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The Best Chocolate Cake in the World: Exclusivity vs Massification

“Massification is a possible scenario due to the dimensions of Brazil and the United States. I have many question marks about this topic. In Brazil I don’t know what will happen. I think it is hard to lose quality because the cake requires a lot of handwork, and this work cannot be dismissed. So, I believe that it’s difficult to set up an assembly line, because it will always need the manual skills to spread the mousse, to apply the coverage... but I don’t know, everything is possible...”

At the end of 2010, *The Best Chocolate Cake in the World* was being sold in Portugal, Brazil, Spain, and United States. Carlos Braz Lopes, the creator of this chocolate cake graduated in Business Administration at the Catholic University of Portugal in 1981. Braz Lopes never imagined that his product could be sold in so many different markets in such a short period of time. Moreover, other openings all over the world were in Braz Lopes’ agenda.

In face of the size reached by *The Best Chocolate Cake in the World*, the company needed to look into the future cautiously and rigorously, in order to continue to decide to keep growing through massification or via exclusivity.

Vasco Braga da Costa Correia Simão prepared this case under the supervision of Nuno Magalhães Guedes, in partial fulfillment of the Dissertation requirements for the degree of MSc in Business Administration, at Universidade Católica Portuguesa, in January 2011, as a basis for class discussion rather than to illustrate either effective or ineffective handling of a management situation.

1. Company Background

The Best Chocolate Cake in the World – or rather *O Melhor Bolo de Chocolate do Mundo*, in its native Portuguese tongue – appeared in 1987 in Paris when Braz Lopes was searching for innovative ideas for his restaurant, *Mercado de Santa Clara*, in Lisbon. What would be *The Best Chocolate Cake in the World*, in the beginning only had the ambition to be a different dessert, similar to the meringue and chocolate cake of the well-known French brand *Fauchon*.

The dessert was such a success that Braz Lopes began to sell it for take away to some of the restaurant's usual customers. They started to ask for the cake to celebrate their own and family anniversaries. At the same time, Braz Lopes brought the chocolate cake to his cookery school in Lisbon, *Cozinhomania*, to give a chocolate taste to his students. The chocolate's smell attracted the people who passed by on the street, that wanted to check how good it was. "It is the best chocolate cake in the world", explained Braz Lopes. The name caught on and the sales fired up. In 2001, Braz Lopes was selling more than 30 cakes per weekend and he started to refuse orders due to lack of production capacity.

In 2002, Braz Lopes decided to open a store in Campo de Ourique, Lisbon, exclusively to sell the chocolate cake. He needed an initial investment of 150,000 Euros and 4 employees – 2 responsible for sales, and the other 2 in charge of the cake's confection – to set up the store. "It was impossible that the business did not work, because I was already selling the cake in huge quantities", revealed Braz Lopes.

Simultaneously, Braz Lopes started to supply the cake for selected restaurants and cafeterias.

Some years later Braz Lopes said, kidding with one Brazilian customer, "One day I will open a store in your country to sell the cake". "I was far from knowing that this would be a reality in the near future", clarified Braz Lopes. This Brazilian invasion happened because the Brazilian magazine *Veja* recommended *The Best Chocolate Cake in the World*, in Lisbon, as one of the 10 best places to eat in the Portuguese capital city. So, in 2007 a Brazilian friend of Braz Lopes, Celina Dias, called him and suggested the opening of a store in São Paulo. It was the first step towards internationalization.

Braz Lopes is a simple person. "I want this business to give me pleasure, I want to enjoy weekends and dining out with friends, I want to have good vacations. I don't want this business to cause distress and anxiety because I have several stores around the world", said Braz Lopes. For him "Making money is as simple as making a chocolate cake. You just need to bring something unique to the market because there is always a niche for it".

From 2007 on, *The Best Chocolate Cake in the World* was spread around the world. It was present in Brazil, in Spain and in the United States of America. **Exhibit 1** shows some

stores. In 2010, The Best Chocolate Cake in the World had three factories, in Portugal, in Brazil and in the United States. In Portugal alone, *The Best Chocolate Cake in the World* was now producing 150,000 chocolate cakes per year.

2. How to profit from just one store

From 2002 until 2007, *The Best Chocolate Cake in the World* only had one single store. But this fact never prevented Braz Lopes to increase the annual turnover. “Why do you need to have 10 stores to make money?”, questioned Braz Lopes.

First of all, for Braz Lopes “The success of this store is the name of its product and the fact that the store sells virtually one product alone”. These two factors were crucial to attract the consumers’ curiosity. But of course, the success only happened because *The Best Chocolate Cake in the World* is a high-quality product. “The cake is good and the consumers keep telling me that everyday. It was the quality of the cake that caused the word of mouth. And this word of mouth allowed the concept to expand”, claimed Braz Lopes.

Despite having only one store, Braz Lopes increased significantly the turnover of *The Best Chocolate Cake in the World*. This growth was also due to the expansion of selling points all over Portugal. **Exhibit 2** shows the list of selling points in Portugal. In 2002 the turnover in Portugal was 41,500 Euros and in 2010 a turnover of 750,000 Euros was expected. **Exhibit 3** shows the turnover evolution along the years.

At the same time, Braz Lopes had a very well defined criterion where he only supplied a very selected range of restaurants and cafeterias all over the country.

The structure of *The Best Chocolate Cake in the World* was obviously greater than before since the product started to be available in several points throughout Portugal. In spite of not having more stores, the selling points increased along with the need to maintain the exact same quality in these places. Having more selling points required the factory to produce more, to have a more accurate accounting system, and a person to check everyday if the sales value matched the cakes that left the factory. So, there was a more professionalized administrative structure than before, when the chocolate cake was sold only in the store.

