



From left to right:
Deana Anderson,
Levi Goode

CLIENT:
Goode Company

BANKER:
Deana Anderson

CHALLENGES:

- ▶ Continued growth in the Houston market
- ▶ The need for a constant flow of information
- ▶ Finding “big bank” service with a personalized feel

Lip-Smackin’ Goode

For three decades, two generations of Goodes have kept the barbeque tradition alive in Houston

Mention Goode Company around Houston and you’re bound to see smiles, or even set a few mouths watering. For 30 years, this family-run company has built its reputation in the restaurant industry as the finest local purveyor of fresh ingredients and handmade-from-scratch recipes like authentic Texas barbeque, 18-hour mesquite smoked brisket, seafood gumbo and Mexican specialties. Its Brazos Bottom Pecan Pie, made from a secret family recipe, has been featured on the Food Network and has pleased palates as discerning as those of Chef Emeril Lagasse and Oprah Winfrey.

Launched in 1977 by Jim Goode, initially as a 40-seat restaurant serving authentic Texas barbeque, the company has grown since then into a six-location restaurant empire, which also includes a direct mail retail operation called Goode Company Barbeque Hall of Flame; a robust catering business; and a soon-to-be third barbeque location on the Northwest side of Houston.

Founder Jim Goode, who for years sported a trademark long beard beneath an ubiquitous cowboy hat, has become somewhat of a legend in the

Houston community. As the company celebrates its 30th anniversary, stories have been circulating about its early days, when Jim would spend the nights at its original location, stoking the mesquite fires and smoking the barbeque until he perfected his technique.

PASSING THE REIGNS

Jim’s son, Levi Goode, who resembles his father sans beard, says he literally grew up in the family restaurants. “We practically lived there,” he says. He also recalls sitting down with his sister Jana, “cracking pecans one at a time,” for soon-to-become-famous pecan pies.

Levi has been in the business since its inception, eventually working his way up through the ranks at Goode Company to become vice president, running the day-to-day business activities of the multi-restaurant empire. “In the restaurant industry, the more information you have on a daily basis, the better,” Levi says. He adds that, while he’s not the type to sit in front of a computer all day, “Compass Bank’s online interface is easy to navigate and makes getting

the information I need easy, whether it’s an account update, or generating a new report. CompassPC Banking and E-Access have been a tremendous resource for us in our daily operations.”

The Goode family has been banking with Compass since the 1980s, for both its personal and professional needs, and has relied on the bank for financing Goode Company as it has expanded from a single location eatery with modest revenues, into the culinary juggernaut that it is today. For the past three-and-a-half years, Deana Anderson, a senior vice president in Compass Bank’s Wealth Management Group, has handled Goode Company’s account, working closely with the company’s CFO, Rudy Fernandez, as well as with Levi.

COMBINING THE BEST OF SMALL AND LARGE WITH A PERSONALIZED FEEL

Anderson says, while most banks would try to handle the Goode’s accounts strictly as a corporate or business banking relationship, Compass Bank Wealth Management Group understands that a family’s personal finances are inextricably combined with the heart and soul of a family’s business. “We know that Goode Company is so much more than a group of restaurants, it is the Goode’s legacy and the family’s way of life.”

For his part, Levi explains that the family has chosen to remain with Compass Bank and its Wealth Management Group because they combine the best of a small, neighborhood bank with the assets and services of a large one, while still providing personalized service. He appreciates, for example, Compass’ large number of branches, conveniently located throughout the Houston area. “We use these individual locations for our deposit services of each restaurant and we don’t have to run all over town to do so. This is a huge benefit for us.”

At the same time, he enjoys the close attention paid to him by Anderson and the personalized service the family receives from the Wealth Management Group. The Goode family formerly used a small neighborhood bank called West University Bank, which Compass acquired in 1988. After the acquisition, “the service didn’t drop off at all,” recalls Levi. “Compass began to provide more services and investment solutions than a small bank ever could, but they still maintained the feeling of a small bank,” he says.

As an example of this tailor-made approach, he cites the fact that Anderson has personally walked their facilities, from the kitchens to the dining rooms, “to see how we operate. She’s taken the time to get to know us and to realize what separates us from the competition—from our extremely loyal employees who take pride in what they do every-day to the extra mile we go to insure top quality and consistency in our products.”

Anderson’s first-hand and thorough knowledge of Goode Company’s restaurants has come in handy when she structures loans for them. “There’s a lot that separates us from industry standards and Deana understands that side of our business,” Levi observes. “She knows industry statistics don’t say it all, that our business has a uniqueness to it that is intangible but still a very important part of our success. You have to see it in person to get a true feel for how we operate.”

“When structuring a loan, providing cash management services, or analyzing a client’s investment portfolio, I strive to introduce customized solutions to match their specific needs,” Anderson explains. ■