

What Recession? Flip Flop Shops Growing Fast!



iReport —

While the economic climate throughout the past couple of years has left an increasing number of small businesses challenged, forcing some to pull the plug on growth and expansion all together, Flip Flop Shops, North America's first retail chain exclusive to the hottest brands and latest styles of flip flops and sandals, has defied the odds and grown its network of franchises at a record pace.

Behind the strength and experience of an executive team that boasts a combined 50 years of franchise experience – including the same group of major players who helped build such household brand names as Cold Stone Creamery and Moe's Southwest Grill – Flip Flop Shops has capitalized on the massive market potential of flip flops and sandals and taken this area of a booming specialty retail sector mainstream.

Today, nearly two years later, Flip Flop Shops has:

- accepted nearly 5,000 franchise applications
- generated more than \$1 million in franchise fees
- grown the concept to 11 shops nationwide, with 30 more in the pipeline

The company's mission is to provide the opportunity for anyone, in any climate, to "live, work and play with their toes exposed" while wearing the freedom of flip flops on their feet. Once reserved only for poolside or beachwear, flip flops have grown to become the "global youth uniform," as well as accepted footwear for anyone ranging from surfers to high-level corporate executives. In fact, flip flop sales exceeded those of athletic shoes for the first time in 2006, and flip flop fever has continued to build momentum ever since.

Flip Flop Shops currently has 14 locations operating in Florida, Arizona, California, Texas, Nevada, New Jersey, and Delaware, as well as forays into Vancouver, Edmonton and Guam. The company will soon open additional shops in Hawaii, Idaho, Utah, Tennessee, North Carolina and Ohio.

Company plans call for more than doubling its presence throughout the United States and Canada in 2010 and having more than 200 shops by 2013.