

LISA THORSEN, MBA

lisakthorsen@gmail.com | Bangkok, Thailand | +66832995619

GLOBAL FOOD R&D DIRECTOR

Translating Global Food Trends into Innovative Culinary Products

Performance-driven and growth-minded corporate executive with unparalleled capacity to deliver increased profits, efficiencies and cost reductions. Highly effective communicator (English and spoken Thai) with expertise in strategic planning and extensive global R&D experience. Thorough understanding of global food trends and consumer demand, with strong ability to analyze data and effectively incorporate trends into exciting and saleable culinary products.

LEADERSHIP – Recognized for leading high-performing teams to double-digit revenue increases by rebranding corporate food concepts, redesigning menus and championing expansion plans for QSR and fast-casual restaurants. **Rebranded PowerEats and saw 50% growth in sales after reworking menu and hiring new marketing director**, allowing company to significantly expand operations in 2021.

BUSINESS ANALYSIS & STRATEGIC PLANNING – Conduct in-depth business and competitor analyses, utilizing results to unlock new revenue streams. Develop positioning, pricing, promotion and packaging strategies to increase profitability and drive market expansion. Notable successes in **reducing food costs by up to 17% at Sizzler** through effective supplier negotiation and raw material evaluation.

GLOBAL FOOD TRENDS & PRODUCT INNOVATION – Keep abreast of food trends, analyzing consumer demand to create innovative products and business concepts. Collaborated on initial creation and spearheaded resulting development of burger crust pizza that **outperformed sales forecast by 50% for Thailand's largest pizza chain**. Build effective virtual and food delivery programs, directing activities for 6 brands out of one kitchen.

OPERATIONS | RESEARCH & DEVELOPMENT | BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

ADDITIONAL AREAS OF EXPERTISE

Brand Development
Market Expansion
Strategy Design
Cross-Cultural Negotiations

Financial Management
QSR
Franchising
Food Safety

Project Management
Culinary Management
Product Innovation
Revenue Growth & Planning

CAREER NARRATIVE

Destination Eats – Bangkok, Thailand

2020 – 2021

MANAGING DIRECTOR, VIRTUAL KITCHEN COMPANY

Direct activities for 6 brands and 12 direct reports out of 1 kitchen, leading all positioning, pricing, packaging and promotion strategies. Restructured kitchen operations to reduce labor cost and improve efficiency. Brands under scope of management include Bob's Big Boy, Hooters, Scoozi Pizza, PowerEats, Boom Burger (premium burgers) and Wow Cow (premium ice cream), with 3 additional brands in development.

- Spearheaded all strategic activities for PowerEats rebranding concept, **generating double-digit increase in sales after relaunching menu and hiring new marketing director.**
- **Expanded PowerEats into 5 fitness center locations in March 2021.** Additional expansion plans include opening of 20 new kiosks by end of Q1 2021 and 2 stand-alone virtual kitchens by end of Q3 2021.
- **Reduced food cost by 8%** by reassessing suppliers and raw materials and creating efficiencies in kitchen management.
- Leading Virtual Kitchen's growth strategy **expanding company into 9 Scoozi stores and all Destination Property hotels in Thailand by end of Q3 2021.**

R&D DIRECTOR – SIZZLER (2017 – 2019) | R&D DIRECTOR – THE PIZZA COMPANY (2016 – 2017)

Driving force behind internal product development and marketing strategy expansion for international operator of global food brands, driving growth for company and its subsidiaries. Thoroughly analyze business and competitor trends to increase revenue.

SIZZLER – *Promoted to help struggling brand after filling market calendar for entire next year at The Pizza Company.*

- **Guided cross-functional team of 3 in product development** for highly segmented menu with large overhead expense due to highly perishable salad bar and generous beverage menu.
- **Conceptualized and executed 4 annual full-menu revamps and 4 annual main LTO promotions** as well as several smaller promotions throughout year.
- **Developed and launched Sizzler Juice Bar at Siam Centre.** Concept later expanded to 5 stores with monthly sales of 1.4M baht, comprising over 3% of monthly product mix and .7% of sales of sales mix.
- Launched delivery program, **comprising 7-8% of annual sales.**
- **Reduced salad bar cost by 17% (from 60 to 50 baht/head) within 1 year** by spec matching lower-cost options, recreating recipes, utilizing new ingredients to drop COGS and negotiating discounts with suppliers.
- **Achieved 7% of forecasted sales in 2018 and 11% of forecasted sales in 2019** through 2 effective promotion launches.

THE PIZZA COMPANY – *Recruited by COO to enhance relationships with global partners and expand Thailand's largest pizza chain. Led team of 4 devoted to product development, overseeing operation-wide innovation, development, commercialization, JA creation, staff training, and nationwide launches.*

- **Doubled sales forecasts for 2 quarters (6% to 12%)** with 3 new non-pizza dishes, growing YOY sales every quarter after.
- Launched burger crust pizza **outperforming sales forecast by 50%.**

CUISINE CHEF INSTRUCTOR

Taught 3 levels of French cuisine (basic, intermediate, and superior) for world-renowned hospitality education institution with 23 schools on 5 continents. Created curriculum, recipes, and classes.

- **Delivered 10% additional revenue by creating Le Petit Cordon Bleu Program,** a short French cuisine cooking class for children – at least one student went on to enroll in adult program **resulting in \$40K additional revenue in student fees.**

GENERAL MANAGER

Managed market expansion for 47 boutique, short-term accommodation apartments spread across 5 sites at Hobart's waterfront. Oversaw team of 18 cross-functional, direct report staff while managing day-to-day operations and facilities during a period of extreme growth and expansion. Built cost-efficient operations strategy by creating partnerships with vendors and suppliers, capturing new business.

- **Grew property from 29 to 47 units** in 3 years with 38% increase in room offerings and 60% increase in revenue.
- **Increased new management-level employees by 50% and delivered 15% labor cost reduction** by sourcing, recruiting, hiring, training and managing all staff and building a cohesive team-based environment.
- **Decreased cleaning and maintenance costs by 20%** after streamlining room amenity and supplies purchasing.

Early Career Experience

GENERAL MANAGER, Islington Hotel, Hobart, TAS, Australia, 2009 – 2010

CHEF & PROPRIETOR, Amulet Restaurant, North Hobart, TAS, Australia, 2003 – 2008 | *Built restaurant from ground up into one of top 3 restaurants in Hobart. Coordinated booth at Taste of Tasmania festival for 3 consecutive years, resulting in \$37K profit over 7-day period. Provided VIP catering services to crown prince/princess of Denmark at Government House.*

EDUCATION

Master of Business Administration (MBA) | University of Tasmania, Hobart

Bachelor of Commerce in Hotel & Restaurant Management | University of Guelph, Canada

Certificate of Occupational Sciences in the Culinary Arts | California Culinary Academy, San Francisco