

RCI HOSPITALITY HOLDINGS, INC.  
Form 10-K  
December 15, 2014

**UNITED STATES SECURITIES AND EXCHANGE COMMISSION**

**Washington, D.C. 20549**

**FORM 10-K**

**ANNUAL REPORT PURSUANT TO SECTION 13 OR 15(d) OF THE SECURITIES EXCHANGE ACT OF  
X 1934**

For the fiscal year ended September 30, 2014

Transition report under Section 13 or 15(d) of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934

Commission file number: 001-13992

**RCI HOSPITALITY HOLDINGS, INC. (FORMERLY RICK'S CABARET INTERNATIONAL, INC.)**

(Exact name of registrant as specified in its charter)

**Texas**

State or other jurisdiction of (I.R.S. Employer incorporation or organization Identification No.)

**10959 Cutten Road, Houston, Texas 77066**

(Address of principal executive offices)

**(281) 397-6730**

Registrant's telephone number, including area code

Securities registered pursuant to Section 12(b) of the Act:

**Common Stock, \$.01 Par Value**

(Title of class)

**NASDAQ**

Name of each exchange on which registered

Securities registered pursuant to section 12(g) of the Act:

None

Indicate by check mark if the registrant is a well-known seasoned issuer, as defined in Rule 405 of the Securities Act.

Yes  No

Indicate by check mark if the registrant is not required to file reports pursuant to Section 13 or Section 15(d) of the Act.

Yes  No

Indicate by check mark whether the registrant (1) has filed all reports required to be filed by Section 13 or 15(d) of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934 during the preceding 12 months (or for such shorter period that the registrant was required to file such reports), and (2) has been subject to such filing requirements for the past 90 days. Yes  No

Indicate by check mark whether the registrant has submitted electronically and posted on its corporate Web site, if any, every Interactive Data File required to be submitted and posted pursuant to Rule 405 of Regulation S-T (§ 232.405 of this chapter) during the preceding 12 months (or for such shorter period that the registrant was required to submit and post such files). Yes  No

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Indicate by check mark if disclosure of delinquent filers pursuant to Item 405 of Regulation S-K (§ 229.405 of this chapter) is not contained herein, and will not be contained, to the best of registrant's knowledge, in definitive proxy or information statements incorporated by reference in Part III of this Form 10-K or any amendment to this Form 10-K "

Indicate by check mark whether the registrant is a large accelerated filer, an accelerated filer, a non-accelerated filer, or a smaller reporting company. See the definitions of "large accelerated filer," "accelerated filer" and "smaller reporting company" in Rule 12b-2 of the Exchange Act. Large accelerated filer " Accelerated filer x Non-accelerated filer " Smaller reporting company "

Indicate by check mark whether the registrant is a shell company (as defined in Rule 12b-2 of the Exchange Act.):  
Yes " No x

The aggregate market value of the voting and non-voting common equity held by non-affiliates computed by reference to the price at which the common equity was last sold as of the last business day of the registrant's most recently completed second fiscal quarter was \$95,508,875.

As of December 1, 2014, there were approximately 10,354,616 shares of common stock outstanding.

## NOTE ABOUT FORWARD-LOOKING STATEMENTS

This Annual Report on Form 10-K contains forward-looking statements within the meaning of the Private Securities Litigation Reform Act of 1995. These statements include, among other things, statements regarding plans, objectives, goals, strategies, future events or performance and underlying assumptions and other statements, which are other than statements of historical facts. Forward-looking statements may appear throughout this report, including without limitation, the following sections: Item 1 “Business,” Item 1A “Risk Factors,” and Item 7 “Management’s Discussion and Analysis of Financial Condition and Results of Operations.” Forward-looking statements generally can be identified by words such as “anticipates,” “believes,” “estimates,” “expects,” “intends,” “plans,” “predicts,” “projects,” “will be,” “will continue,” “likely result,” and similar expressions. These forward-looking statements are based on current expectations and assumptions that are subject to risks and uncertainties, which could cause our actual results to differ materially from those reflected in the forward-looking statements. Factors that could cause or contribute to such differences include, but are not limited to, those discussed in this Annual Report on Form 10-K, and in particular, the risks discussed under the caption “Risk Factors” in Item 1A and those discussed in other documents we file with the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC). Important factors that in our view could cause material adverse effects on our financial condition and results of operations include, but are not limited to, the risks and uncertainties related to our future operational and financial results, competitive factors, the timing of the openings of other units, the availability of acceptable financing to fund corporate expansion efforts, our dependence on key personnel, the ability to manage operations and the future operational strength of management, and the laws governing the operation of adult entertainment businesses. We undertake no obligation to revise or publicly release the results of any revision to any forward-looking statements, except as required by law. Given these risks and uncertainties, readers are cautioned not to place undue reliance on such forward-looking statements.

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**PART I****Item 1. Business.****INTRODUCTION**

At the Company's Annual Meeting of Stockholders on August 6, 2014, its name was officially changed from Rick's Cabaret International, Inc. to RCI Hospitality Holdings, Inc. RCI Hospitality Holdings, Inc. (sometimes referred to as RCIHH herein) was incorporated in the State of Texas in 1994. Through our subsidiaries, as of December 1, 2014, we operate a total of forty-four establishments that offer live adult entertainment, and/or restaurant and bar operations. We also intend, through our subsidiaries, to open an additional location in the Spring of 2015. We have one reportable segment, nightclubs. RCI Hospitality Holdings, Inc. is a holding company and operates through its subsidiaries including its management company, RCI Management Services, Inc. All services and management operations are conducted by subsidiaries of RCI Hospitality Holdings, Inc. In the context of club and bar/restaurant operations, the terms the "Company," "we," "our," "us" and similar terms used herein refer to subsidiaries of RCI Hospitality Holdings, Inc. Excepting executive officers of RCI Hospitality Holdings, Inc., any employment referenced in this document is not with RCI Hospitality Holdings, Inc. but solely with one of its subsidiaries.

