

Wood's Salsa Rico kiosk rollout makes Mexican food portable

ALLENTOWN, PA. — Wood Dining Services is shrinking one of its popular retail brands.

Salsa Rico, one of several concepts developed by Wood over the last year, will be introduced this spring in a kiosk format, according to David Henry, director of brand and concept development for Wood.

Wood bills Salsa Rico as a “fresh Mexican grill,” meaning that no items are manufactured by outside vendors. Salsa Rico is designed to be quick-serve Mexican that Wood says is higher end than at such chains as Taco Bell. Items are made to order, using such proteins as steak, chicken and snapper.

Henry noted that a compact, portable version of Salsa Rico gives Wood the ability to move the concept around on a corporate, college or health-care campus in order to reach more people.

“The kiosk can be available on its own or

in conjunction with a food court,” Henry said. He added that the investment in a kiosk is one-third the cost of a full-service setup even though it generates as much revenue.

“We want to make sure we are meeting our clients’ dining needs no matter what the circumstances are,” Henry said. “The kiosks allow for corporate customers to more easily use foodservices for meeting rooms on special occasions. Because of this convenience, the need for takeout or catering can be eliminated.”

Last year Wood either developed or refreshed several retail brands as a way to compete with commercial brands that may be drawing Wood customers off-site for meals. They include Jazzman’s Café, Stacks Deli, Pete’s Arena, Pandini, SubVersions and Sky Ranch Grill.

Pete’s Arena, a pizza-by-the-slice concept that is more than a decade old, and Stacks Deli are examples of time-tested ideas that received new looks. Pandini’s, which sells gourmet pizzas, is an attempt to broaden pizza’s appeal with customers.

At present, only Jazzman’s — a gourmet coffee concept — is available in a smaller-than-full-size version. Wood offers Jazzman’s in a kiosk and table-top format.

Salsa Rico will be available as a kiosk, a format that costs one-third the price of full-service setup.

