



**JANUARY 21, 2009 – RESTAURANTS ARE LOOKING FOR GUIDANCE IN CHALLENGING ECONOMIC TIMES**

The consumer spending slowdown over the past year has created a financial hardship for the restaurant industry. While seeing reduced guest visits, declining check averages, and lower sales, restaurants have also been dealing with increased expenses due to mandated escalations of the minimum wage, higher benefits costs and increases in commodity prices. This has created a great need for restaurateurs to seek specialized outside expertise to enhance their operational performance. Approximately 80 California restaurants have outsourced their financial management to Vine Solutions, Inc., a premier California based restaurant consulting and accounting practice. Vine Solutions provides restaurants with timely and accurate financial information, expert guidance and thorough benchmarking information to help clients navigate through these difficult economic conditions.

Edward Levine, Founder and CEO states “The current economic conditions are a formidable opportunity for well managed restaurants. Five conditions fuel our optimism:

1. Expenses are negotiable in the current environment including ingredients, wages and occupancy costs.
2. Restaurants will adapt and become far more productive. This focus will yield strong returns as business conditions improve.
3. The availability of skilled talent allows restaurateurs the opportunity to strengthen teams.
4. Numerous restaurants will not adapt and will close providing opportunities for others to build sales through increases in market share.
5. Growth opportunities for new locations will arise for well managed establishments.”

During the last two years, Vine Solutions has grown by approximately 50% each year. John Priest, VP of Operations states that, “The success of Vine Solutions can be attributed to our organization stressing to clients that successful restaurants understand and focus on the importance and relevance of information. We make sure that our clients receive financial information in a timely and accurate manner to enable decision-making quickly and objectively.”

In recent personnel news, Edward Levine who also founded Left Bank Brasserie has turned over management of Left Bank to Richard Miyashiro to focus his full-time efforts on the growth and development of Vine Solutions. Levine indicated that “I want to share my knowledge to enable many restaurant businesses to prosper.” Prior to founding Vine Solutions and Left Bank Brasserie, Mr. Levine was Chief Executive Officer of Gordon Biersch Brewing Company, Inc. and Chief Financial Officer of Il Fornaio (America) Corporation.

Vine Solutions, Inc. was incorporated in 1996 and has offices in Corte Madera and Santa Monica, California. Vine Solutions, Inc provides accounting and financial advisory services to a variety of high volume independent restaurants and regional chains.

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If you would like additional information, or would like to schedule an interview with Edward Levine or John Priest, please contact Erica Patterson at 415.927.3308 or e-mail Erica at [epatterson@vinesolutions.com](mailto:epatterson@vinesolutions.com).