**SCHEDULE OF UNITS**

Name of Nightclub	Date Acquired/Opened
Club Onyx, Houston, TX	1995
Rick's Cabaret, Minneapolis, MN	1998
XTC Cabaret, Austin, TX	1998
XTC Cabaret, San Antonio, TX	1998
XTC Cabaret North, Houston, TX	2004
Rick's Cabaret, New York City, NY	2005
Club Onyx, Charlotte, NC	2005
Rick's Cabaret, San Antonio, TX	2006
XTC Cabaret South, South Houston, TX	2006
Rick's Cabaret, Fort Worth, TX	2007
Tootsie's Cabaret, Miami Gardens, FL	2008
XTC Cabaret, Dallas, TX	2008
Club Onyx, Dallas, TX	2008
Club Onyx, Philadelphia, PA	2008
Rick's Cabaret, North Austin, TX	2009
Cabaret North, Fort Worth, TX	2009

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Cabaret East, Fort Worth, TX	2010
Rick's Cabaret DFW, Fort Worth, TX	2011
Downtown Cabaret, Minneapolis, MN	2011
Rick's Cabaret, Indianapolis, IN	2011
Temptations, Aledo, TX	2011
Silver City Cabaret, Dallas, TX	2012
Jaguars Club, Odessa, TX	2012
Jaguars Club, Phoenix, AZ	2012
Jaguars Club, Lubbock, TX	2012
Jaguars Club, Longview, TX	2012
Jaguars Club, Tye, TX	2012
Jaguars Club, Edinburg, TX	2012
Jaguars Club, El Paso, TX	2012
Jaguars Club, Harlingen, TX	2012
Jaguar's Club, Beaumont, TX	2012
Vee Lounge, Fort Worth, TX	2013
Bombshells, Dallas, TX	2013
Temptations, Sulphur, LA	2013
Temptations, Beaumont, TX	2013
Bombshells, Webster, TX	2013
The Black Orchid, Dallas, TX	2013
Vivid Cabaret, New York, NY	2014
Bombshells, Austin, TX	2014
Rick's Cabaret, Odessa, TX	2014
Bombshells, Spring TX	2014
Bombshells, Fuqua (Houston)	2014
Temptations, Lubbock, TX	2014
Union Square, Fort Worth, TX (1)	2014
Bombshells, Willowbrook (Houston) (2)	2015

(1) Opened in December 2014.

(2) To be opened in Spring 2015.



As noted above, we have the following nightclubs/restaurant under construction or contract:

- Union Station (formerly Pole Position) opened in December 2014.
- Bombshells Willowbrook to be opened in Spring 2015.

Our website address is [www.rcihospitality.com](http://www.rcihospitality.com). Upon written request, we make available free of charge our Annual Report on Form 10-K, Quarterly Reports on Form 10-Q, Current Reports on Form 8-K, and all amendments to those reports as soon as reasonably practicable after such material is electronically filed with the SEC under the Securities Exchange Act of 1934, as amended. Information contained in the website shall not be construed as part of this Form 10-K.

## **BUSINESS ACTIVITIES—NIGHTCLUBS**

Prior to the opening of the first Rick's Cabaret in 1983 in Houston, Texas, the adult entertainment nightclub business was characterized by small establishments generally managed by their owner. Operating policies of these establishments were often lax, the sites were generally dimly lit, standards for performers' personal appearance and personality were not maintained and it was customary for performers to alternate between dancing and waiting tables. The quantity and quality of bar service was low and food was not frequently offered. Music was usually "hard" rock and roll, played at a loud level by a disc jockey. Usually, only cash was accepted. Many businessmen felt uncomfortable in such environments. Recognizing a void in the market for a first-class adult nightclub, we designed Rick's Cabaret to target the more affluent customer by providing a unique quality entertainment environment. In addition we have continued to develop additional brands targeting specific markets and demographics to maximize the business opportunities at these locations. The following summarizes our areas of operation that distinguish us:

Female Entertainers . Our policy is to maintain high standards for both personal appearance and personality for the entertainers and waitresses. Of equal importance is a performer's ability to present herself attractively and to engage in conversation with customers. We prefer that performers who work at our clubs be experienced entertainers. We make a determination as to whether a particular entertainer is suitable based on such factors of appearance, attitude, dress, communication skills and demeanor. At all clubs, except for our Rick's Minnesota location, the entertainers are independent contractors. We do not schedule their work hours.

Management . We often recruit staff from inside the adult entertainment industry, as well as from large restaurant and club chains, in the belief that management with experience in the sector adds to our ability to grow and attract quality entertainers as well as clientele. Management with experience is able to train new recruits from outside the industry.

Compliance Policies/Employees .. We have a policy of ensuring that our businesses are operated in conformity with local, state and federal laws. We continually monitor the behavior of employees and customers to ensure that proper standards of behavior are observed.