Braz Lopes had an advantage when he opened his store in Campo de Ourique. He knew how the market would react to his chocolate cake, because he already sold it in vast quantities in his Restaurant and in Cozinhomania. This great confidence allowed Braz Lopes to face the market with a different self-assurance. “I didn’t wake up one day and said, I will sell chocolate cakes. When I opened the store I knew what I was doing”, clarified Braz Lopes.

For Braz Lopes, Portugal was the market for *The Best Chocolate Cake in the World*. “Portugal is my business. I want to continue with this format and also with the Campo de Ourique store, because it was here that all started and it is here where I enjoy selling *The Best Chocolate Cake in the World*”, said Braz Lopes.

3. How to create a successful brand

A brand’s success goes beyond the product’s quality. It is a combination of factors like understanding the consumers’ perception, knowing your target, making an association between the brand name and its emotional aspects, having a sense for differentiation, being able to create a new experience, among others.

But for Braz Lopes, *The Best Chocolate Cake in the World* was not made under these parameters. “This business was not made with all these things. It was just a product that started in my restaurant, and after that it was introduced in *Cozinhomania*. Later on, I opened the store, and subsequently it went abroad”, stated Braz Lopes.

Today, people think that the brand name – *The Best Chocolate Cake in the World* – was a genius formula to create a successful brand. “The name of the cake was not thought at all in order to increase its success. The name comes from my dramatization. Those who know me recognize that I exaggerate everything I am talking about. For me, there are never dozens of people, there are always thousands”, explained Braz Lopes.

The brand name created enormous curiosity among consumers. For Braz Lopes “the name of the cake was a great provocative factor for all the curiosity generated”. In all stores there is the story of the cake in the menus and placemats. “I think that people don’t come to eat the cake because of my story, people come to taste the cake because of its name. I don’t know if in Portugal people like the story of the cake, but abroad they love it”, said Braz Lopes. So, the owners of the stores in Brazil, Spain, and United States “seize the opportunity to emphasize the story and make it a more homemade chocolate cake story”, affirmed Braz Lopes. The promotion of the concept was always a concern in every store of *The Best Chocolate Cake in the World*.

A brilliant example of a situation regarding the impact of the name on the consumers mind was the episode that happened in the early days of the first Brazilian store. One day, in São Paulo, a man entered the store and said to Braz Lopes, “I don’t like chocolate, I will not buy anything, but I want to know the guy who thought of this name, it’s genial”. “Imagine how I my ego was, what else could I say?”, expressed Braz Lopes.

The success of a brand is also associated with not missing opportunities. Braz Lopes never missed an opportunity to amplify and to spread his business a little bit around the world. “I’m sitting in a coffee shop and I receive calls from people saying that they would like to open a new store in Brazil, New York, wherever, and ask me if I’m interested”,

claimed Braz Lopes to explain how people have been showing their interest on investing in this business.

Probably, all these factors are related to Braz Lopes's personality. "I never realized quite well how my personality could be valuable for the brand. Nowadays, I understand that there is not an entrepreneur that doesn't want to open a store with me as a partner. People come to me and ask if I want to make a partnership with them. I know that in Brazil they will obviously be able to sell the cake without me there. But they understand that it is important to have the story of the Portuguese guy associated to the brand, and they don't abdicate from it. So, all these people know that it is interesting and, more importantly, they will benefit by having the protagonist close to the consumers", argued Braz Lopes.

4. Product, Price, Promotion, and Place

4.1. Product

The Best Chocolate Cake in the World was sold in every store as the main product. The chocolate cake was an idea developed by Braz Lopes that consisted of discontinuous crispy chocolate meringue and smooth chocolate mousse layers, glazed with a chocolate ganache. *The Best Chocolate Cake in the World* was sold in two versions, a Bittersweet with 70% cacao content and a Traditional with 55% of cacao. The chocolate cake was sold in two different sizes 7" and 11"¹. **Exhibit 4** shows how the chocolate cake looks like.

In the United States and Brazil the chocolate cake had the Kosher certificate. "This certificate allows the Jewish community to eat the cake. Jews represent a significant percentage of consumers. So, having this authentication is essential for the business success in these two countries", justified Braz Lopes.

In Portugal, the store offered several services beyond the sale of the chocolate cake. *The Best Chocolate Cake in the World* was present in weddings, events, birthday parties and home deliveries. But this last service was only provided if the consumer asked for a reasonable quantity.

The Braz Lopes' store concept was to have small stores. "The stores are always small since the idea is to sell the whole cake. But this does not happen in all the countries where we sell. Each country is quite different from one another. In Portugal, for instance, there is a family concept, while in the United States and Brazil each family members lives in a different part of the country, usually in a different State", clarified Braz Lopes.

¹ 18 and 28 centimeters

4.2. Price

The price policy of *The Best Chocolate Cake in the World* was defined to be at the same level of the competition for a cake with similar characteristics. In Portugal, Braz Lopes himself set the prices. In the other countries, “the prices are defined by the local partners because they know the market better”, considered Braz Lopes. For him, “the price is accessible to the target market that we want to reach”. **Exhibit 5** shows the prices in the different countries.

4.3. Promotion

Initially, the promotion in Portugal was only done by word of mouth. “The name created great impact. I didn’t need to worry about that”, claimed Braz Lopes. In 2009, Braz Lopes hired a communication agency to work with him. “When I understood that the chocolate cake was gaining a substantial dimension and there were some copy attempts I decided to spread even more the name of the chocolate cake. Nowadays, *The Best Chocolate Cake in the World* has a Facebook page, I go to television shows and to some events where *The Best Chocolate Cake in the World*, the official one”, is present, explained Braz Lopes.

