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Blaze Fast-Fire'd Pizza Hires Jim Mizes as President/COO

Fast Casual Veteran to Lead the Rapidly Expanding Built-To-Order Assembly Line Pizza Chain

July 8, 2013 – Pasadena, Calif. – Blaze Fast-Fire'd Pizza, the leader in the fast-casual artisan pizza category, today announced the appointment of Jim Mizes as President and Chief Operating Officer. In this role, Mizes will be responsible for leading the ongoing national expansion of Blaze Pizza.

Mizes brings decades of senior-level insight and experience with top fast-casual concepts to his role as President/COO of Blaze Pizza. Previously, he served as President of Freebirds World Burrito, overseeing the growth of the rapidly expanding burrito chain. Under his leadership, Freebirds grew from 50 restaurants to nearly 100 in six states. Prior to Freebirds, Mizes served as VP of Brand Development and VP of Store Operations for Jamba Juice, overseeing its growth from 50 to 350 stores over 5 years. Prior to Jamba Juice, Mizes served as CEO of Noah's New York Bagels.

"The addition of Jim to our team highlights our commitment to assembling a best-in-class headquarter staff," said Elise Wetzel, co-founder of Blaze Pizza. "Jim has overseen the development of over 500 restaurants in his career, and is well suited to lead our franchise expansion across the country."

Blaze Pizza currently has more than 150 franchise stores in its development pipeline, including multi-unit agreements across the West Coast (California), Northeast (New York, New Jersey, Connecticut, Maryland & Washington DC), Midwest (Michigan, Illinois, Indiana, Wisconsin & Ohio) and the Southeast (Florida). Blaze Pizza is registered to franchise in all 50 states and is partnering with veteran restaurant operators to support the company's expansion.

"Blaze Pizza is the leader in the exploding fast-casual pizza sector," said Mizes. "I joined this team because I wanted to be part of a brand that is going to change the way this country enjoys pizza. Blaze offers the best of the best including its focus on quality pizza, top notch and experienced franchisees supported by a seasoned executive leadership team, and a service experience that is fast and fun for our guests and restaurant staff. I'm looking forward to building Blaze Pizza into a nationally recognized and enduring brand that redefines the pizza experience."

About Blaze Pizza

Blaze Pizza uses an assembly line format (similar to Chipotle Mexican Grill®) to create artisan pizzas at lightning fast speed – all for about \$7.00. Each Blaze Pizza restaurant makes its own dough from scratch using a recipe that requires a 24-hour fermentation period to produce its signature light-as-air, crisp crust. Guests watch as each perfectly proofed dough ball is pressed into a generous 12-inch crust. Next, they travel down the assembly line to “co-create” a signature pizza or design one of their own -- with over 40 artisanal toppings to choose from. Pizzas are “fast-fire’d” in a blazing-hot oven and ready in a scant 120 seconds. Blaze Pizza’s menu also features signature salads, fresh lemonades, craft beer & wine and house-made S’more Pies. For pizza fans with specific dietary needs, Blaze Pizza offers gluten-free dough and vegan cheese.

A creation of Elise and Rick Wetzel (founder of Wetzel's Pretzels), the concept is backed by investors including Maria Shriver, movie producer John Davis and Boston Red Sox co-owner Tom Werner, and includes the talents of highly acclaimed Executive Chef Bradford Kent. Blaze Pizza’s seasoned executive team brings fast-casual and quick-serve restaurant experience from numerous concepts including Buffalo Wild Wings, Freebirds World Burrito, California Pizza Kitchen, Panda Express, Jamba Juice and Carl’s Jr. The company, which Forbes.com named a “*Hot New Restaurant Chain from an Established Brand*,” is registered to sell franchises in all 50 states and is currently accepting applications to develop franchise stores across the country.

For more information, please visit www.blazepizza.com or www.facebook.com/blazepizza.

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