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Made-Rite Sandwich Company introduces new brand

Chattanooga-based Made-Rite Sandwich Company -- among the nation's leading single-serve sandwich and packaged snack makers -- is introducing a new brand for virtually all of its products.

In March, Great American Deli will replace Made-Rite, the company's primary retail brand for almost a half-century. The introduction culminates months of research, planning and preparation.

"The changing nature of the marketplace and the new markets we've entered over the last few years, coupled with our desire to develop innovative new products and processes, has led us to take this step," says Keith Sullivan, Made-Rite's president. "After doing business with Made-Rite as our main brand since 1959, it's a big change -- but also very exciting."

Made-Rite, with annual sales topping \$15.5 million, is privately held and family owned, founded by Sullivan's father, Ray Sullivan, now board chairman.

Made-Rite stocks its products in more than 4,000 convenience stores and across 10 Southeastern states, as well as some vending machines. In addition to the Made-Rite sandwich brand, the firm also markets food products bearing several additional brands, including Orpie's, Wolftever and Casa Del Toro. Great American Deli will supplant all except Casa Del Toro.

Made-Rite's "Hot-2-Go!" product line of hot-served sandwiches introduced in 1998 are sold at select convenience stores in 30 additional states and accounts for roughly 20% of total sales. Based on a patented packaging process that allows food to be served fresh longer, "Hot-2-Go!" is the fastest growing segment for Made-Rite.

Products bearing the Great American Deli brand started to appear on convenience store shelves in March 2005.

Beyond the process of converting package printing processes for the new brand, Made-Rite also will re-brand its fleet of some 80 delivery and service trucks and vans and provide its convenience store clients with new point-of-purchase signage and cooler stickers. "This kind of transformation is a big job," Sullivan says. "But it's something our customers are excited about, and it goes without saying that everyone at Made-Rite is extremely excited. We're absolutely focused on making it a smooth transition."

The new brand has been in development for months as Made-Rite's management team worked closely with some of the nation's leading marketing, branding and food industry consultants.

"It's been a well-planned process that has allowed us to thoroughly review a wide range of options and develop a new brand that better reflects who we are today and our direction for the coming decades, says

Sullivan. "The name has a solid, heartland feel and the visuals for packaging are dynamic with plenty of shelf appeal. "In consumer testing up against leading competitors, Great American Deli is a home run."

We've relied on some of the best experts in the marketing and food business," says Sullivan.

"Daniel+Douglas+Norcross in Chattanooga worked closely with us in laying out the plan and managing our new introduction to market. Together, we chose Master-McNeil for the naming phase, and Fitch:RPA to develop the actual packaged goods trademark. We've also brought onboard Mattson and Company, one of the top food consultancies, to work with us on research and development for new products as well as refining and reformulating a few of our current offerings."

Fitch:RPA and Master-McNeil, both in San Francisco, have extensive food industry experience with widely recognized brands and corporations such as On-Star®, Ben & Jerry's®, Coke© and Sara Lee®. Mattson, of Foster City, CA, has worked with General Mills, Heinz® and Williams-Sonoma, Inc. among many others.

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