

## ***Entrepreneurship in Turkey: Outlook and Opportunities***

A breakfast discussion with board members and entrepreneurs of Endeavor Turkey

Friday, November 14, 2008

08:00-10:00am

### **Speaker Bios**

#### **Mehmet Ali Babaoğlu, CEO, Fusun Design**

Mehmet Ali Babaoğlu started the Levi's license operation in Turkey which later turned into a joint-venture with Levi Strauss. Also started and led a European marketing company for denims, a Turkish marketing company for sportswear fabrics, a sourcing company for jeans, a dedicated jeans manufacturing company for Levi Strauss and a jeans development, production and finishing company. Sold his shares in all these companies in July 2004. At this time the group had 2 fabric mills, 3 jeans manufacturing facilities, a design office in London and 5 marketing and sales offices in San Francisco, Brussels, Bergamo-Italy, Lauffenburg-Germany and Tokyo and employed over 4000 people. Founded Fusun A.S. in Istanbul, Turkey and Fusun Design Inc. in New York with his sister Fusun Dalbasar. Fusun is an apparel brand for career women. Also owns and operates an organic farm in western Turkey.

#### **Fadi Nahas, CEO, Everfresh**

Fadi Nahas probably first discovered his real vocation of bridging cultures when he was chosen to present the Koran to the late Pope Paul VI in 1969, as an eleven year old Lebanese Christian. Since then he faced serious challenges without ever taking himself seriously. At the traditional and conservative Catholic schools and university he attended in Lebanon he was better known for his water-polo championship than for his academic achievements and high grades. Doing business under the bombs taught him not to fear controversy and thus helped him conquer the emerging markets in the Caucasus, Central Asia and the Middle East. As the leader of the cold chain in the area, he was the pioneer in introducing Latin American products to emerging countries like Moldova, Georgia, Azerbaijan, Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan, Iraq, Egypt, Romania and Armenia where he was the first to introduce Ecuadorian bananas and Brazilian poultry and meat products. Most important was Turkey where importing bananas became the symbol of open trade.

#### **Speedcity – Ali Özgün**

The most watched sport in the world is also the least played. Motorsports unlike football or basketball is not a sport anyone can just go and do...Until now. Speedcity is a motorsport entertainment center for all ages to enjoy. It is a simulation center where different types of motorsports can be enjoyed with different kinds of simulators. Entertainment like no other, Speedcity can put every customer behind the wheel of a high tech race simulator in a safe and fun environment. For the Özgün siblings, entertainment is a family affair. Raised in the United States, they returned to Turkey in the 1990s, where their mother hosted a popular TV show and the three siblings spent years working in television. Starting in the mid-nineties, they produced a TV show about safe driving that ran for close to a decade, and their first company, ACA Productions, was devoted to motor sports programming, making the three well-known faces of motor sports in Turkey. Lifelong auto racing enthusiasts, Ali, Ahmet and Canan, first came up with the idea for Speedcity when the seasonal nature of motor sports programming led them to explore other ideas.

#### **Dükkan – Emre Mermer**

Entrepreneur Emre Mermer (39) is truly on the "cutting" edge of his market - bringing innovation to one of the world's oldest professions: butchery. His company, Dükkan, was the first butcher to bring milk-fed veal, dry aged beef and fresh sausages to Turkey. Today, Dükkan (which means "shop" in Turkish) is transforming the high-end meat market in the country and almost single-handedly creating market demand for its products. After just one year of operations, Dükkan currently sells over 15 tons of meat per month to Istanbul's top restaurants as well as to discerning consumers through its butcher shop and newly-opened in-shop restaurant. Dükkan is growing rapidly, with plans to open Istanbul's first premium steakhouse this summer and several other exciting projects on the carving block. The company's commitment to quality has people talking: Dükkan was selected the best "Word of Mouth" marketing company in 2006 by the Turkish edition of *Business Week*.