Compliance Policies/Credit Cards . We have in place policies requiring that certain credit card charges must be approved, in writing, by management before any charges are accepted. Management is trained to review credit card charges to ensure that the only charges approved for payment are for food, drink, merchandise and entertainment.

Food and Drink . We believe that a key to the success of our branded adult nightclubs is a quality, first-class bar and restaurant operation to compliment our adult entertainment. We employ service managers who recruit and train professional wait staff and ensure that each customer receives prompt and courteous service. We employ chefs with restaurant experience. Our bar managers order inventory and schedule bar staff. We believe that the operation of a first class restaurant is a necessary component to the operation of a premiere adult cabaret, as is the provision of premium wine, liquor and beer in order to ensure that the customer perceives and obtains good value. At most locations, our restaurant operations provide business lunch buffets and full lunch and dinner menu service with hot and cold appetizers, salads, seafood, steak, and lobster. An extensive selection of quality wines is available at most locations.

Controls . Operational and accounting controls are essential to the successful operation of a cash intensive nightclub and bar business. At each location, we have designed and implemented internal procedures and controls to ensure the integrity of our operational and accounting records. Wherever practicable, we separate management personnel from all cash handling so that management is isolated from and does not handle any cash. We use a combination of accounting and physical inventory control mechanisms to maintain a high level of integrity in our accounting practices. Information technology plays a significant role in capturing and analyzing a variety of information to provide management with the information necessary to efficiently manage and control each nightclub. Deposits of cash and credit card receipts are reconciled each day to a daily income report. In addition, we review on a daily basis (i) cash and credit card summaries which tie together all cash and credit card transactions occurring at the front door, the bars in the club and the cashier station, (ii) a summary of the daily bartenders' check-out reports, and (iii) a daily cash requirements analysis which reconciles the previous day's cash on hand to the requirements for the next day's operations. These daily computer reports alert local management of any variances from expected financial results based on historical norms. We conduct a monthly overview of our financial condition and operating results.

Atmosphere . We maintain a high design standard in our facilities and decor. The furniture and furnishings in the nightclubs create the feeling of an upscale restaurant. The sound system provides quality sound at levels at which conversations can still take place. The environment is carefully monitored for music selection, entertainer and waitress appearance and all aspects of customer service on a continuous basis.

VIP Room . In keeping with our emphasis on serving the upper-end of the businessmen's market, some of our nightclubs include a VIP room, which provides a higher level of service and luxury.

Advertising and Promotion .. Our consumer marketing strategy is to position our brands as premiere entertainment facilities that provide exceptional adult entertainment in a fun, yet discreet, environment. We use a variety of highly targeted methods to reach our customers including hotel publications, local radio, cable television, newspapers, billboards, taxi-cab reader boards, and the Internet, as well as a variety of promotional campaigns. These campaigns ensure that our brand names are kept before the public.

RCI Hospitality Holdings, Inc. has received a significant amount of media exposure over the years in national magazines such as *Playboy*, *Penthouse*, *Glamour Magazine*, *The Ladies Home Journal*, *Time Magazine*, *Time Out New York*, and *Texas Monthly Magazine*. Segments about Rick's have aired on national and local television programs such as "20/20", "Extra" and "Inside Edition", and we have provided entertainers for pay-per-view features as well. Business stories about RCI Hospitality Holdings, Inc. have appeared in *Forbes*, *Newsweek*, *The Wall Street Journal*, *The New York Times*, *The New York Post*, *Los Angeles Times*, *Houston Business Journal*, and numerous other national and regional publications. *Forbes* named RCI Hospitality Holdings, Inc. one of America's 200 Best Small Companies since 2008. RCI Hospitality Holdings, Inc. has been profiled in *The Wall Street Journal*, *Fortune*, *MarketWatch*, *Corporate Board Member*, *Smart Money*, *USA Today*, *The New York Daily News* and other publications.

## NIGHTCLUB LOCATIONS

We currently operate units under the name "Rick's Cabaret" in San Antonio, Austin, Lubbock, Odessa and Fort Worth, Texas (2); Minneapolis, Minnesota; New York, New York; and Indianapolis, Indiana. We also operate a similar nightclub under the name "Tootsie's Cabaret" in Miami Gardens, Florida. We operate a total of four nightclubs (one in Houston, one in Dallas, one in Charlotte, North Carolina and one in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania), as "Club Onyx", upscale venues that welcome all customers but cater especially to urban professionals, businessmen and professional athletes. Additionally, we own five nightclubs that operate as "XTC Cabaret" in San Antonio, Austin, Dallas, Houston and South Houston, Texas, one that operates as "Cabaret East" in Fort Worth, one that operates as "Cabaret North" in Fort Worth, one that operates as Silver City in Dallas and one that operates as "Downtown Cabaret" in Minneapolis. We operate "Temptations" clubs in Sulphur, Louisiana, Beaumont, Texas Lubbock, Texas and Fort Worth, Texas. We operate nine clubs as "Jaguars" in Texas and one in Phoenix, Arizona. We also operate The Black Orchid in Dallas, Texas. We sold our New Orleans, Louisiana nightclub in March 1999, but it continues to use the name "Rick's Cabaret" under a licensing agreement. In addition to the adult nightclubs, we currently operate two bar/restaurants in Fort

Worth, Texas as Vee Lounge (currently open) and Union Square, with the latter to open in December 2014. We also operate five sports bar/restaurants as “Bombshells” in Dallas, Austin and Houston, Texas with another to open in Houston in the Spring of 2015.

