

MODERN Baking

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Annual Leadership Awards



**MERCHANDISING
INDUSTRY SERVICE
MARKETING
TRAINING
COMMITMENT TO QUALITY
PROFITABILITY
MANAGEMENT**



Annual Leadership Awards Profitability

If you bake a better product, the world just may beat a path to your door. But, you won't be able to keep that door open for long if your operation does not make money.

At Tasteez Market & Bakery, the product mix has been carefully designed to make the most efficient use of labor and equipment. A unique compensation program at Hy-Vee Food Stores inspires innovation by rewarding managers for net profit increases. To eliminate downtime during customer lulls, Lovebird's Café trains its retail staff to join the production line.

Lovebirds Café & Bakery leaves no time for downtime

Even when the customer flow is light at Lovebirds Café & Bakery in the southern California town of Alhambra, the shop is always buzzing with activity. That's because when the members of the retail staff are not ringing up sales they are busy scaling doughs or mixing and scooping cookies.

With current annual sales at over \$1 million and a growth rate of 20% per year, Lovebirds is certainly a success story. And Jahanshah and Jahansooz Jomehri, two Iranian-born brothers who opened the bakery in 1984, attribute much of that success to their staff's versatility and team spirit.

"With everyone cross-trained to do every job, every hour of the work day is productive," Jahanshah says. "And by doing much of the prep that doesn't require an experienced baker, they enable our head baker to concentrate on the delicate stuff, such as decorating and making mousses or crème brûlée."

He notes that two assistant bakers work at night scaling ingredients, making simple breads and rolls, and generally making sure that the baker can get right to work in the morning. All together, having so many things prepped and ready saves the baker between three and five hours a day, Jahanshah estimates.

"We believe in training our employees to think like managers, which means looking at the overall picture of what needs to be done around the bakery rather than sticking to a single assigned task," he explains.

At Lovebirds, versatility starts at the top. A trained chemist, Jahanshah has used his knowledge to create



Lovebirds Café & Bakery cross-trains employees for maximum efficiency.

signature formulas for well over half of the bakery's made-from-scratch breads and pastries.

Jahanashah's ingenuity also helped the brothers find the way to take time off on major holidays without leaving their loyal customers without their favorite Lovebirds' products. Prior to each holiday, the bakery sells some of its most popular bread and pastry products in frozen form, along with easy instructions for thawing, proofing and baking in customers' own homes.

Based on their company's achievements to date, the brothers Jomehri are looking forward to opening a commissary and second store in the Pasadena area. They also have acquired the funding to open three additional Lovebirds Café & Bakery locations in Texas.

And, soon customers around the country will be able to get a taste of what the fuss is all about by ordering muffins and specialty cakes from the Lovebirds web site.