In the United States, Brazil and Spain communication agencies were hired to promote the chocolate cake, in addition to the word of mouth. The openings of the two New York stores were the events that had the biggest impact on the media. It attracted the interest of diverse media channels, from television to newspapers and created a lot of buzz around it. **Exhibit 6** shows some articles that promoted the brand.

Beyond the more professionalized promotion there were some stories and testimonials, which can be told as true examples of the impact that this chocolate cake was having on consumers. The first story was a comment that Braz Lopes saw on the Internet, “I was at home and I saw it in the newspaper. I thought these guys were quite pretentious because it was not possible to be the best chocolate cake in the world, but I didn’t resist and I went there. And what I have to say to you is, today don’t go to the beach, go to *The Best Chocolate Cake in the World* store and taste it”, said a Brazilian woman. And the second story also happened in Brazil. “When I went to São Paulo I flew the Portuguese flag, to announce my presence. I thought I was nothing more or less than the Queen, so while I was there I flew the flag. The consumers got used to it and when they saw the flag they knew that the Portuguese owner was there”, told Braz Lopes.

“Today all the brand’s promotion is made in a more professional way”, clarified Braz Lopes.

4.4. Place

The company ran its own distribution operations. In Portugal, the firm had vans that were responsible to deliver the chocolate cake all over Portugal, as well as in Madrid. In the United States and Brazil the system was similar, with vans delivering to the stores.

“In Portugal the sales in the store had a much bigger impact on the annual turnover of the firm”, said Braz Lopes. In 2009, the in store sales represented 70% of the annual turnover, against 30% on selling points.

5. Internationalization strategy

The issue of going abroad was always raised by cake-loving consumers' initiative. These cake lovers were attracted by the simplicity of the concept behind the cake. And so, they looked to this business as a way to change the path of their lives.

The business concept, as the brand name says, turns around *The Best Chocolate Cake in the World*. “It is just a chocolate cake, 90% of people like chocolate”, magnified Braz Lopes. All the stores are small, have *The Best Chocolate Cake in the World* as the central product, and some other products to complement the cake. **Exhibit 7** shows the Menu of New York Nolita's store.

The position adopted by Braz Lopes was always being a junior partner. “I don't want to be a senior partner. As there are persons interested in opening stores with my product, so I want to start earning money in a different way, without investment because the investment was already done and it came from my head”, explained Braz Lopes.

For him “the reason behind the internationalization was a matter of mere curiosity, I didn't have this intention. I took a chance outside of Portugal only because someone suggested it and I decided to take the risk. It is as simple as that”.

“I never prepared the brand for an expansion, so this is why I didn't have an image standardization for *The Best Chocolate Cake in the World*”, justified Braz Lopes. **Exhibit 8** shows the logos of *The Best Chocolate Cake in the World* in different countries.

Concerning the financial issues, Braz Lopes never ran into debt to open new stores, always keeping a controlled risk profile. “The biggest effort is always made by the person who wants to open the business. I will not die from hunger if that store does not succeed”, elucidated Braz Lopes.

5.1. Brazil

In Brazil it was a completely different story. Here Braz Lopes was not just a junior partner. In November 2007, the first store outside of Portugal was opened in São Paulo, on Rua Óscar Freire, the 8th most luxurious street in the world and second in the Americas², just behind 5th Avenue. Here you could find the most prestigious brands like, *Calvin Klein*, *Dior*, *Emporio Armani*, *Cartier*, *Montblanc*, among others. This store emerged through a 50/ 50 partnership between Braz Lopes and Dias. They made an investment of 75,000 Euros.

The immediate success of *The Best Chocolate Cake in the World* in São Paulo must be assigned to the superb location. “We did an opening without fuss, without any promotion, but people were curious. People started to enter, tasted the cake and began spreading the news”, said Braz Lopes.

This decision of bringing *The Best Chocolate Cake in the World* to Brazil demanded the adaptation of the brand and even the production process of the cake, because the weather in São Paulo is much more humid than in Portugal. “The biggest test was to cross the ocean, because here the cake requires some changes, like longer baking time”, explained Dias³.

Other operational aspects were taken in consideration in order to maximize the business on the other side of the Atlantic. “Other concerns emerged, such as the visual identity of the business, the environment inside the store, and the transformation of the kitchen into a functional area. The idea was to create a replicable model, since the next step was to franchise”, said Dias².

In August 2010 there were six franchised stores in Brazil: three in São Paulo, one in Brasília, one in Rio de Janeiro, and another one in Salvador. The franchising cost was defined around the 110,000 Euros with an expected return payback period of around 24 months. **Exhibit 9** shows the Brazilian franchising registration form and some legal conditions. For 2010, a turnover of 790,000 Euros, for Brazil alone was expected.

5.1.1. The closure of two franchised stores

In the beginning the franchising experience was not quite successful. The first two franchising stores in Brazil were closed.

Both franchised stores belonged to the same owner and where located in São Paulo. One store was in Vila Madalena neighborhood and the other one was in Higienópolis. Each of the owner’s daughters was responsible for one store.

² - According to Excellence Mystery Shopping International.

³ - Valor Económico - Brazilian Newspaper.

For Braz Lopes, the reason of these two closures was that “the franchisees were never in their stores; and also, one of the main franchising principles is the constant presence of the responsible in the store in order to evaluate what is happening and take care of the business. And sometimes, once they buy a successful business, people think they can set it up and leave it to their employees”.