## RECENT TRANSACTIONS

See Note M, Acquisitions, of Notes to Consolidated Financial Statements for acquisitions during fiscal years ended September 30, 2014, 2013 and 2012.

## BUSINESS ACTIVITIES – MEDIA GROUP

The Media Group, made up of wholly owned subsidiaries, is the leading business communications company serving the multi-billion-dollar adult nightclubs industry. It owns a national industry convention and tradeshow; two national industry trade publications; two national industry awards shows; and more than 25 industry websites. Included in the Media Group is ED Publications, publishers of the bimonthly ED Club Bulletin, the only national business magazine serving the 3,500-plus adult nightclubs in North America, which have annual revenues in excess of \$5 billion, according to the Association of Club Executives. ED Publications, founded in 1991, also publishes the Annual VIP Guide of adult nightclubs, touring entertainers and industry vendors; produces the Annual Gentlemen’s Club Owners EXPO, a national convention and tradeshow which marked its 20-Year Anniversary in 2012; and offers the exclusive ED VIP Club Card, honored at more than 850 adult nightclubs. Also in the Media Group is Storerotica, founded in 2004, which publishes the bimonthly Storerotica Magazine, the industry trade publication for the multi-billion-dollar erotic apparel and adult novelty retail sales industries. The Media Group produces two nationally recognized industry awards show for the readers of both ED Club Bulletin and Storerotica magazines, and maintains a number of B-to-B and consumer websites for both industries.

## COMPETITION

The adult entertainment and the restaurant/bar businesses are highly competitive with respect to price, service and location. All of our nightclubs compete with a number of locally owned adult clubs, some of whose names may have name recognition that equals that of ours. While there may be restrictions on the location of a so-called "sexually oriented business"(SOB), there are low barriers to entry into the adult cabaret entertainment market. The names "Rick's" and "Rick's Cabaret", "Tootsie's Cabaret", "XTC Cabaret", "Silver City", "Club Onyx", "Downtown Cabaret", "Temptations" and "The Black Orchid" are proprietary. In the restaurant/bar business, "Bombshells" is also proprietary. We believe that the combination of our existing brand name recognition and the distinctive entertainment environment that we have created will allow us to compete effectively in the industry and within the cities where we operate. Although we believe that we are well positioned to compete successfully, there can be no assurance that we will be able to maintain our high level of name recognition and prestige within the marketplace.

## GOVERNMENTAL REGULATIONS

We are subject to various federal, state and local laws affecting our business activities. In particular, in Texas the authority to issue a permit to sell alcoholic beverages is governed by the Texas Alcoholic Beverage Commission ("TABC"), which has the authority, in its discretion, to issue the appropriate permits. We presently hold a Mixed Beverage Permit and a Late Hour Permit at numerous Texas locations. Previously subject to annual renewal, the TABC recently changed to a renewal every two years, provided we have complied with all rules and regulations governing the permits. Renewal of a permit is subject to protest, which may be made by a law enforcement agency or by the public. In the event of a protest, the TABC may hold a hearing at which time the views of interested parties are expressed. The TABC has the authority after such hearing not to issue a renewal of the protested alcoholic beverage permit. Rick's has never been the subject of a protest hearing against the renewal of Permits. Minnesota, North Carolina, Indiana, Louisiana, Arizona, Pennsylvania, Florida, and New York have similar laws that may limit the availability of a permit to sell alcoholic beverages or that may provide for suspension or revocation of a permit to sell alcoholic beverages in certain circumstances. It is our policy, prior to expanding into any new market, to take steps to ensure compliance with all licensing and regulatory requirements for the sale of alcoholic beverages as well as the sale of food.

In addition to various regulatory requirements affecting the sale of alcoholic beverages, in many cities where we operate, the location of an adult entertainment cabaret is subject to restriction by city ordinance. For example, adult entertainment nightclubs in Houston, Texas are subject to "The Sexually Oriented Business Ordinance", which contains prohibitions on the location of an adult cabaret (see "Legal Proceedings" herein). The prohibitions deal generally with distance from schools, churches, and other sexually oriented businesses and contain restrictions based on the percentage of residences within the immediate vicinity of the sexually oriented business. The granting of a Sexually Oriented Business Permit is not subject to discretion; the Business Permit must be granted if the proposed operation satisfies the requirements of the Ordinance. In all states where we operate, management believes we are in compliance with applicable city, county, state or other local laws governing the sale of alcohol and sexually oriented businesses.

## **TRADEMARKS**

Our rights to the tradenames "Rick's", "Rick's Cabaret", "Tootsie's Cabaret", "Club Onyx," "XTC Cabaret," "Temptations," "Jaguars," "Downtown Cabaret," "Cabaret East," Cabaret North," Bombshells," "Vee Lounge" and "The Black Orchid" are established under common law, based upon our substantial and continuous use of these tradenames in interstate commerce, some of which have been in use at least as early as 1987. We have registered our service mark, "RICK'S AND STARS DESIGN", with the United States Patent and Trademark Office. We have also obtained service mark registrations from the Patent and Trademark Office for the "RICK'S", "RICK'S CABARET", "CLUB ONYX", "XTC CABARET", "SILVER CITY CABARET", "THE BLACK ORCHID", "BOMBSHELLS" and "EXOTIC DANCER" service marks. We also own the rights to numerous tradenames associated with our media division. There can be no assurance that the steps we have taken to protect our service marks will be adequate to deter misappropriation.

