

Wowprime plans to hire 1,500 in Taiwan

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Wowprime Corp (王品集團), a leading restaurant chain operator, plans to hire 1,500 employees next year as it extends its local footprint, company chairman Park Chen (陳正輝) said yesterday.

The company is to accelerate its expansion, as its restructuring of local outlets has begun to bear fruit, Chen told reporters, adding that three new brands would be launched next year.

Wowprime began adjusting its operating strategy after a string of food safety issues in 2014, including a case involving one of its suppliers. It closed 35 inefficient restaurants in Taiwan last year.

Opening more restaurants offering Chinese cuisine would be its next focus, a company official said.

Wowprime hopes to increase the presence of its brands featuring Chinese cuisine in Taiwan, especially Madam Goose (鵝夫人), which in September was named a Michelin recommended restaurant.

Chen said the company has developed key management strategies for expanding Madam Goose in China and plans to duplicate its success there in Taiwan.

From January through September the company saw its sales drop 4.45 percent to NT\$12.32 billion (US\$390.3 million) from the same period a year earlier, dragged down



Wowprime Corp staff take part in the company's annual tray-walking contest in Taipei yesterday.

PHOTO: CNA

by weak sales in Taiwan.

Wowprime operates 258 restaurants in Taiwan, where sales totaled NT\$7.21 billion in the first nine months, a drop of 9.24 percent from the same period a year earlier.

Revenue from its operations in China picked up 3.26 percent to NT\$5.11 billion from the same period the previous year, accounting for nearly 41 percent of overall sales, company data showed.

Wowprime said it is upbeat about the sales outlook through the end of this year, mainly supported by its expansion in China and the traditional high season for restaurant operators.

Wowprime shares gained 1.3 percent to close at NT\$117 in Taipei trading yesterday, outperforming the benchmark TAIEX, which dropped 0.19 percent to 9,272.70 points.