Braz Lopes and Dias tried to block the opening of the store in Higienópolis, because they considered that it was too big. This was against *The Best Chocolate Cake in the World's* concept, which consisted of having small stores in order to sell the entire cakes instead of slices.

After these two failures, Braz Lopes and Diaz opened another store in Vila Madalena. “We opened a store on the other side of the street, because we believed that it was an excellent location and it would work. These two girls opened their stores and handed them to their employees. And there is no business that survives in these conditions, unless it sells gold popcorns”, justified Braz Lopes.

5.1.2. The loss of control in Brazil through licensing

On August 27th 2010, Braz Lopes and Dias sold their position in the Brazilian market. The Brazilian fast-food company Casa do Pão de Queijo⁴ acquired the rights to use *The Best Chocolate Cake in the World* brand. “We said that we could be interested in selling and this opportunity popped up”, clarified Braz Lopes.

The rights to use the brand were sold to the Brazilian company. “The brand was sold. I made a contract where I will receive royalties for brand use”, explained Braz Lopes.

From this date on, Casa do Pão de Queijo had the absolute control over the brand. “I don't have any control over the brand. Casa do Pão de Queijo can make everything they want. They can open as many stores and selling points in Brazil as they want until the end of the contract”, highlighted Braz Lopes.

Another condition of this licensing agreement was to hire Dias to work at Casa do Pão de Queijo. Dias was hired to be the Marketing Director of the Brazilian firm. Therefore, “this asset would be important for Casa do Pão de Queijo to maximize the performance of this new business area since she is the Brazilian face of *The Best Chocolate Cake in the World*”, explained Braz Lopes.

⁴ - A Brazilian fast-food company founded in 1967. It was the first company in Brazil selling “cheese buns” and it is also responsible for making cheese rolls, a national tradition. In 2010, Casa do Pão de Queijo owned more than 400 stores and 400 selling points all over Brazil. And it had the highest number of franchisees in Brazil.

5.2. Spain

The Best Chocolate Cake in the World arrived in Madrid by the name of *La Mejor Tarta de Chocolate del Mundo*. The interest started in 2003 when the Spaniard cake lover, Isabel Ruiz-Morales, lived in Lisbon.

In November 2008, Ruiz-Morales returned to Spain and saw *The Best Chocolate Cake in the World* as an excellent opportunity to develop her own business. For that reason, Ruiz-Morales proposed to Braz Lopes to establish a partnership.

Ruiz-Morales's goal was to sell the cake in Madrid without any physical space associated to it, like a store or a restaurant. But in order to have this freedom Ruiz-Morales needed a space where she could stock the cakes without losing quality. So, it was under these conditions that the partnership with Iria Romero, a restaurant owner in the centre of Madrid, appeared. Romero had a restaurant that had sufficient refrigerator space to preserve the cakes. "The goal of this partnership was not to sell the cake in the restaurant. The partnership emerged because there was a need to find space to stock the cake", said Braz Lopes. The chocolate cake started to be sold to local restaurants, to other retailers, and to some individual consumers.

This storage space in Madrid provided the opportunity to evaluate the consumers' cake acceptance. And the market reacted so well that two years later, in November 2010, Ruiz-Morales and Romero opened a store to sell solely the cake. "This store was located near by Calle Serrano, where we can find the most prestigious brands in the world", stated Braz Lopes. And now, at the end of 2010, we are analyzing the opening of a factory in Madrid".

In 2010 the expected turnover was 110,000 Euros. **Exhibit 3** shows the turnover evolution along the years since 2008.

5.3. United States of America

In June 2010 by the hand of Braz Lopes and Adriano Lucas – a local Portuguese partner – *The Best Chocolate Cake in the World* arrived in New York City. Located in the centre of Manhattan, in the Nolita neighborhood on Spring Street, this first shop gave the opportunity to New Yorkers to taste the Portuguese confection. "Opening a shop right here gives us a quite spoiled ego", said Braz Lopes about the opening of Nolita's shop.

With a degree in Business and Administration at the Catholic University of Portugal and a previous career in investment banking, Lucas was a cake lover. Therefore, being a fan of this cake, he saw *The Best Chocolate Cake in the World* as an opportunity to start his own business.

After the opening of Nolita's store, Braz Lopes and Lucas decided to open another shop in the Big Apple. In October of 2010, the second store was officially inaugurated in New York City. This store was located in Dumbo, that is, a rustic area near some promising art-galleries, picturesque restaurants, and neighborhood bars. "The reason why we opened another shop was because the factory was already there and the neighborhood was becoming a trendy zone with high purchasing power", clarified Braz Lopes.

The buzz around the cake's name was stunning. There were several comments around it. On the one hand, there were people that subscribe the name of the chocolate cake. "This is without a doubt the most amazing chocolate cake in the world. Call it cake, call it what you want but let there be no doubts, this is the best chocolate cake ever!", said a New Yorker cake lover⁵. But on the other hand, there were opinions against the name of the chocolate cake. "If you're going to name your shop *The Best Chocolate Cake in the World*, you've got to at least bring it into, say, the Top 10, especially in New York City, where there are already dozens of excellent chocolate cake desserts to choose", criticized a New Yorker⁴.

Lucas and Braz Lopes were scheduling the opening of a new store in Madison, New York. And a store in Washington D.C. was also in the Braz Lopes' agenda. In 2010, the expected turnover in the United States was 120,000 Euros.

