



2007 Operator Testimonials

MADISON JOBE

VICE PRESIDENT OF DEVELOPMENT
STOCKADE COMPANIES
WICHITA, KAN.

How do you like *Chain Leader LIVE*?

I've enjoyed it very much. This is my second year in a row to attend. It is unique compared to many of the other conferences I attend because of the base of attendees.

Is there any specific thing you liked about it? The specific topics, or was it the networking?

I enjoyed the networking. The ability to connect with your peers in the industry, and that being the primary focus in addition to the program content, is what I think is one thing that is unique.

What do you think about the fact that the majority of people here are operators as opposed to, say, vendors or suppliers?

Well I think that facilitates the opportunity for networking, because I certainly understand when suppliers or vendors or consultants, particularly if they're not only a part of the conference but sponsors of the conference, that they need a certain amount of exposure. But in many larger conferences, by just sheer numbers of people, the involvement of the vendors sometimes is prohibitive from being able to really network and spend quality time with your peers in the industry.

What did you think about the food at the conference?

There obviously is a lot of time and thought put into it by the vendors as they show specific products that they want to showcase here. I've been very pleased with the food from the breakfasts, the lunches at the fixed meals and certainly at the receptions two nights in a row. I felt they did a great job, and I enjoyed it very much.

Would you recommend *Chain Leader LIVE* to other operators?

I would absolutely recommend it for those that want to have the opportunity to hear directly from peers within the industry, whether they are individual speakers or on a panel of speakers. I would recommend it to people that want to come in and network and either expand their network of contacts or maybe reconnect with folks in the industry. If you're looking to come to a conference where you can be anonymous and go in and out of sessions and maybe not attend very much, it's probably not a conference for you.



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KEN COLE
PRESIDENT & CEO
SIZZLER USA
CULVER CITY, CALIF.

Can you tell us what you liked about *Chain Leader LIVE*?

Actually, I loved everything. I brought my vice president of marketing this year because it's hard to take all of this knowledge back that you gained from here and convey. So I brought him down so he could see and listen and learn the same things that I did. But I thought the panelists were great. I thought the branding was outstanding. Listening to the Hard Rock people, listening to Max & Erma's people and just other things--it was very inspiring. It's something that we're going through. We have a 50-year-old brand, and so we're looking at how to revitalize that ourselves. So the learnings from that were outstanding. I just thought all the panels that were set up and the people that were on the panels were very inspirational and very educational.

What do you think about the fact that most of the people here are operators as opposed to suppliers or vendors?

I think it's great because too many conferences that you go to there are too many vendors. And for being in the business as an operator, it's a great event because you're not inundated with suppliers trying to get your business. It's really truly educational, learning from other operators.

Would you recommend *Chain Leader LIVE* to other operators that you know?

Absolutely, and quite honestly next year I will bring not only my VP of marketing that I brought this year, but I'll bring my operations guy.



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TANYA MALCH PETROVNA

CHEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER
NATIVE FOODS RESTAURANT GROUP
IRVINE, CALIF.

What do you like about *Chain Leader LIVE*?

Chain Leader LIVE I thought was great because it brought together the executives of chains. So it's exactly what we work with and we all have the same issues at hand. And it was nice to share, to find solutions, but to also see our commonality and our challenges. Sometimes we are all in our own world, in our own groove, with our own people, and it's really nice to come together and see our commonalities and, again, to find some solutions and to relax knowing that I'm not alone in the world.

What do you think about the fact that most of the people here are operators as opposed to vendors and suppliers?

Great, because no one is pushing any kind of sales agenda at this point. So we can discuss product use unbiased or without anyone trying to skew our views and be honest about it and not have to worry about that.

What did you think about the food at the conference?

The people behind it were great and for me as a vegetarian of course there were not any options. As a vegetarian corporation, if I were to come back with some of my staff members, it would have been a little hard for us. We had to go and have lunch at the Marriott facility, where we could get an option. It was really nice talking to some of the suppliers. I've made some good friends with the sponsors because they also worked with vegetables and other kinds of foods, so we had a nice sharing of information. So what the food brought besides the food was great for me.

Would you recommend *Chain Leader LIVE* to other operators?

Yes, I think more should come. I liked the timing of it, it's short and quick. Good timing, the Wednesday to Friday, and we can all get back to work after our weekends. I thought the timing was good and it would be nice if more operators come, but not too many more. The size was nice, too, because you were able to communicate with mostly everyone.



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BRIAN DIXON

VICE PRESIDENT OF MARKETING
TACO JOHN'S INTERNATIONAL
CHEYENNE, WYO.

How did you like *Chain Leader LIVE*?

I like the conference very much. The content is just outstanding. The rapid pace has been very absorbing, and the amount of topics and the kind of things that were hit on seem to cover a very broad range, from operations to marketing to menu to finance to safety. And that's been very compelling.

What do you think about the fact that most of the people here are operators as opposed to suppliers or vendors?

That's very likeable. You're talking to people who are like kind or like mind and have very similar concerns, interests and a lot of common backgrounds and things that are causing people to think and to probe, and that's very appealing.

What do you think about the food at the conference?

It's been superb. Outstanding. Probably the best that I've seen anywhere. The variety and the presentation has been very neat. The way the evening meals have been put together just to sample a lot of great things has been very attractive.

Would you recommend *Chain Leader LIVE* to other operators?

Absolutely. Great place, wonderful facility and well put together. The hospitality has been outstanding. The kind of friendliness of the feeling has been very pleasant and very nice.