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The two biggest brands in China now are Haagen Daz and Dairy Queen.

The Thomas Sweet business will be headquartered in Wuhan, where the first location will be built. Expansion will have stores spread out into other major cities, and then smaller cities, said Mr. Leagh.

"(Wentao) sees an opportunity and a gap in the marketplace," said Mr. Neufeld. "I think he's going to do great with it; he's a great

xpanding domestically has been an internal struggle and a battle against the past for Mr. Cucchi

"I don't want to do it in a way that's foolish or we loose our hometown appeal," he said. "I think one of the things that makes us successful is that

In the 1980s Thomas Sweet did have franchise locations throughout the nation under different owners.
"The stores were so geographically dispersed that it was very hard to manage the growth and be there," said Mr. Cucchi, who bought out the last partner in 2008. "By and large all the stores except the Washington, D.C., and New Brunswick stores failed for one reason or another."

The management structure then was not set up to manage growth

"Before I looked to grow again, I wanted to have a whole store opening under my belt," he said. "I wouldn't be valuable to somebody if I hadn't gone through it myself. That's where Montgomery came into play."

Thomas Sweet's Montgomery location opened in 2009

Capital generated from the deal with China will be invested in the business here without looking at outside funding such as a bank.

"What international allowed us to do is have a good amount of capital, which I can use as seed money to grow the brand here." said Mr. Cucchi, "When China came up as an opportunity it allowed me to forgo those other sources where I'd have to answer to other people."

Mr. Cucchi will give the Chinese investors intellectual capital, recipes, branding and marketing.

"I don't have the responsibility of oversight like you would with a typical franchise arrangement," he said.

Mr. Cucchi will be compensated monthly for each store opened in Asia. He was also compensated for allowing the Asian investors to license the Thomas Sweet brand in China. He declined to say how much the deal was worth, just that when all stores are open, it is well into the six

American recipes will be adapted to the Chinese palate.

"If you look at other multi-national brands who are successful in China, they've tailored their product to the market they go in," said Mr. Cucchi. "They've paid to use our brand, they're not going to want to do something stupid."

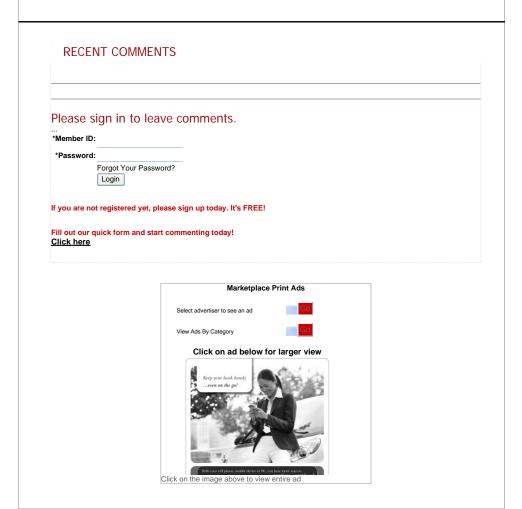
As far as giving up control over his product, Mr. Cucchi isn't too worried

"We found someone who believes in our brand and the importance of quality and who believes in doing things right," he said.

To get quality product that is up to Thomas Sweet standards, ice cream will be manufactured in the United States and shipped to China. Thomas Sweet ice cream is currently made in-house in Princeton and a few flavors are made at Arctic Ice Cream in Ewing. Arctic produces ice cream for the Washington, D.C., store as well.

The production location has not been ironed out yet, said Mr. Cucchi. West Coast production options are also being explored. The first Chinese store is slated to open in August.







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