

[Home](#) | [MyMauMau: Log In / Register](#) | [Ask Franny](#)[Log In / Register](#) | Oct 12, 2009

## Dunkin' Chief Legal Counsel Steve Horn Is Out

Posted Fri, 2009/10/09 - 16:16 by [Janet Sparks](#)

CANTON, Mass. – Following much turmoil and bad press over its legal team's aggressive tactics against franchisees, Dunkin' Brands CEO Nigel Travis has just announced the latest in his reorganization of corporate executives, stating that the company's controversial chief legal counsel Stephen Horn is leaving to pursue new opportunities. His email letter to franchise operators reads,



Dunkin' chief legal officer Horn steps down after scandal, Photo/Dunkin web

Dear Dunkin' Donuts and Baskin-Robbins Franchisees,

After 10 years with Dunkin' Brands, Steve Horn has decided to take this opportunity to announce his intent to leave the company. Steve has communicated that he will pursue new opportunities including his passion for writing. A well known author, Steve has had significant success with his two previous novels and has decided that this is the time for him to start the third. At our request, Steve had agreed to stay on working with myself on special projects until the end of December.

Steve has always striven to act in the best interests of our brands, our franchisees' investment in those brands, our customers and the thousands of employees in our restaurants who work so hard to serve these customers. We appreciate Steve's integrity, his total dedication to the company and his many years of service.

On an interim basis and effective immediately, Arthur Anastos, director and managing counsel, will assume management of the legal department.

We plan to quickly recruit an experienced general counsel from the outside. With that hiring of a new general counsel, we will have finalized our Dunkin' Brands leadership team.

I look forward to discussing the new organization with you and our exciting plans for the future at the upcoming RAC meetings and as I visit markets around the country.

Thank you for your support,

Nigel Travis  
Dunkin' Brands CEO and Dunkin' Donuts President

Robert Zarco, Zarco, Einhorn, Salkowski & Brito, representing a number of franchisees, recently affirmed that the franchisor's "loss prevention" department headed up by Horn has been turning its lawsuits against

operators into a major “profit center.” In hearing today’s announcement, Zarco stated, “I believe these draconian tactics have caught up with Steve Horn. He has been a bully for years.”

Zarco also feels that the franchisees uniting into an association has demonstrated the force and strength it can have with a franchisor. He said, “It’s only because the franchisees got together that they were able to effectuate this kind of impact and resolve. My hat goes off to them.” He added, “And, congratulations to the board of directors of Dunkin’ Brands for making what I am sure was a very difficult but appropriate decision, which has been long overdue.”

In a statement from Michelle King, Dunkin’s director of global public relations, she announced, “Steve has always striven to act in the best interests of our brands, our franchisees investment in those brands and our customers. We appreciate his dedication and years of service and wish him the best in his future endeavors.”

She said upon the hiring of a new general counsel, the company will have finalized its leadership team. And, in addition, she confirmed that the Dunkin’ Brands loss prevention team now reports to Paul Carbone, vice president of finance. Previously, he worked for large retail organizations, including Limited Brands and Tween Brands where he had responsibility for loss prevention.

New York attorney Paul Steinberg, who first highlighted Horn’s hardball tactics in terminations and litigation in his publication, *Beguiling Heresy: Regulating the Franchise Relationship*, today said, “This is a very positive step for the brand.” He explained that any franchisor needs to make sure that people are being honest. But he observed, “You don’t need to be sleazy. You can treat your franchisees with respect and integrity and expect that they will treat you likewise. Where they don’t, obviously, you will have to deal with that.” He said there was never any reason for Steve Horn to pursue the course of action that he did, adding, “Other franchisors don’t have to do that.”

--

#### Related Articles:

[Dunkin' Executive Movement, Horn Dulled?](#)

[Despite Mounting Evidence, Dunkin' Continues to Deny Spying on Franchisees](#)

[Dunkin' Caught in Scheme to Entrap Franchisee](#)

[Attorneys Criticize Dunkin Donuts Litigious Behavior](#)

#### Average:

Your rating: None

Franchise topic: [food](#) , [legal](#)

Enter Your Own Tag: [Stephen Horn](#) , [Dunkin'](#)

[Email this Story](#)