



Business expands international offerings

By Hillary Wundrow
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George Vardiogoreli is bringing a bite of Beloit to the Republic of Georgia. The 25-year-old entrepreneur attended a training seminar at the Broaster Company to learn how to run his own business back home.

"Chicken is very popular in Georgia," Vardiogoreli said.

Vardiogoreli will be opening the first stand to sell Broaster trademarked chicken in the Republic of Georgia. His operation will be on the first floor of a large cinema complex, Rustaveli Plaza, in the city of Tbilisi.



George Vardiogoreli (left) and Juan Vasquez in the Broaster Training Center

Of the 3.5 million people living in Georgia, more than a million residents occupy Tbilisi, Vardiogoreli said.

Vardiogoreli plans to hire three to five employees and will work together with the movie theater owners to promote each other's businesses.

With the only major chain restaurant being McDonald's, Vardiogoreli thought Broaster trademarked chicken might work well in the developing country.

"The fast food business is growing," Vardiogoreli said.

Currently there are no chains or franchises offering brand name chicken products in the Republic of Georgia.

While Vardiogoreli was working for an electrical distribution company, he spotted information about Broaster on its Web site.

The entrepreneur was curious about Broaster's branded food concept which is offered with an annual no-cost licensing rather than as a franchise program with fees.

He then started communicating with Juan Vasquez, Broaster export sales manager, about how he could purchase equipment and run his own operation.

Vardiogoreli's college degree in business and English language skills combined with his commitment to expanding his future business impressed Vasquez.

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"The most critical part is an individual who will remain with the business for many years," Vasquez said.

After reviewing Vardiogoreli's marketing plan, Vasquez contacted the Consulate in Georgia to arrange for the entrepreneur to spend a few days at the test kitchen at Broaster company, headquartered in Beloit.

In the kitchen Vardiogoreli would learn how to cook the chicken and maintain the Broaster equipment from Vasquez as well as Food Service Technician Scott Johnston.

Under the watchful eyes of Johnston, Vardiogoreli cooked his first batch of Broaster chicken, ribs, battered shrimp and other items Friday morning.

Broaster President and Chief Operating Officer Richard Schrank, as well as Jerald Veit, International Trade Specialist for the Export Assistance Center of the Wisconsin Department of Commerce, were on hand to sample Vardiogoreli's first batch of fried food.

Veit has helped Broaster expand its international coverage by adding its product information to the U.S. Commercial Services Web site.

After the group enjoyed the taste testing, Vardiogoreli had to go back to the kitchen to learn how to clean machine filters.

Based upon the success Broaster has experienced in Russia, Vasquez is optimistic about the possibilities for the Republic of Georgia.

One of Broaster's newest distributors, Margus, LTD, is developing the branded concept throughout the Russian Federation. Two locations serving Broaster Chicken are already in place in Moscow and eight more will be operation by the end of 2004.

The man responsible for setting up all the McDonald's in Turkey has also met with Broaster to set up a program for distributing in Turkish convenience stores, Vasquez said.

Broaster deals with 55 countries worldwide, Vasquez said.

Broaster is also popular at home with 5,000 operations in the United States. In addition, Broaster's products are in 173 U.S. military hospitals and one piece of equipment is in the Pentagon, Vasquez said.

Since its inception in 1954, the Broaster Company has become famous all over the globe for its line of food service products including pressure fryers, ventless fryers, rotisserie ovens, broilers, merchandisers, frozen foods, marinades, breadings, soups, stuffing, sauces and other related items.