

THE INDIANAPOLIS STAR

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 10, 2010 ★ "Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty" II COR. 3:17 ★ 75 CENTS ★ CITY EDITION

MORE IN STORE FOR PIZZA FANS

MARCO'S PIZZA

» **Headquarters:** Toledo, Ohio
» **About:** It is the fastest-growing pizza company in the U.S., based on the number of stores in development since 2007.

» **History:** Marco's Pizza founder Pasquale Giammarco moved to the U.S. from Italy when he was 9 years old and grew up working in his family's pizzeria. The first Marco's Pizza store opened in Toledo in 1978.

» **Locations:** More than 200 stores in 17 states and the Bahamas. Five in the Indianapolis area.

» **Employees:** 4,200 employees nationwide and 35 corporate employees.

» **Menu:** Pizza, hot sub sandwiches, salads and Cheezybread for carryout and delivery.

» **National growth plans:** More than 60 new stores in 2010.

More than 900 new Marco's locations have been signed, which means the company will quadruple its store count in the coming years.

» **Indiana growth plans:** 60 stores in the next six to seven years.

Sources: Marco's Pizza, Star research



STEVE SANCHEZ / The Star

Harold Patrick, Marco's Pizza's point man in Central Indiana, says "people here eat pizza." The state ranks 11th in the number of per-capita pizza outlets.

CHAIN HOT ON EXPANSION

By Dana Hunsinger

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In the world of pizza, Indianapolis has a pretty big slice of the pie.

Not only is the city home to 20 big-name chains, but the state ranks 11th nationally in the number of pizza eateries per 10,000 people.

Pizza Hut. Mozzzi's. Chicago's Pizza. Papa Murphy's. Pizza

Marco's Pizza plans 60 new regional outlets

King. Domino's. Little Caesars. Papa John's. Cici's. Greek's Pizzeria. Donatos. Noble Roman's. Luca Pizza Di Roma. Jack's Pizza.

And now — Marco's Pizza.

This Toledo, Ohio-based chain, with five Indianapolis-area stores already open, plans

to blanket Central Indiana with 60 additional stores.

Could that push Indiana into the top 10 for pizza shop saturation?

Harold Patrick, the man with development and marketing rights for Marco's in Central Indiana, grins widely when he

hears that question.

"What that says is people here eat pizza," said Patrick, with Circle City Hospitality, which owns the Marco's franchise at Binford Boulevard and 71st Street. "There is no such thing as too many good of anything."

In Indiana, there are 1,674 pizza eateries, which equates to 2.61 stores per 10,000 people, according to Pizza Marketing Quarterly. That puts it well above average in places to consume pizza.

But Patrick hopes Marco's will stand out. He said it is the only major chain that was

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“Everybody eats pizza. Our goal is to be in virtually every neighborhood.”

Harold Patrick of Circle City Hospitality, Marco's franchise owner

Chain

» Industry weathered recession fairly well.

From A10

founded by an Italian, Pasquale Giammarco, and it makes its dough and sauce

fresh daily.

Its White Cheezy pizza has won national awards, including one that beat out Wolfgang Puck. That pizza has four types of cheese, including feta, as well as bacon, onions, tomatoes and a garlic butter sauce.

More Marco's are com-

ing, including another one in Fishers by the end of the year, Patrick said. Marco's won't stop at suburbia, however. It's already Downtown and plans to hit inner-city neighborhoods as well.

“Black, white, Greek or poor — everybody eats pizza,” Patrick said. “Our goal is to be in virtually every neighborhood.”

The company estimates the new stores will create 1,200 to 1,300 jobs once expansion plans are complete.

Marco's is already the fastest-growing pizza company in the U.S. and has signed deals for 900 new

stores, which will quadruple its store count in the next several years.

Locally, Marco's is seeking franchisees. Fees range from \$170,000 to \$350,000.

And of all the industries to get into, pizza is a stable one that managed to weather the recession fairly well.

Sales for the pizza industry in 2009 remained virtually flat at \$38 billion, dropping less than 1 percent from 2008, according to the National Association of Pizzeria Operators.

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The expert hands of Brandon Whitis cut The Deluxe Uno pizza at Marco's Pizza, 7002 Lake Plaza Drive, Indianapolis.