

COLUMBUS BUSINESS FIRST

Flip Flops wants store double take for Columbus

Friday, February 27, 2009

Expect to hear the slapping of rubber on bare heel in the vicinity of Columbus-area malls. **Flip Flop Shops Inc.** plans to have two shops open in the area by this summer.

Franchisee Jamie Frauenberg said he is looking at Polaris Fashion Place, Easton Town Center and the Mall at Tuttle Crossing as potential destinations for the stores.

“You see stores like Lids or Sunglass Hut and those are very niche, but they’ve been around for years,” he said of merchants with a narrow retail focus.

Stores will be between 500 and 1,000 square feet, with the cash register on an island in the middle of the shop and the walls lined with flip flops – from \$10 basics to \$100 leather pairs with arch supports, air soles and other features.

Frauenberg, who declined to share sales projections for the stores, said he wanted to work for himself and was attracted to the vision of the Flip Flop Shops’ team.

Founders Todd Giatrelis and Sarah Towne opened the first store of the now four-shop business in 2004. CEO Darin Kraetsch, President Brian Curin and Chief Operating Officer Alan Woods took over franchising for the chain last year, which has 18 shops in development, including the two planned Columbus stores. Their goal: 236 franchised shops by 2013, including in Atlanta, New York, Orlando, Tampa and San Francisco.