6. Exclusivity vs Massification

By the end of 2010, Braz Lopes was facing a dilemma. He needed to explore new ways to expand his business within the next few years. This was a delicate decision because it could affect the positioning of *The Best Chocolate Cake in the World* in the consumers' mind, and consequently the future of the company in the market.

One option was to stay focused on *The Best Chocolate Cake in the World's* distinctive competence: delivering a high-quality chocolate cake to a very specific target. This approach offered many revenues to the firm along the past years and didn't change the perception of the consumers. However, this choice was making the product available for only a niche of consumers and this fact could undermine the future growth of the firm.

Alternatively, the other option was to increase quickly the annual turnover. *The Best Chocolate Cake in the World* could open several stores and extend the business to local franchises in the markets where the product was present, like it did in Brazil. This option could provide a quick return and huge growth rates. But, this alternative could change the perception of the consumers and compromise the future existence of *The Best Chocolate Cake in the World*.

⁵ - The Best Chocolate Cake in the World - Facebook

So, the alternatives were quite clear. The firm could opt between a fast and massive growth or a slow and exclusive one. This was what Braz Lopes had on his hands, besides a tasteful slice of his cake, to decide in which way *The Best Chocolate Cake in the World* should grow in the future.

7. Exhibits

Exhibit 1 Stores



Lisbon



Oscar Freire, São Paulo



Nolita, New York



Madrid

Source: The Best Chocolate Cake in the World - Facebook

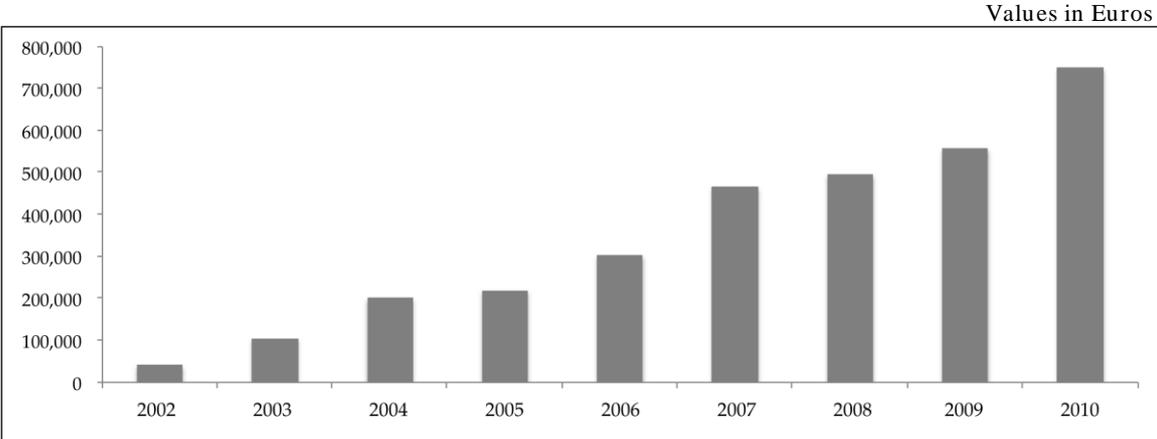
Exhibit 2 List of selling points in Portugal

North	
Aveiro	Loja do Chá
Figueira da Foz	Gourmet em casa
Matosinhos	Confeitaria Primavera
Porto (Foz)	Augusto Leite
Center	
Alenquer	Madalena Santos
Batalha	Pastelaria Panetto
Coimbra	Coimbra Shopping Loja In
Leiria	Pastelaria Panetto
Pousos	Pastelaria Panetto
Lisbon area	
Av. Roma	D.O.P. Centro Comercial Acqua Roma
Campo Pequeno	Café au Chocolat
Carcavelos	Carcavelos Sushi
Cascais	Mercearia da Vila Santini
Chiado	Flower Power Food Santini
Parque das Nações	Gelataria Emanha
Sacavém	Paulo Santos
Setúbal	Kitsch&Chic
Sintra (Linhó)	Pátio da Pi
Telheiras	Dom Brigadeiro
South	
Algarve	ICON, Interior Design & Gourmet