## **EMPLOYEES AND INDEPENDENT CONTRACTORS**

As of September 30, 2014, we and our subsidiaries had approximately 1,750 employees, of which approximately 100 are in management positions, including corporate and administrative operations and approximately 1,650 are engaged in entertainment, food and beverage service, including bartenders, waitresses, and certain entertainers. None of our employees are represented by a union. We consider our employee relations to be good. Additionally, as of September 30, 2014, we had independent contractor relationships with approximately 3,000 entertainers, who are self-employed and conduct business at our locations on a non-exclusive basis as independent contractors. Our entertainers at Rick's Cabaret in Minneapolis, Minnesota act as commissioned employees. We believe that the adult entertainment industry standard of treating entertainers as independent contractors provides us with safe harbor protection to preclude payroll tax assessment for prior years. We have prepared plans that we believe will protect our profitability in the event that the sexually oriented business industry is required in all states to convert entertainers who are now independent contractors into employees.

## SHARE REPURCHASES

On September 29, 2008, our Board of Directors authorized us to repurchase up to \$5 million worth of our common stock in the open market. As of April 2013, we completed the repurchase of all \$5 million in stock authorized under this plan. On April 25, 2013, our Board of Directors authorized us to repurchase up to an additional \$3 million worth of our common stock in the open market or in privately negotiated transactions. During May 2014, our Board of Directors increased the repurchase authorization to \$10 million. During the fiscal year ended September 30, 2014, we purchased 101,330 shares of common stock in the open market at prices ranging from \$10.45 to \$12.00 and during the fiscal year ended September 30, 2013, we purchased 179,955 shares of common stock in the open market at prices ranging from \$7.84 to \$8.95. Under the Board's authority, we have \$8.8 million remaining to purchase additional shares as of September 30, 2014.

### Item 1A. Risk Factors.

An investment in our common stock involves a high degree of risk. You should carefully consider the risks described below before deciding to purchase shares of our common stock. If any of the events, contingencies, circumstances or conditions described in the risks below actually occurs, our business, financial condition or results of operations could be seriously harmed. The trading price of our common stock could, in turn, decline and you could lose all or part of your investment.

#### Our Business Operations are Subject to Regulatory Uncertainties Which May Affect Our Ability to Continue Operations of Existing Nightclubs, Acquire Additional Nightclubs or Be Profitable

Adult entertainment nightclubs are subject to local, state and federal regulations. Our business is regulated by local zoning, local and state liquor licensing, local ordinances and state and federal time place and manner restrictions. The adult entertainment provided by our nightclubs has elements of speech and expression and, therefore, enjoys some protection under the First Amendment to the United States Constitution. However, the protection is limited to the expression, and not the conduct of an entertainer. While our nightclubs are generally well established in their respective markets, there can be no assurance that local, state and/or federal licensing and other regulations will permit our nightclubs to remain in operation or profitable in the future.

Beginning January 1, 2008, the Company's Texas clubs became subject to a new state law requiring each club to collect and pay a \$5 surcharge for every club visitor. A lawsuit was filed by the Texas Entertainment Association ("TEA"), an organization to which the Company is a member, alleging the fee amounts to be an unconstitutional tax. On March 28, 2008, a State District Court Judge in Travis County, Texas ruled that the new state law violates the First Amendment to the United States Constitution and is therefore invalid. The judge's order enjoined the State from

collecting or assessing the tax. The State appealed the Court's ruling. In Texas, when cities or the State give notice of appeal, it supersedes and suspends the judgment, including the injunction. Therefore, the judgment of the District Court cannot be enforced until the appeals are completed. Given the suspension of the judgment, the State gave notice of its right to collect the tax pending the outcome of its appeal but took no affirmative action to enforce that right. On June 5, 2009, the Court of Appeals for the Third District (Austin) affirmed the District Court's judgment that the Sexually Oriented Business ("S.O.B.") Fee violated the First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution but on August 26, 2011, the Texas Supreme Court reversed the judgment of the Court of Appeals, ruling that the SOB Fee does not violate the First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution, and remanded the case to the District Court to determine whether the fee violates the Texas Constitution.

TEA appealed the Texas Supreme Court's decision to the U.S. Supreme Court (regarding the constitutionality of the fee under the First Amendment of the U.S. Constitution), but the U.S. Supreme Court denied the appeal on January 23, 2012. Subsequently, the case was remanded to the District Court for consideration of the remaining issues raised by TEA. On June 28, 2012, the District Court in Travis County held a hearing on TEA's Texas Constitutional claims and on July 9, 2012 entered an order finding that the tax was a constitutional Occupations Tax. The Court denied the remainder of TEA's constitutional claims. TEA appealed the trial court's ruling to the Third Court of Appeals and on May 9, 2014, the Third Court of Appeals issued a ruling adverse to TEA and in favor of the State. TEA filed a petition for review to the Texas Supreme Court on July 17, 2014. The Texas Supreme Court denied TEA's petition for review on November 21, 2014. On December 8, 2014, TEA notified the Texas Attorney General that TEA intends to file a petition for writ of certiorari with the United States Supreme Court.

The Company has not made any payments of these taxes since the first quarter of 2009 and plans not to make any such payments while the case is pending in the courts. However, based on the court ruling, the Company will continue to accrue and expense the potential tax liability on its financial statements. If the final decision of the courts is ultimately in the Company's favor, as it believes it will be, then the Company will record a one-time gain of the entire amount previously expensed.

