

## **UAE Firm Now Backed by the UK's Number one Foodservice Distributor**

Tuesday, 24 January 2006

The Bidvest Group Ltd, owners of 3663 First for Foodservice, the UK's leading foodservice wholesale distributor, has acquired a majority shareholding in HORECA Trade in the United Arab Emirates , with the intention of developing it to become the number one foodservice distribution company in the region.

The company - now known as HORECA First for Foodservice - has already demonstrated its ambition, pioneering the one-stop-shop approach in the UAE by offering a product range of more than 3500 items, including exclusive representations for Unilever Foodsolutions, Nestlé Waters, Kerry Group and others.

Andrew Selley, Managing Director of 3663's Logistics Division, said: "This is a very exciting partnership opportunity for us. We are delighted that HORECA share our vision to create efficiencies within the supply chain, leverage joint business synergies thus delivering excellent value, choice and service to customers. Although a relatively young player in the market, our vision is to maximise the full potential of the business, and in the future expand into Abu Dhabi and the wider Emirates regions."

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"Dubai is renowned for some of the best standards of hospitality in the world and it is therefore commercially challenging for us. We aim to deliver an exceptional service to compliment this prestigious market," Andrew Selley continues. According to Hisham Al-Jamil, Managing Director of HORECA First for Foodservice: "By becoming part of The Bidvest Group, we gain access to the very latest innovations in food distribution - e-commerce, supply chain management, product development - plus sales and marketing expertise. It is a very exciting time for us and we are eager to take advantage of the opportunities that are opening up."

The company currently supplies more than 600 customers out of one depot, containing dry, ambient and chilled stores. It has 35 employees, many of whom have extensive qualifications and experience in the hospitality market.

Despite its modest size, HORECA has developed the first Foodservice Product Guide and Newsletter in the Middle East - a major undertaking - and an interactive website for general information and online ordering. It has participated in many top catering events, including the Gulf Food Exhibition. It has also worked with the World Association of Cooks Societies, raising its profile with top chefs.

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