Papa Romano's Pizza and Mr. Pita Sandwiches.

"Askar Brands has found co-branding can keep an establishment busier throughout the day by generating two revenue streams under one roof," McCausland said. "Being busy during more hours of the day generates more cash flow and a higher return on investment."

Seventy percent of sales at Bearclaw Coffee shops occur between the morning hours of 5 a.m. and 11 a.m. while Mr. Pita units conduct a majority of their business from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. daily. The bulk of the nearly 50 Papa Romano's Pizza stores sales occurs in the evening and on weekends, McCausland said.

Bearclaw Coffee has 21 stores in Michigan, two in Kentucky and four Bearclaw Mobile coffee trucks in both states. Askar Brands has nearly 100 franchise units operating in seven states and has 500 franchise units under contract to be opened in the next 10 years.

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