Since the inception of the tax, the Company has paid more than \$2 million to the State of Texas under protest for all four quarters of 2008 and the first quarter of 2009, expensing it in the consolidated financial statements (except for two locations in Dallas where the taxes have not been paid, but the Company is accruing and expensing the liability). For all subsequent quarters, as a result of the Third Court's 2009 decision, the Company has accrued the tax, but not paid the State. Accordingly, as of September 30, 2014, the Company has approximately \$15.5 million in accrued liabilities for this tax. Patron tax expense amounted to approximately \$3.1 million, \$3.2 million and \$3.1 million for the years ended September 30, 2014, 2013 and 2012, respectively. The Company's Texas clubs have filed a separate lawsuit against the State in which the Company raises additional challenges to the statute imposing the fee or tax, demanding repayment of the taxes the Company has paid under this statute. The courts have not yet addressed these additional claims. If the Company is successful in the remaining litigation, the amount the Company has paid under protest should be repaid or applied to any future, constitutional admission tax or other Texas state tax liabilities.



Our Business has been, and may Continue to be, Adversely Affected by Conditions in the U.S. Financial Markets and Economic Conditions Generally

Our nightclubs are often acquired with a purchase price based on historical EBITDA (Earnings Before Interest, Taxes, Depreciation and Amortization). This results in certain nightclubs carrying a substantial amount of intangible value, mostly allocated to licenses and goodwill. Generally accepted accounting principles require an annual impairment review of these indefinite lived assets. If difficult market and economic conditions continue over the next year and/or we experience a decrease in revenue at one or more nightclubs, we could incur a decline in fair value of one or more of our nightclubs. This could result in future impairment charges of up to the total value of the indefinite lived intangible assets.

We May Need Additional Financing or Our Business Expansion Plans May Be Significantly Limited

If cash generated from our operations is insufficient to satisfy our working capital and capital expenditure requirements, we will need to raise additional funds through the public or private sale of our equity or debt securities. The timing and amount of our capital requirements will depend on a number of factors, including cash flow and cash requirements for nightclub acquisitions. If additional funds are raised through the issuance of equity or convertible debt securities, the percentage ownership of our then-existing shareholders will be reduced. We cannot assure you that additional financing will be available on terms favorable to us, if at all. Any future equity financing, if available, may result in dilution to existing shareholders, and debt financing, if available, may include restrictive covenants. Any failure by us to procure timely additional financing will have material adverse consequences on our business operations.

There is Substantial Competition in the Nightclub Entertainment Industry, Which May Affect Our Ability to Operate Profitably or Acquire Additional Clubs

Our nightclubs face competition. Some of these competitors may have greater financial and management resources than we do. Additionally, the industry is subject to unpredictable competitive trends and competition for general entertainment dollars. There can be no assurance that we will be able to remain profitable in this competitive industry.

Risk of Adult Nightclubs Operations

Historically, the adult entertainment, restaurant and bar industry has been an extremely volatile industry. The industry tends to be extremely sensitive to the general local economy, in that when economic conditions are prosperous,

entertainment industry revenues increase, and when economic conditions are unfavorable, entertainment industry revenues decline. Coupled with this economic sensitivity are the trendy personal preferences of the customers who frequent adult cabarets. We continuously monitor trends in our customers' tastes and entertainment preferences so that, if necessary, we can make appropriate changes which will allow us to remain one of the premiere adult cabarets. However, any significant decline in general corporate conditions or uncertainties regarding future economic prospects that affect consumer spending could have a material adverse effect on our business. In addition, we have historically catered to a clientele base from the upper end of the market. Accordingly, further reductions in the amounts of entertainment expenses allowed as deductions from income under the Internal Revenue Code of 1954, as amended, could adversely affect sales to customers dependent upon corporate expense accounts.

#### Permits Relating to the Sale of Alcohol

We derive a significant portion of our revenues from the sale of alcoholic beverages. States in which we operate may have laws which may limit the availability of a permit to sell alcoholic beverages or which may provide for suspension or revocation of a permit to sell alcoholic beverages in certain circumstances. The temporary or permanent suspension or revocations of any such permits would have a material adverse effect on our revenues, financial condition and results of operations. In all states where we operate, management believes we are in compliance with applicable city, county, state or other local laws governing the sale of alcohol.

#### Activities or Conduct at Our Nightclubs May Cause Us to Lose Necessary Business Licenses, Expose Us to Liability, or Result in Adverse Publicity, Which May Increase Our Costs and Divert Management's Attention from Our Business

We are subject to risks associated with activities or conduct at our nightclubs that are illegal or violate the terms of necessary business licenses. Some of our nightclubs operate under licenses for sexually oriented businesses and are afforded some protection under the First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution. While we believe that the activities at our nightclubs comply with the terms of such licenses, and that the element of our business that constitutes an expression of free speech under the First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution is protected, activities and conduct at our nightclubs may be found to violate the terms of such licenses or be unprotected under the U.S. Constitution. This protection is limited to the expression and not the conduct of an entertainer. An issuing authority may suspend or terminate a license for a nightclub found to have violated the license terms. Illegal activities or conduct at any of our nightclubs may result in negative publicity or litigation. Such consequences may increase our cost of doing business, divert management's attention from our business and make an investment in our securities unattractive to current and potential investors, thereby lowering our profitability and our stock price.

