Draft MPR

Operation upgrades rev up multi-awarded Potato Corner's global expansion

Potato Corner International (PCI) is one of the most successful fast-food businesses that follow the business franchising model and it's bringing its success beyond Philippine shores.

It won consecutive Franchise of the Year awards in 2000, 2001, and 2002; which led to Franchise Hall of Fame recognition from the Philippine Franchise Association. It is also the Department of Trade and Industry's 2009 Outstanding Filipino Retailer and the PLDT SME Nation's 2010 Bossing Awardee in Retail.

Thanks to a timely upgrade in managing its power needs, the award-winning enterprise has boosted its business operations, increased its bottom line and continues to earn recognition including one from Meralco itself.

From local market to global market

From a starting capital of P150,000, Jose "Jomag" Magsaysay and four partners started operations in 1992 with a small food cart at a popular mall in the City of Mandaluyong. More than two decades later, the original cart is still rolling strong and it has others kiosks rolling with it.

"The motivation to start this business was us partners wanting to earn extra money, as we were all starting families about 20 years ago," said Magsaysay, President & CEO of PCI. "We never imagined it would lead to this. In just the first 39 days of our first store, people were already inquiring how they could open their own."

Magsaysay explains that one of the reasons for PCI's appeal is that French fries are synonymous with hamburgers. "The product is a basic staple. Fast food hamburger places have made French fries a staple, so it is easy for us to get into the mainstream," he says.

Magsaysay points out that if Potato Corner connected all the fries that it has sold since 1992, "there would be enough to go around from the earth to the moon four times."

Potato Corner has close to 500 stores, which include international locations in Indonesia, Malaysia, Panama, Egypt, Oman, Kuwait, Syria, Lebanon, Jordan, Bahrain, Saudi Arabia, Qatar, and the U.S.

PCI's game plan is targeting another 50 store launches in 2015 here and abroad. According to its website, Singapore will become its latest international beachhead.

Operational upgrades

Their aggressive expansion required an improvement in its Mandaluyong commissary, where the company conducts R&D and product development. Meralco worked closely to upgrade the commissary's electrical supply and gave free consultancy on how to use power more efficiently.

Efficient use of power is necessary since 99 percent of its stores use electric fryers. Through Meralco's Power Ideas program, the power utility has paved the way for PCI to switch to electric cookers which are 70 percent more efficient than conventional cooking.

For PCI's trailblazing business practices, Meralco honored Potato Corner International at the 2015 Meralco Luminaries Awards last March 18 as one of its outstanding Meralco Biz Partners.

The Luminaries is an annual celebration of the leaders and pioneers from local government units, small and medium-sized enterprises, and industrial and commercial corporations whose inspired partnership with Meralco contributes significantly towards a world-class Philippines.

The Meralco Biz Partners serves the energy needs of businesses from commercial and industrial segments, such as those in food manufacturing, hotels and restaurants, rubber and plastics manufacturing, business offices, construction, or agriculture whose contracted power capacity ranges from 5 kW to 400 kW.

Partnership leads to efficiency

"Potato Corner provides a template of how business success can be reached using ingenuity, innovation, and hard work," says Cecille Domingo, Head of the Meralco Biz Partners Group. "Their expansion here and abroad is just phenomenal. Meralco is excited to be a partner to their growth."

"I never thought I'd experience a utility company working closely with us to get things working well. We're so happy that Meralco is the one taking the time and the effort to meet us to improve not only our relationship but also to make our use of electricity more efficient," Magsaysay notes.

"No man is an island. It really helps if you get the right partners." [who said this? please attribute]

Kaya anuman ang negosyo, may partner *ka sa pagtupad ng pangarap mo*.
Call (02) 16210 or visit www.meralco.com.ph/biz

END