



Creative Loafing

Breads Rising

When *C.E.O.* last spoke with **Jeff Rains**, president, CEO and co-founder of **Breads of the World** (*"Creative Loafing,"* March 2001), **Panera Bread's** second-largest franchisee boasted 20 bakery-cafes—10 in Columbus, three in Dayton, five in Cincinnati and two in Denver. Rains said he was aiming for 20 stores in Columbus, 25 in the Cincinnati/Dayton area and 40 in Colorado—and six years later, he's getting close.

"Today, we have those 20 in Columbus," Rains says. "We have 22 in Colorado, and then we have 27 open in Cincinnati/Dayton." **Ken Rosenthal**, owner, chairman and co-founder of Breads of the World, says 10 of those 69 stores opened in 2006.

Rosenthal founded the St. Louis Bread Company in 1987 and sold it to Au Bon Pain Company in 1993. The name was changed to Panera Bread in 1999, and today the rapidly growing company serves fresh-baked artisan breads, soups, sandwiches and other edibles at more than 1,000 bakery-cafes in 38 states.

In June, Breads of the World will celebrate the 10th anniversary of the opening of its first Panera store, in Olentangy Plaza at Bethel and Olentangy River roads. Rains, a Rax Restaurants veteran and former vice president at the St. Louis Bread Company, won't discuss Breads of the World's financials, but says Panera's systemwide average weekly sales—\$38,359 per store during the first quarter of 2007—are "generally representative of ours."



Jeff Rains

—Amy Aldridge

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