Source: The Best Chocolate Cake in the World

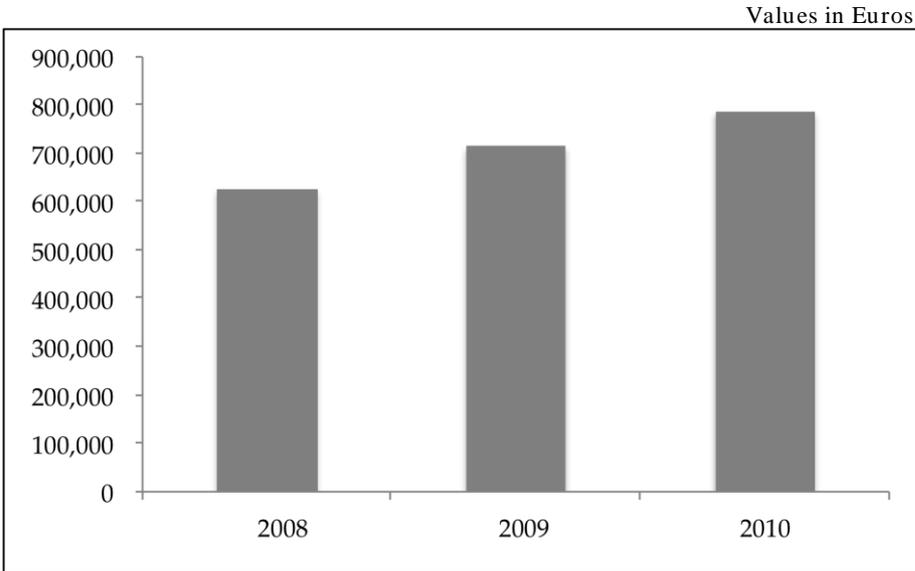
Exhibit 3 Annual turnover evolution

Portugal



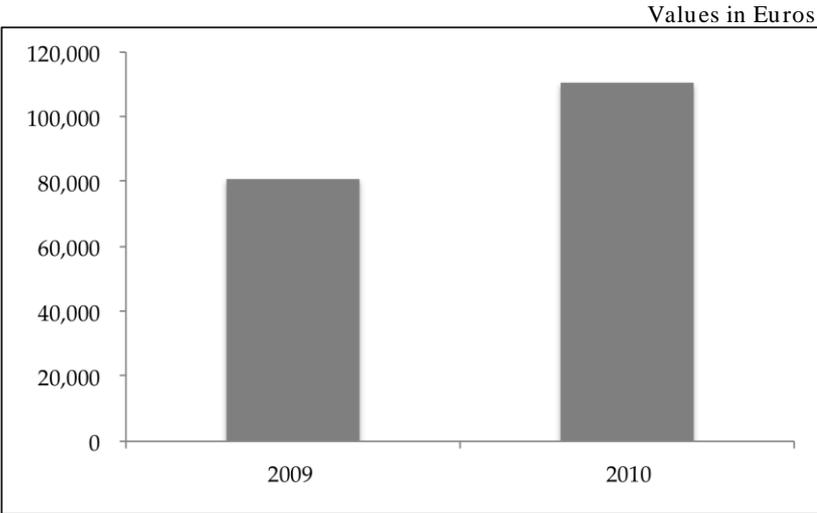
Source: The Best Chocolate Cake in the World

Brazil



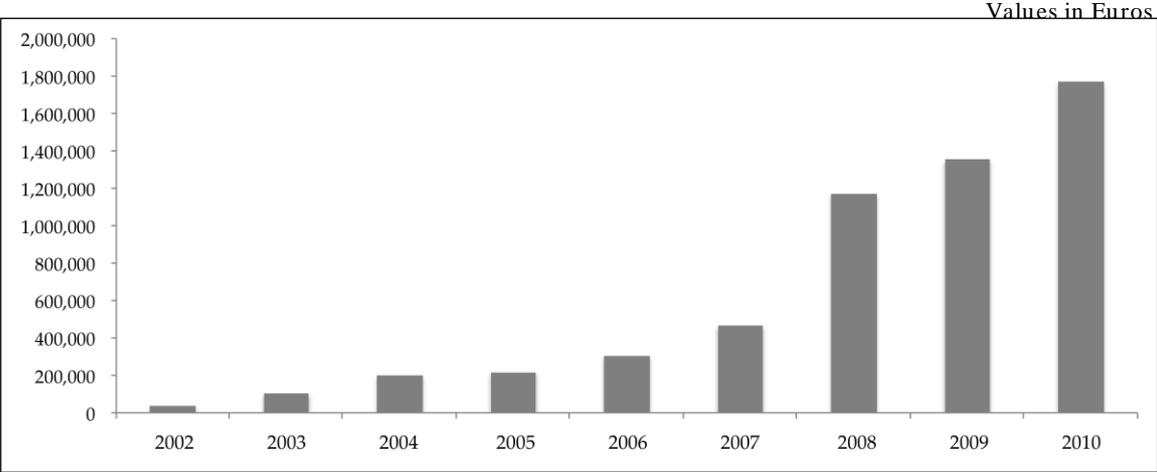
Source: The Best Chocolate Cake in the World

Spain



Source: The Best Chocolate Cake in the World

Cumulative turnover – Portugal, Brazil, Spain and United States



Source: The Best Chocolate Cake in the World

Exhibit 4 The Best Chocolate Cake in the World



Cake in the World - Facebook

Source: The Best Chocolate

Exhibit 5 Prices

	Lisbon	São Paulo	New York	Madrid
	Price in Euros	Price in Reais	Price in US dollars	Price in Euros
Slice	2,30	8.90	6.50	4.50
7" Cake	20	69	35	22
11" Cake	28	99	56	32

Source: The Best Chocolate Cake in the World

Exhibit 6 Articles

Diário Notícias - Portuguese Newspaper

Diário de Notícias

INÍCIO DESPORTO CARTAZ BOLSA GENTE ESPECIAIS GALERIAS ARQUIVO

Portugal Globo Economia Ciência Artes TV & Media Opinião Pessoas

ECONOMIA

Bolo de chocolate provoca gula em São Paulo

por

DUARTE CALVÃO10 Dezembro 2007

Filas de espera à porta, 500 fatias vendidas aos domingos, encomendas a superar as expectativas, elogios em blogues de gastronomia. Com a sua famosa informalidade, os brasileiros que vão à nova loja de O Melhor Bolo de Chocolate do Mundo, que abriu em São Paulo há menos de um mês, querem conhecer o "portuga" que detém a receita que tanto os delicia. E Carlos Braz Lopes, o lisboeta que abriu a loja original em Campo de Ourique há cinco anos, faz as honras da casa, surpreendido e reconhecido com o êxito imediato da filial paulista. A tal ponto que, num inquérito online da Folha de São Paulo, o Melhor Bolo de Chocolate do Mundo anda numa acérrima disputa com a Cau Chocolates como "melhor doceria" da cidade, cada uma com 36% dos votos.

