

Mafia Goes Public



By Joe Pescino

Amidst recent rumors of their impending emergence into the mainstream financial world, the Mafia confirmed today in New York that they indeed were about to go public, taking their place *not* next to the **MobMin's** and **MobileTel's** of the New York Stock Exchange, but in the lesser known but nonetheless financially formidable world of NASDAQ. To avoid confusion and allow quick newspaper Business section perusal, the shares will be listed conveniently under the name **Mob**.

"After we unionized with the Italians, Sicillians, Russians, Jews, and all the other reasonably well known Mafii, it just seemed like the natural thing to do." said uber mob boss, Joey "Knuckle Face" Vladimir Antillioni Steinberg-Shapiro.

Added his much more reasonably named aide, Vincente Pagliani, "When you really think about it, the Mafia are just entrepreneurs who think outside of the box. Nobody talks shit about Einstein and Thomas Edison for taking a sledgehammer to that fucking box. It's practically a natural outgrowth of capitalism. Would you really condemn us just for being this clever? And I *know* you think Robert Deniro is a fine actor? I thought so, punk."

"Laws shmaws." Agreed actor Benicio Del Toro, who for some reason happened to be in the room, reading a magazine. "Who ever agreed to let a piece of paper tell them how to live their lives?"



While skepticism of the NASDAQ move remains high, the long standing and almost guaranteed financial success of the Mafia has kept a few minds open. And as a poignant counterexample to the well known adage "Crime doesn't pay", an unnamed goon kindly remarked, "I got \$50 million dollars in unmarked twenties sitting in old Leo's broken refrigerator that says different. And that's just the tip of the lasagna." With that, and a few acts of gun violence and a montage of film-stylized personal terror, at least 43 percent of critics were silenced.

Even so, other Mafia bosses such as Vincenzo Candotti, Luigi Mario, and the somewhat out of place Mark Honeycutt, were keen to disagree.

"This recession hits all of us, even in the underground crime world." said Honeycutt. "Don't think the Mafia is impervious to statistical fluctuations in income just because it bypasses all legal hurdles and has all those casinos cleaning wallets like Pledge. That splendid moron of a president has our economy in such shambles that even the black market is turning purple. I mean last fiscal quarter alone we netted only 64 billion dollars in an average midsize Ohio town, down from 65 billion calzones the previous quarter."

When asked why they chose to join the traditionally technology based NASDAQ rather than the more standard, NYSE, 5th level Godfather Mario Podretti explained, "It's just that cute little Q at the end...couldn't resist."

But don't rule out a further branching out into the NYSE, says Mafia financial analyst for hire Alan "Chicken Cacciatore" Greenspan. "We're the longest tenured, most ruthlessly efficient criminal organization in the world. Nobody's been allowed to be on two stock exchanges before, but rules are for pussies. It's about time we showed those Wall Street punks who's boss."

At least the Initial Public Offering wasn't the head of Seabiscuit, as some analysts, and a paranoid Toby Maguire had long feared. As it happened, the IPO consisted of a full plate of Grandma Tio's gourmet pasta with a sauce to die for. Investors were satiated but not impressed.

Said Solomon Smith Barney's Kent Meyerott, "I haven't had a plate of pasta that good since 1964, but that still doesn't mean that I'm going to forget the difference between ridiculously good Italian food and actual, honest to goodness stock offerings that my company can make bank on."

Added Meyerott, "Can I have another plate, Mama Tio?" For the record, Meyerott did eat a second plate and enjoyed it 106 percent as much as the first, with interest.



Mama Tio & Kent



CORPORATE WATCH

Other criticism came from Wall Street, including questions about what products the Mafia actually produce, or more specifically, what services they will now offer now that they are responsible to their investors, rather than a complicated hereditary network of old crime bosses mostly named Don.

"What products do we produce?" mouthed Big Tony, while chewing on a crow bar, "I'll produce your body in the morgue is what I'll produce if you reporters keep asking questions. No, no, I'm just kidding. Let's just say that we do things...for people. We're regular problem solvers. We fix things. Yeah, let's keep it at that for the kids at home."

When asked by many activist groups if their widely admitted commitment to violence, drug trafficking, and crime in general was inconsistent with their now being a publicly traded company, Mafia spokesman Robert Duvall had this to say.



Wait, I just saved a bunch of money on my car insurance by switching to Geico.



"Hah! Are you kidding? What do you think all the other corporations do, make bedspreads? Pfizer and Novartis sell drugs, and you don't need to look very hard in Washington to find perpetrators of violence that put us to shame. All the oil interests we have are in *olive oil*. And crime? Hah! What does crime even mean any more? WorldCom. Enron. Martha Stewart. The corporate world has so much crime on its hands already, that even if we were a historied, highly organized criminal organization, which we are, mind you, we'd still be just a drop in the bucket...Excuse me, I have to go star in an undetermined upcoming Mafia film."

That said, Duvall's goons good naturedly offered to break this reporter's arms for good measure, but instead just handed me a cigar and hooked me up with some sneakers which were surprisingly light and comfortable for concrete. When I looked down to see the Adidas logo emblazoned on the sides of my doom, I knew the Mafia had finally made it out of the depths of underground financial obscurity.



In other news, the Mafia also announced its plans to join the United Nations. U.N. president Kofi Anan had some critical comments, but declined to say them for some reason having to do with the value he and the United Nations placed on their kneecaps.