

Drinking games

Smaller pub hopes to sell more franchises

Prime Pubs recently launched a pint-sized Fionn MacCool's in Toronto, with plans to open more in both Canada and the U.S.

Recognizing that the softening economy could stall franchise sales for its Irish pubs, Prime created smaller versions for publicans weary of investing. The wee watering holes are 2,200 square feet and sell for \$500,000, compared with upwards of \$800,000 for pubs ranging between 4,500 and 5,000 square feet. The bars will also have fewer beers on tap and shrunken menus.

"The pint-sized pubs will have the same branding [as the full-size ones]," says Grant Cobb, senior vice-president of Prime Pubs. "There are smaller pubs around, but this is the first pub chain to take advantage of this

market opportunity."

Promotions—including 2 Pint Fridays and Liquid Lectures—will cross over into the pint-sized strategies. "The approach to the pint-sized pub is delivering on all those things on a smaller footprint," says Jack Gardner vice-president sales and marketing, Prime Pubs. Promotions will be localized, and the chain is also reaching franchisees via the Internet with SEO, franchise shows and ads in B2B journals.

—LISA HANNAM



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