We have developed comprehensive policies aimed at ensuring that the operation of each nightclub is conducted in conformance with local, state and federal laws. We have a “no tolerance” policy on illegal drug use in or around the facilities. We continually monitor the actions of entertainers, waitresses and customers to ensure that proper behavior standards are met. However, such policies, no matter how well designed and enforced, can provide only reasonable, not absolute, assurance that the policies’ objectives are being achieved. Because of the inherent limitations in all control systems and policies, there can be no assurance that our policies will prevent deliberate acts by persons attempting to violate or circumvent them. Notwithstanding the foregoing limitations, management believes that our policies are reasonably effective in achieving their purposes.

#### Our Acquisitions May Result in Disruptions in Our Business and Diversion of Management’s Attention

We have made and may continue to make acquisitions of complementary nightclubs, restaurants or related operations. Any acquisitions will require the integration of the operations, products and personnel of the acquired businesses and the training and motivation of these individuals. Such acquisitions may disrupt our operations and divert management’s attention from day-to-day operations, which could impair our relationships with current employees, customers and partners. We may also incur debt or issue equity securities to pay for any future acquisitions. These issuances could be substantially dilutive to our stockholders. In addition, our profitability may suffer because of acquisition-related costs or amortization, or impairment costs for acquired goodwill and other intangible assets. If management is unable to fully integrate acquired business, products or persons with existing operations, we may not receive the benefits of the acquisitions, and our revenues and stock trading price may decrease.

#### We Must Continue to Meet NASDAQ Global Market Continued Listing Requirements or We Risk Delisting

Our securities are currently listed for trading on the NASDAQ Global Market. We must continue to satisfy NASDAQ’s continued listing requirements or risk delisting which would have an adverse effect on our business. If our securities are ever de-listed from NASDAQ, they may trade on the over-the-counter market, which may be a less liquid market. In such case, our shareholders’ ability to trade or obtain quotations of the market value of shares of our common stock would be severely limited because of lower trading volumes and transaction delays. These factors could contribute to lower prices and larger spreads in the bid and ask prices for our securities. There is no assurance that we will be able to maintain compliance with the NASDAQ continued listing requirements.

#### We Incur Significant Costs as a Result of Operating as a Public Company, and Our Management Devotes Substantial Time to New Compliance Initiatives

We will incur significant legal, accounting and other expenses that our competition does not incur. The Sarbanes-Oxley Act of 2002 (the “Sarbanes-Oxley Act”), as well as new rules subsequently implemented by the SEC,

have imposed various requirements on public companies, including requiring certain corporate governance practices. Our management and other personnel devote a substantial amount of time to these compliance initiatives. Moreover, these rules and regulations increase our legal and financial compliance costs and will make some activities more time-consuming and costly.

In addition, the Sarbanes-Oxley Act requires, among other things, that we maintain effective internal controls for financial reporting and disclosure controls and procedures. In particular, we have been required to perform system and process evaluation and testing on the effectiveness of our internal controls over financial reporting, as required by Section 404 of the Sarbanes-Oxley Act. Then, beginning in fiscal 2010, our independent registered public accounting firm has reported on the effectiveness of our internal controls over financial reporting, as required by Section 404 of the Sarbanes-Oxley Act. In the future, our testing, or the subsequent testing by our independent registered public accounting firm, may reveal deficiencies in our internal controls over financial reporting that are deemed to be material weaknesses. Our compliance with Section 404 requires that we incur substantial accounting expense and expend significant management efforts. Moreover, if we are not able to comply with the requirements of Section 404 in a timely manner, or if we or our independent registered public accounting firm identifies deficiencies in our internal controls over financial reporting that are deemed to be material weaknesses, the market price of our stock could decline, and we could be subject to sanctions or investigations by the SEC or other regulatory authorities, which would require additional financial and management resources.

#### Uninsured Risks

We maintain insurance in amounts we consider adequate for personal injury and property damage to which the business of the Company may be subject. However, there can be no assurance that uninsured liabilities in excess of the coverage provided by insurance, which liabilities may be imposed pursuant to the Texas "Dram Shop" statute or similar "Dram Shop" statutes or common law theories of liability in other states where we operate or expand. For example, the Texas "Dram Shop" statute provides a person injured by an intoxicated person the right to recover damages from an establishment that wrongfully served alcoholic beverages to such person if it was apparent to the server that the individual being sold, served or provided with an alcoholic beverage was obviously intoxicated to the extent that he presented a clear danger to himself and others. An employer is not liable for the actions of its employee who over-serves if (i) the employer requires its employees to attend a server training program approved by the TABC; (ii) the employee has actually attended such a training program; and (iii) the employer has not directly or indirectly encouraged the employee to violate the law. It is our policy to require that all servers of alcohol working at our clubs in Texas be certified as servers under a training program approved by the TABC, which certification gives statutory immunity to the sellers of alcohol from damage caused to third parties by those who have consumed alcoholic beverages at such establishment pursuant to the Texas Alcoholic Beverage Code. There can be no assurance, however, that uninsured liabilities may not arise in the markets in which we operate which could have a material adverse effect on the Company.

