



Staying viable in the quick-service game requires an ability to change course when your customers—both consumer and franchisee—demand it.



STAYING ALIVE

2008 marks a year of growth and expansion in the quick-serve industry. Established concepts are working hard to maintain their staying power while emerging concepts are counting on innovative menu offerings and marketing techniques to boost them to the top. Check out these noteworthy companies to see where the future of fast food is headed.

WITH REPORTING BY PAM GEORGE

10/TOSSED

YEAR FOUNDED: 1998

SIGNATURE PRODUCT(S): The Signature Salad

Since its inception, the mission of Tossed has remained the same: Maintain high ethical standards. To that end, the brand collects only royalty fees from its franchisees. No food or equipment charges.

This year Tossed, which planned to open four units last quarter, has five signed agreements for more stores. The chain prefers franchisees who can handle a market instead of one or two stores. The focus is on downtown urban markets in cities such as Chicago and Houston. Since Tossed cut its leaves in the competitive New York market, there's no doubt it will succeed in similar locales.