

Napoleon Perdis

\$90 Million



Flamboyant cosmetics king Napoleon Perdis has spent most of this year travelling, promoting his new entry-level cosmetics range, NP Set, which is being sold through Target stores internationally. Perdis - who spent almost \$US15 million (\$18.3 million) on the launch of the brand - timed the entry into the lower-budget market well, with many consumers downsizing their make-up purchases in light of the economic downturn. In addition to expanding his brand, Perdis's United States reality television show *Get your Face On*, aired in late 2008 on cable network TLC. He is in discussions with television networks to host a similar program in Australia. Perdis now has his products in around 2000 stores in the US, along with two flagship stores in Los Angeles. Perdis a self-described working class boy made good lives on Hollywood Mulholland Drive with his wife and "muse" Soula Marie and their four daughters.

Mayoral team returned unopposed

LIBERAL councillor Nick Varvaris was re-elected unopposed for this third term as mayor of Kogarah Council on Monday night.

Middle Ward Councillor Varvaris will again be joined by Annie Tang of Unity Party, as deputy mayor, also re-elected unopposed.

Cr Varvaris and Ms Tang served as mayor and deputy mayor in 2005 before being re-elected last year.

"It is definitely an honour to be given a chance to be head of council for another term," Cr Varvaris said.

Liberal councillor Mark



All smiles: Kogarah Mayor Nick Varvaris and Deputy Mayor Annie Tang have been re-elected.

Picture: Jane Dyson

Coure had floated the idea of mounting a challenge to Cr Tang but opted against

running for the position.

"I was certainly talking to a few of my colleagues

about it", Cr Coure said.

"But we all chose the status quo.

"Annie does an outstanding job as deputy mayor".

Cr Varvaris said projects over the next 12 months included building on the economic development and CBD taskforce, and improving Railway Parade streetscape works.

"Also on this year's agenda will be the development of the Jubilee community facility and the commencement of the Penshurst Aged Care facility," Cr Varvaris said.

"It has been a good atmosphere with the council over the past 12 months.

"I'm happy that everyone felt the same way and have put their support behind me".

COSTA ANASTASIADIS

OWNER, CRUST GOURMET PIZZA BAR
31, SYDNEY

Costa Anastasiadis says all he ever wanted to do was to give his customers a quality take-away pizza option. With that simple goal, he has turned his dream into a multimillion-dollar franchising empire. Nine years ago, things were very different; then a promising soccer player in the United Kingdom's lower leagues, he gave away his career due to a family illness. Anastasiadis returned home to join his father in the family's pub in the Sydney suburb of Kogarah. The most popular item on the menu was the wood-fired pizza. A healthier pizza option was the impetus for the first Crust Gourmet Pizaa Bar, which opened in the inner-west Sydney suburb of Annandale in 2001. Crust will have 46 stores by December. Anastasiadis' fortune is an estimated \$39 million.

The downtown has actually favoured our business.

There is a misconception out there that the retail food industry is hurting during the downturn. In fact, you'll find that most takeaway and retail food business is flourishing in this climate. I'm not going to tell you otherwise; we are getting some very strong growth numbers. Stores that have recently opened are exceeding turnover projections within three months.

In the midst of success you still need to reassess your strategy.

We are in a better position than the past financial year. On average our stores have grown revenue 24 per cent during this financial year, compared with last year's 17-20 per cent.

There is a temptation to grow quickly.

We have been cautious about growing too quickly. We've held back and tried to grow organically as there is quite a bit of uncertainty. We've resisted the temptation to go all out, and try to maintain a steady growth level. Our brand is gaining momentum; we have had to be cautious with our strategy, although we have been developing a few other models. We're not unlike other businesses in that we want to expand. One idea is to develop a food-court concept [shopfront] and a "take-and-bakd" [takeaway] concept. We were hoping to have a pilot food court [outlet] by the end of the year; we've now put that back by six months. We are still finalising the model, and secondly the location. It's important for us to really nail the location, otherwise we won't be able to sell the concept as a franchise.

I've learned to wear two hats.

I came from operating a family food business. One of the hardest things has been to make myself redundant from the day-to-day running a family business as a single store owner to viewing myself as franchisor. As a store operator you look at things quite differently than when you are at the top running a franchise. For us the bottom line is that our franchises make money.

From day one your product has to be different.

Unintentionally, we have fallen into making a healthier pizza alternative. The food in our stores is on display as soon as a customer walks in; they want to see high-quality produce. We couldn't have it any



other way. This has led us into developing pizzas that cater for people's allergy and digestive disorders.

Use the downturn to your advantage.

A lot of companies will try to offer deals in these times. We've gone the other way. We are constantly changing and listening to our customers. Recently, due to the economic climate, we know-people will swap eating out for eating in. People are not going out and spending \$150 on a meal when they can spend a quarter of that on a couple of pizzas and a bottle of wine. This is a good opportunity for us to provide a premium product. In February we launched our Upper Crust range. When customers receive their orders, it's like having a high-end meal at home.

This last year has given us a sense of confidence.

The model we have invested in has worked for us. We started in a buoyant economy and invested heavily into this business. We continue to re-invest everything back into the business. Our franchises are happy, their returns are growing annually. In the next 18 months we want to see 60 stores opening up, and then we will really see the fruits of our labours.

Franchising is a get-rich slow concept.

Interview: Emily Chantiri
Article from BRW