



03 Feb 2017

Herald Sun, Melbourne

Author: Paul Gilder • Section: Business News • Article type : News Item
Classification : Capital City Daily • Audience : 317,517 • Page: 50
Printed Size: 220.00cm² • Market: VIC • Country: Australia • Words: 386
Item ID: 722438466

isentia.mediaportal

Licensed by Copyright Agency. You may only copy or communicate this work with a licence.

Page 1 of 1

Crafty buy for Broo

Mildura Brewery takeover

PAUL GILDER BEVERAGES

LISTED beer maker Broo has acquired a taste for the craft brewing industry, picking up the storied Mildura Brewery and its stable of brands for \$1 million as it pursues a ramp-up in production.

Broo founder and executive chairman Kent Grogan said the acquisition allowed his company, which is expanding its distribution network in China, to rapidly lift its production levels without having to build its own plant.

With plans to spend more on upgrading the brewery, including on automation, Mr Grogan said he was confident the facility could produce five million bottles a year.

“That makes it our biggest in Victoria, at the moment,” he said.

“It also gives us a foray into the craft brewing market, which we see growth in, as well.

“There were more than 40 craft pubs opened across Aus-

tralia last year ... consumers are looking for something a little different rather than just a local pub.”

He said the Mildura Brewery, which was established in 2004 by Don Carrazza — a name synonymous with the Sunraysia region through his fruit producer father Giuseppe — was one of the finest examples of a craft brewery in the state.

Remodelled from the Astor Theatre in the Grand Hotel complex, the brewery is now operated by Don's daughter Donata and celebrity chef Stefano de Pieri.

“There's enormous history and pride attached to the place, it was the jewel in the crown for them,” Mr Grogan said.

“They were only willing to sell it to someone they felt confident would treat it the same.”

Mr Grogan said there were no plans to alter the venue's existing labels, including its Honey wheat beer and Mallee Bull ale, but more blends may be introduced.

Broo's expansion plans are also expected to add about 20 jobs to the brewery in adminis-

tration, distribution and front of house roles.

The heady success of Sorrento-based Broo, which was listed at 20c a share in October and yesterday closed at 36c, continues to prove humbling for its founder.

Mr Grogan will this month head over to China to manage the continuing roll-out of his Premium Lager and Draught brands from Hunan province, with China-wide distribution anticipated by April.

“We knew we had a product that would work, it was just about getting the recipe right,” he said.

paul.gilder@news.com.au