

Former Yankee Candle CEO Craig Rydin Joins LNK Partners

Written by Australian Business

WHITE PLAINS, N.Y., Sept. 12, 2013 /PRNewswire/ -- LNK Partners, a private equity firm focused on the consumer/retail sector, announced that Craig Rydin, a leading consumer products industry executive, has joined the firm. Highlights of Mr. Rydin's experience include: 12 years as Chairman and CEO of Yankee Candle Company, Inc., where he and his team executed a strategy that increased the company's market capitalization by over \$1

billion

more than doubled wholesale points of distribution to over 20,000 doors, and opened over 300 new retail stores; and, 23 years at Campbell Soup Company, including as President of Godiva Chocolatier Worldwide, where he delivered sales growth of 19% CAGR and EBIT growth of 31% CAGR.

Mr. Rydin will be working with and providing perspective to existing LNK portfolio companies, as well as helping to evaluate and pursue new investment opportunities for the firm. LNK's current portfolio includes investments in Au Bon Pain, Natural Food Holdings (Niman Ranch), and Beachbody. Prior investments have included the support of PVH's acquisition of Tommy Hilfiger, and Ariat.

Details of Mr. Rydin's consumer products career include:

- A 12-year veteran of Yankee Candle, as Chairman and CEO, he ran the leading candle and home fragrance business with a nationwide base of over 500 company-owned retail stores, a vibrant and growing catalog and online business, an expanding North American wholesale customer network, and international distribution.

- A 23-year veteran of Campbell's, he held positions of increasing responsibility. He began in marketing and grew to Vice President and General Manager of its Pepperidge Farm frozen foods, bakery, and biscuit brands. From Pepperidge Farm, he advanced to President of Campbell's Godiva Chocolatier Worldwide. Subsequent to Godiva, he was Global President of Campbell's

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Away From Home Division, its foodservice operations. He was an Officer of Campbell's for his last six years with the organization. Prior to Campbell's, he was in sales and marketing management at Liggett Group.

Mr. Rydin is currently on the Board of Directors of Au Bon Pain, PVH, and Priceline.com.

He received a Bachelor of Arts from University of New Hampshire and earned a MBA from Sacred Heart University

For more information on LNK Partners and their investment professionals, please visit LNKpartners.com.

About LNK Partners LNK Partners is a private equity firm focused on backing strong management teams who are building outstanding consumer and retail businesses. LNK's partners have extensive experience successfully investing in, operating, or serving on the boards of many leading consumer and retail businesses, including Staples, Quaker Oats, Pepsi, Gatorade, Panera Bread, Life Time Fitness, Levi Strauss, PVH/ Tommy Hilfiger /Ca Ivin Klein, Campbell's, Pepperidge Farm, Godiva, and Yankee Candle.

LNK also is distinguished by the high degree of flexibility in the type, structure and size of its investments, and its willingness to be a minority or majority shareholder. LNK invests in a broad range of investment types, including growth capital, buyouts and recapitalizations. LNK typically invests up to \$150 million per transaction.

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