

## Cozzini Bros. and Diamond Sharp Announce Merger

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DES PLAINES, Ill.--(BUSINESS WIRE)--Cozzini Bros., Inc., the leading cutlery sharpening and exchange services company in the United States, today announced its merger with Diamond Sharp Services, Inc., the leading cutlery sharpening and exchange services company in the Western United States. The joint company will operate under the Cozzini Bros. name.

“Joining forces with Diamond Sharp is truly transformational for the cutlery services industry and a significant milestone for Cozzini”

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Diamond Sharp, based in Brea, CA, was founded in 1987. The Company provides cutlery sharpening and rental services for approximately 9,000 customers, primarily in the Western U.S. Diamond Sharp operates three sharpening centers in the State of California and another in Albuquerque, New Mexico. The Company is family owned and operated by two second generation brothers-in-law: Cliff Wallman, CEO, and Bryan Hampton, who oversees the Company’s extensive operations in San Diego. Wallman, Hampton and the approximately 100-person strong Diamond Sharp team will continue with the

merged company.

“Joining forces with Diamond Sharp is truly transformational for the cutlery services industry and a significant milestone for Cozzini” said Ed Finnegan, CEO of Cozzini Bros. “Cozzini has long admired and respected Diamond Sharp as the clear market leader in the West. Like Cozzini, their focus on customers is core to their value system. Diamond Sharp’s broad service offering in combination with Cozzini’s operational systems and geographic reach positions us well to better service our growing customer base. We are excited about the improved safety, crew satisfaction and increased operating efficiencies the combination of the #1 and #2 companies in the highly fragmented cutlery services industry offers our customers for their back-of-house operations.”

Cliff Wallman, Diamond Sharp’s CEO, added, “The Diamond Sharp family is excited to merge our 35 years of service experience with the impressive team at Cozzini Bros. We can’t wait to show our valued customers, employees and subcontractors all the reasons why we chose this path and to add a little West Coast flavor to the Cozzini service mix as well.”

### About Cozzini Bros.

Cozzini Bros, Inc. is the largest commercial knife sharpening company in the country, serving independent restaurants, restaurant chains, grocery stores and other food service kitchens across the country. The Company provides knife exchange, various ancillary services and kitchen supplies to over 82,000 customers nationwide, operating ten sharpening centers across the country. Established in 1905, Cozzini Bros. is headquartered in Des Plaines, Illinois and operates in 47 states.

In 2017, Cozzini Bros. partnered with Birch Hill Equity Partners ([www.birchhillequity.com](http://www.birchhillequity.com)) to support the continued execution of a robust growth strategy driven by additional strategic partnerships, acquisitions and enhanced selling efforts. The strategic partnership with Diamond Sharp represents the 14th such transaction since Birch Hill partnered with Cozzini’s management and the 43<sup>rd</sup> since Ed Finnegan joined Cozzini Bros. as CEO in 2009.