

Rental MANAGEMENT

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Classic expands to Chicago and New York

Classic Party Rentals, Los Angeles, ended the year with a flourish, announcing the acquisitions of Chicago Party Rental in McCook, Ill., and TriServe Party Rentals in New York on Dec. 20. The two deals mark Classic's first move into the northern half of the U.S. and complete an active year for Classic, which acquired 10 party and event businesses in 2007.

Chicago Party Rental was founded in 1967 as A-Z Rental by Ben Shipper II and his wife, Bea, and the company has been an active member of the American Rental Association (ARA) since 1969. In the 1980s, growth prompted the Shippers to rename the event division Chicago Party Rental (CPR). In 2002, CPR merged with Braun Tent & Event, and in 2006, CPR acquired Events Chicago, but this time the company is on the selling end of a deal.

"We have grown our business significantly over the years and wanted to take it to the next level," said Ben Shipper IV, who will continue with the company as general manager. "Joining the Classic team ensures our business will continue to flourish. Our clients and employees will be well served. Our team is excited that we are joining and strengthening the leading rental network in the industry. Like Classic, clients rely on us for our premium customer service, high-quality equipment and skilled installation teams."

CPR has provided rentals for high-profile events in the region, including the presidential Democratic debate, Chicago premieres for "Ocean's 13" and "Bee Movie," and has a client list including Levy Restaurants, Compass Group, and the Chicago Bulls, Bears and White Sox.

Classic will continue to operate the business at the company's existing locations and will re-brand the company as Classic Party Rentals. Gary Braun, CPR's vice president, will continue to lead the national events business.

"As the leading company in one of the top markets in the country, Chicago Party Rental has developed into a fantastic business," said John Campanelli, CEO of Classic Party Rentals. "We share their dedication to clients and employees, core values and approach to the business. By strategically adding the experienced Chicago Party Rental team to the Classic family, we gain a strong hub to branch out from in the Midwest and we can now better serve our Chicago-based clients, national accounts with local operations and large national events."

"The acquisition of Chicago Party Rental by Classic Party Rentals is an indication of the continued growth and evolution of the party and event segment of the rental industry based on strong consumer demand. This news and other changes within party and event rental will continue to occur due to the tremendous growth potential ahead for this segment of the industry, representing already \$2 billion of rental revenue in 2006," said Christine Wehrman, ARA's executive vice president and CEO.

In New York, TriServe has been providing high-end tabletop, specialty linens, kitchen equipment, and other party rental equipment to clients in the area for more than 30 years and has high-profile clients including Saks Fifth Avenue, the Lincoln Center and JPMorgan Chase.

"We are excited to be part of the nation's leading party rental company. New York clients are always looking for new and exciting products, and now we have the resources to go get them," said Lance York, co-owner of TriServe Party Rentals. Hageman, Stansberry & Associates, Cameron Park, Calif., represented TriServe in the deal.

Classic will continue to operate the business as Classic Party Rentals at the company's existing showroom and warehouse, located in Manhattan's Garment District and the Bronx, respectively. York will serve as general manager and John Dawson will continue as operations manager.

"Clients with both New York and Los Angeles offices have been asking Classic to bring our company to New York City," Campanelli said. "TriServe has most of Classic's existing service model in place and its employees understand the market and local venues." **RM**

— Whitney Carnahan



The Rental Show

Las Vegas
Feb. 11-14, 2008
Contact: ARA, 1900 19th St.,
Moline, IL 61265; (800) 334-2177;
Fax (309) 764-1533;
TheRentalShow@ararental.org
www.TheRentalShow.com

The Special Event

Atlanta
Jan. 15-18, 2008
Contact: (866) 486-0731
registration@penton.com
www.thespecialeventshow.com

World of Concrete

Las Vegas
Jan. 22-25, 2008
Contact: (866) 860-1983
www.worldofconcrete.com

IFAI Tent Conference

Long Beach, Calif.
Jan. 24-26, 2008
Contact: (562) 491-1234
www.tentexperts.org

The International Builder's Show

Orlando, Fla.
Feb. 13-16, 2008
www.buildersshow.com

CRA Atlantic Regional Trade Show

Moncton, New Brunswick, Canada
Feb. 23, 2008
Contact: (800) 786-9899
www.crarental.org

Samoter

Verona, Italy
March 5-9, 2008
Contact: +39 045 8298111
www.samoter.com

CRA Prairie Regional Trade show

Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, Canada
March 8, 2008
Contact: (800) 786-9899
www.crarental.org

CONEXPO-CON/AGG

Las Vegas
March 11-15, 2008
Contact: (800) 867-6060
www.conexpoconagg.com

CRA Quebec Regional Trade Show

Saint-Hyacinthe, Quebec, Canada
March 26-27, 2008
Contact: (800) 786-9899
www.crarental.org