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## **Dream Dinners Revitalizes Franchise Growth, Aims to Restore Family Dinnertime** *Creator of meal assembly industry sells first franchise location after five-year hiatus*

**SEATTLE** – October 16, 2013 – [Dream Dinners](#), originator of the once exploding meal assembly industry, is on the brink of expansion as it opens its first newly-signed franchise location after five years of strategically rebuilding the family-focused brand. By adopting a pragmatic business approach from a new CEO and remaining true to the original service model, the brand grew through the recession and positioned itself as the only national concept that has solved one of the American family’s greatest dilemmas – how to get a homemade meal on the table that parents are proud of.

In 2002 two working mothers opened the first Dream Dinners store. Based on their own experience as parents searching for a quick, healthy solution to a common problem, the women found the secret to better tasting “fix-and-freeze” meals. Dedicated to giving families more time to do what they love together, Dream Dinners allows guests to take a volume approach to dinner by assembling a variety of homemade meals in-store, taking them home to freeze and preparing them at their convenience using simple instructions. It only took six months before the business expanded and soon began franchising, experiencing unprecedented growth while creating a booming new industry.

Fast-forward to 2008 when many stores were beginning to show signs of struggle. Enter new CEO Darin Leonard with an extensive background in home products/services as it relates to family values and needs.

“Dream Dinners is at the emotional core of what American consumers want and many would say they need, which is an easy, wholesome, home-cooked meal. Many don’t have the time and knowledge in the kitchen to serve their family something they are proud of. We allow them to easily create homemade dinners. This is largely why we survived,” said Leonard. “When the recession hit, competitors started to offer individual smaller meal packages to decrease their price point, but in doing so, they cannibalized the business and ceased to exist. By embracing the lifestyle of homemade meals and rejecting the instant gratification request, we have found great success.”

To achieve this, the company’s leadership team executed a systemic approach to stabilize Dream Dinners; what Leonard calls the “Core Four” approach to business that focuses on customer acquisition, increasing average ticket by creating value and driving higher customer retention all while reducing cost and complexity. They were challenged to accomplish this without wavering from the purpose, values or core business model. The end results led to game-changing growth through the following initiatives:

- Embedding systems, procedures and an organizational sales process that focused on positively impacting the lives of the customer. This led to a 40% increase in the number of first-time guests that returned for a second month.
- Implementing a comprehensive customer loyalty program that amplified overall customer retention two-fold by increasing monthly customer adoption of the Dream Dinners lifestyle to nearly 70 percent.

- Increasing the average ticket by over \$25 within one year by expanding the center of the plate to a complete meal offering of sides and desserts via add-on sales.
- Innovating throughout the supply chain and being part of the launch of a groundbreaking procurement alliance that drove food costs down by over 25 percent.
- Investing significantly into R&D, product development and testing that ultimately increased customer satisfaction on food offering by nearly 10 percent as well as reducing errors and costs across the enterprise.
- Solidifying a culture and organizational conviction that all employees regardless of their role were personally responsible for changing the lives of the Dream Dinners customers.

These tactics turned Dream Dinners into a healthy franchise system poised for growth. When Leonard arrived, the company was a \$60 million company with 220 stores and declining sales. He led the organization through a very difficult season, and today, the company is gaining momentum with revenue just under \$40 million at only 90 stores. The system has experienced consistent same-store sales growth over the past five years and average revenue per month per store has nearly doubled. September 2013 ended with the highest average same-store sales in company history.

“Our mission is simple. To lead a movement that caters to the majority of Americans who are time-starved and need an efficient dinnertime solution they can quickly prepare with their own hands and are proud to serve their family. One that helps preserve traditional family values as each customer defines it,” said Leonard.

The newest Dream Dinners franchise opened its doors on September 4, 2013 in Scottsdale, Arizona; further proof that demand for the business is strong. Many of the existing franchise owners live the lifestyle that Dream Dinners promotes – they are passionate about restoring the family unit. Leonard and his leadership team are looking for qualified prospects who are dedicated to this cause and who have exceptional business acumen to help grow the brand. As Leonard would tell you, “Restoring America isn’t easy, but nothing great ever is!”

For additional information about Dream Dinners and the franchise opportunity, please contact [franchise@dreamdinners.com](mailto:franchise@dreamdinners.com).

#### **ABOUT DREAM DINNERS:**

Founded in 2002, Dream Dinners, Inc. is the originator and leader of the meal assembly industry. Headquartered in Snohomish, Wash., Dream Dinners locations bring families together over home-cooked meals by providing an easy, time-saving solution to the dinnertime dilemma. Guests choose meals from seasonal, changing monthly menus that they prepare in-store without the hassle of planning, shopping and chopping. Dream Dinners lays out the ingredients in an easy-to-follow format so that guests can assemble a month's worth of meals in about an hour. They then take them home to freeze and cook on busy nights. With nearly 90 franchises in 30 states, Dream Dinners saves guests valuable time and money by making it easy to serve homemade meals. For more information, visit [www.dreamdinners.com](http://www.dreamdinners.com).