"Fizemos uma abertura sem alarido, sem qualquer tipo de promoção, mas as pessoas estavam curiosas, entravam, provavam o bolo e começaram a espalhar a notícia", diz Carlos Braz Lopes, que atribui à localização privilegiada da loja, na Rua Óscar Freire, no bairro dos Jardins, a zona mais chique de São Paulo, grande parte deste êxito.

"Antes da abertura, no tapume da obras, a única coisa que estava escrita era 'Lisboa-São Paulo'. Acho que isso também despertou curiosidade, porque estou numa zona onde residem pessoas com alto nível de rendimentos, que costumam viajar e gostam de ir a Portugal.

Carlos Braz Lopes já está a pensar em novas aventuras comerciais no Brasil e uma delas poderá passar pela abertura de outras lojas de doces. Em menos de um mês, já recebeu propostas de abrir Melhores Bolos de Chocolate do Mundo noutras bairros de São Paulo e no Rio de Janeiro. Mas para já prefere consolidar o êxito da primeira loja, deixando passar o efeito da novidade. Depois, se tudo continuar a correr bem, logo se vê.

Carlos Braz Lopes tem como sócia a jornalista brasileira Celina Dias, que acreditou no projecto e lhe propôs o negócio, mesmo antes de conhecer a loja de Campo de Ourique. Fizeram um investimento de cem mil euros, que tudo indica que será rapidamente recuperado. "Agora, tenho já várias pessoas que, com o êxito da loja, dizem que querem ser sócias. Mas agora é tarde, deviam ter arriscado na altura certa, como nós fizemos", declara.]

Source:
Diário

de Notícias, December 2007; [http:// dn.sapo.pt/ inicio/ interior.aspx?content_id=990803](http://dn.sapo.pt/inicio/interior.aspx?content_id=990803)

ACTUALIDADE ACTUALIDAD



O Melhor Bolo de Chocolate do Mundo llega a Madrid directamente desde Lisboa

La "Mejor tarta de chocolate del mundo" ya tiene local en Madrid para enloquecer a los adictos de esta sustancia. Este "bolo" portugués sigue cruzando fronteras y la capital española es la primera parada de la aventura europea que al otro lado del atlántico ya está triunfando en Brasil y en EE.UU.

Textos y Fotos **Belén Rodrigo** brodrigo@ccle.org

Isabel Ruiz-Morales probó la tarta de chocolate en Lisboa, en la pequeña tienda que Carlos Bras Lopes, autor de la receta, tiene desde hace años en Campo de Ourique. Esta gallega se encontraba viviendo en Portugal con una beca del ICEX y desde entonces guarda muy buenos recuerdos del país vecino. A su vuelta a España, y después de varios trabajos, decidió montar un negocio con su amiga de infancia Iria Romero, una canaria que conoció en Galicia. "Yo tenía claro el producto, o melhor bolo do chocolate do mundo", explica a Actualidad€ Isabel. Por eso se fueron juntas a Lisboa para probar la tarta y hablar con el dueño del negocio. "La primera vez que la probé no me pareció tan espectacular", confiesa Iria. "Le pareció muy bien la propuesta y desde las Navidades del 2008 comenzamos a distribuir la tarta". Lo hacían a través del restaurante madrileño Doña Antonia, en donde la tarta, además de estar en el menú, se vendía para fuera y a domicilio. Venden 70 tartas semana-

les y tras la aparición de varios artículos en la prensa "los pedidos han sido una auténtica locura", explican las responsables. "¿Cuál es el secreto de esta tarta?", preguntamos. "La combinación de texturas de suspiro y mousse que se deshace delicadamente en la boca es increíble", nos dicen. La receta no lleva harina y está hecha con uno de los mejores chocolates del mundo, Valrhona.

Desde el pasado mes de septiembre ya tienen un local propio donde además de vender la tarta los clientes puedan tomar una porción y beber un café. Se encuentra en la calle Alcalá 89, en un

pequeño espacio enfrente de El Retiro. "Nuestro primer objetivo es duplicar la venta semanal, es decir, 140 tartas", explica Isabel. Existen dos variedades, "la tradicional dulce con 53% de cacao y la de chocolate más amargo, con 70% de cacao", matiza Iria. Este aumento de las ventas será posible gracias a la nueva fábrica de Lisboa, con una producción mucho mayor. "Si en España el negocio fuese muy bien no se descartaría tener una fábrica para la distribución", cuentan ambas. Tras este primer paso esperan poder abrir franquicias en otros lugares. Y es que ya se ha hecho muy famosa incluso fuera de Madrid y son muchos los andaluces que antes de coger el AVE en Atocha pasan por la tienda para recoger su "tesoro". Eso sí, conviene reservar para asegurarse el producto. ■



La mejor tarta de chocolate del mundo
 C/Alcalá 89 Madrid
 Tel.: 0034 91 577 50 08
 0034 634 500 986

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Source: The Best Chocolate Cake in the World - Facebook

The New York Times Newspaper

The New York Times

Dining & Wine

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FOOD STUFF

A New Chocolate Cake in New York



Chester Higgins Jr./The New York Times

By FLORENCE FABRICANT
Published: June 15, 2010

To New Yorkers, [chocolate](#) cake might mean crumb-dusted blackout, not layers of chocolate meringue and chocolate mousse with a thin glaze of ganache. But that is the signature dessert at the Best Chocolate Cake in the World. A restaurateur in Lisbon, Carlos Lopes, with his Manhattan partner, Adriano Lucas, created a version of a dacquoise he saw at Fauchon in Paris. Now Mr. Lopes's shops sell his creamy confection in Portugal, Spain and Brazil, with a factory turning out 150,000 a year just in Portugal.

[Enlarge This Image](#)



Chester Higgins Jr./The New York Times

Carlos Lopes, left, with his partner, Adriano Lucas.

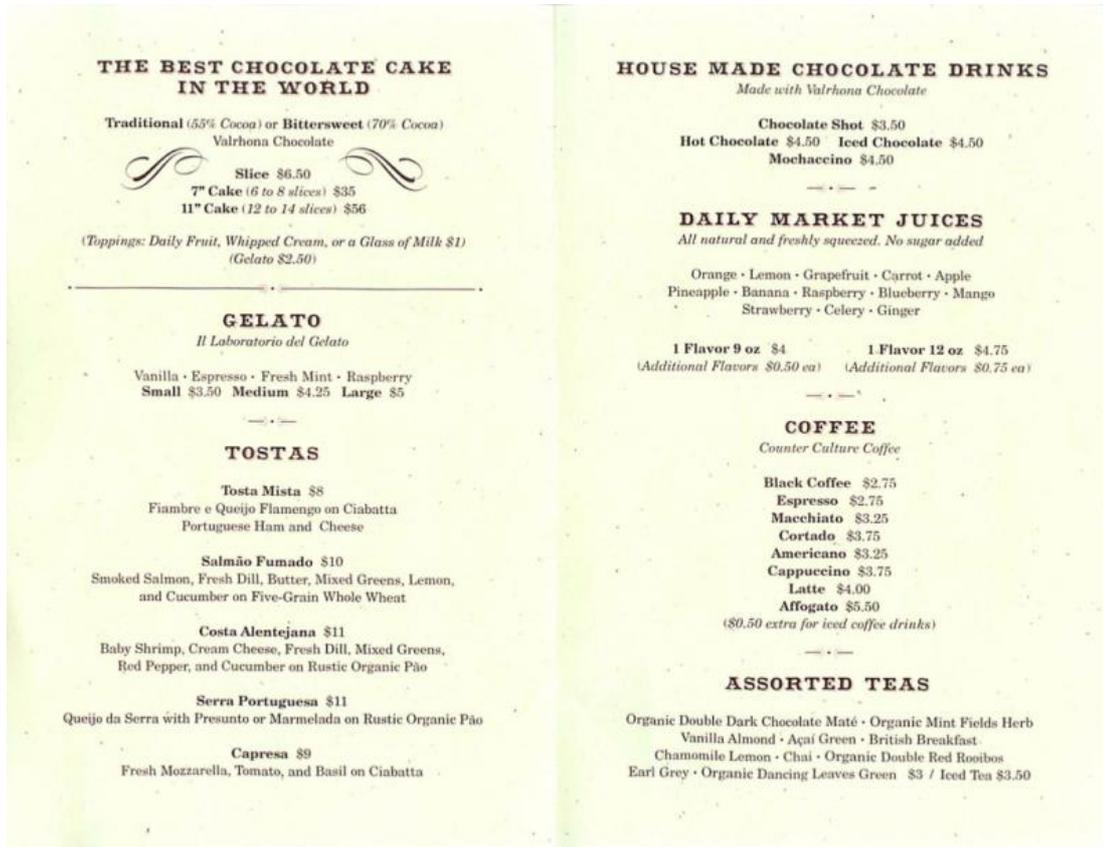
They'll be sold starting June 16 in a NoLiTa shop run by Mr. Lucas. The storefront shop is done in white brick and enamel, with mirrors, a cork banquette and some tables for the cake, Counter Culture coffee, Il Laboratorio gelato and a few sandwiches.

The Best Chocolate Cake in the World is \$6.50 a slice, \$36 for a whole 9-inch cake, \$55 for 11 inches; 55a Spring Street (Lafayette Street), (212) 343-2253.

1

Source: New York Times, June 2010; <http://www.nytimes.com/2010/06/16/dining/16cake.html>

Exhibit 7 New York Nolita's store menu



Source: The Best Chocolate Cake in the World - Facebook

Exhibit 8 Logos



Portugal



Brazil



United States of America



Spain

Source: The Best Chocolate Cake in the World

Exhibit 9 Brazilian franchising registration form

O MELHOR BOLO DE CHOCOLATE DO MUNDO
LINDA - SÃO PAULO

LOJAS • PRODUTOS • DELIVERY • FRANQUIAS • BL

FRANQUIAS: FICHA CADASTRAL

Formulário

Nome completo

Digite seu telefone de contato

Digite seu e-mail

Cidade

Estado

CPF

Data de Nascimento

Formação Acadêmica

Experiência profissional

- Investimento total para uma loja a partir de R\$ 250 mil (incluindo taxa de franquia e capital de giro inicial).
- Total de unidades: 3
- Taxa de franquia: R\$ 45 mil
- Royalties: 5% sobre o faturamento bruto
- Taxa de marketing: 2% sobre o faturamento bruto
- Número de funcionários: a partir de 6
- Área mínima: 60m²
- Prazo de retorno: a partir de 24 meses

Caso tenha interesse em saber mais sobre as oportunidades de expansão da nossa marca, o primeiro passo é preencher a ficha cadastral abaixo para que possamos dar continuidade ao atendimento.

O passo seguinte será uma reunião em nossa sede a fim de esclarecer dúvidas, e apresentar o projeto de nosso negócio.

Todas as informações serão tratadas com o devido sigilo.

Source: The Best Chocolate Cake in the World – Brazilian Website;
<http://www.omelhorbolodechocolatedomundo.com/franquias-form.htm>