Our Previous Liability Insurer May Be Unable to Provide Coverage to Us and Our Subsidiaries

We and our subsidiaries were insured under a liability policy issued by Indemnity Insurance Corporation, RRG (“IIC”) through October 25, 2013—we switched to a different insurer on that date. By order dated November 7, 2013, the Court of Chancery of the State of Delaware declared IIC impaired, insolvent and in an unsafe condition and placed IIC under the supervision of the Insurance Commissioner of the State of Delaware (“Commissioner”) in her capacity as receiver. The order empowered the Commissioner to rehabilitate IIC through a variety of means, including gathering assets and marshaling those assets as necessary. Further, the order stayed or abated pending lawsuits involving IIC as the insurer until May 6, 2014. On April 10, 2014 as a result of a determination that IIC was not able to develop a Rehabilitation Plan to remediate and correct its financial impairment, the Court of Chancery of the State of Delaware found that IIC is insolvent and therefore ordered IIC liquidated. The Receiver in charge of the IIC Liquidation Proceeding has set a January 16, 2015 deadline for filing proof of claims to obtain proceeds from the liquidation to cover the reimbursement of funds paid on premium and on matters previously covered under an IIC policy. The Company will timely file a proof of claim.

Currently, there are multiple civil lawsuits pending or threatened against us and our subsidiaries that we covered by the IIC policy. There is also the potential that other lawsuits of which we currently are unaware could be filed against us for incidents that occurred before October 25, 2013. There can be no assurances we will have adequate insurance coverage for any of these lawsuits. It is unknown at this time what effect, if any, this uncertainty will have on the Company.

Limitations on Protection of Service Marks

Our rights to the tradenames "Rick's", "Rick's Cabaret", "Tootsie's Cabaret", "Club Onyx," "XTC Cabaret," "Temptations," "Jaguars," "Downtown Cabaret," "Cabaret East," Cabaret North," Bombshells," "Vee Lounge" and "The Black Orchid" are established under common law, based upon our substantial and continuous use of these tradenames in interstate commerce, some of which have been in use at least as early as 1987. "RICK'S AND STARS DESIGN" logo, "RICKS," "RICK'S CABARET", "CLUB ONYX", "XTC CABARET," "SILVER CITY CABARET", "THE BLACK ORCHID", "BOMBSHELLS" and "EXOTIC DANCER" are registered through service mark registrations issued by the United States Patent and Trademark Office. We also own the rights to numerous tradenames associated with our media division. There can be no assurance that these steps we have taken to protect our Service Marks will be adequate to deter misappropriation of our protected intellectual property rights. Litigation may be necessary in the future to protect our rights from infringement, which may be costly and time consuming. The loss of the intellectual property rights owned or claimed by us could have a material adverse affect on our business.

Anti-takeover Effects of Issuance of Preferred Stock

The Board of Directors has the authority to issue up to 1,000,000 shares of Preferred Stock in one or more series, to fix the number of shares constituting any such series, and to fix the rights and preferences of the shares constituting any series, without any further vote or action by the stockholders. The issuance of Preferred Stock by the Board of Directors could adversely affect the rights of the holders of common stock. For example, such issuance could result in a class of securities outstanding that would have preferences with respect to voting rights and dividends and in liquidation over the common stock, and could (upon conversion or otherwise) enjoy all of the rights appurtenant to common stock. The Board's authority to issue Preferred Stock could discourage potential takeover attempts and could delay or prevent a change in control of the Company through merger, tender offer, proxy contest or otherwise by making such attempts more difficult to achieve or more costly. There are no issued and outstanding shares of Preferred Stock; there are no agreements or understandings for the issuance of Preferred Stock, and the Board of Directors has no present intention to issue Preferred Stock.

#### We Have Not Paid Dividends on Common Shares in the Past

Since our inception we have not paid any dividends on our common stock.

#### Future Sales of Our Common Stock May Depress Our Stock Price

The market price of our common stock could decline as a result of sales of substantial amounts of our common stock in the public market, or as a result of the perception that these sales could occur. In addition, these factors could make it more difficult for us to raise funds through future offerings of common stock.

#### Our Stock Price Has Been Volatile and May Fluctuate in the Future

The trading price of our securities may fluctuate significantly. This price may be influenced by many factors, including:

- our performance and prospects;
- the depth and liquidity of the market for our securities;
- sales by selling shareholders of shares issued or issuable in connection with certain convertible notes;
- investor perception of us and the industry in which we operate;
- changes in earnings estimates or buy/sell recommendations by analysts;
- general financial and other market conditions; and
- domestic economic conditions.

Public stock markets have experienced, and may experience, extreme price and trading volume volatility. These broad market fluctuations may adversely affect the market price of our securities.

Our Management Controls a Significant Percentage of Our Current Outstanding Common Stock and Their Interests May Conflict with Those of Our Shareholders

As of December 1, 2014, our Directors and executive officers and their respective affiliates collectively and beneficially owned approximately 6.38% of our outstanding common stock, including all warrants exercisable within 60 days. This concentration of voting control gives our Directors and executive officers and their respective affiliates substantial influence over any matters which require a shareholder vote, including, without limitation, the election of Directors, even if their interests may conflict with those of other shareholders. It could also have the effect of delaying or preventing a change in control of or otherwise discouraging a potential acquirer from attempting to obtain control of us. This could have a material adverse effect on the market price of our common stock or prevent our shareholders from realizing a premium over the then prevailing market prices for their shares of common stock.

We are Dependent on Key Personnel

Our future success is dependent, in a large part, on retaining the services of Mr. Eric Langan, our President and Chief Executive Officer. Mr. Langan possesses a unique and comprehensive knowledge of our industry. While Mr. Langan has no present plans to leave or retire in the near future, his loss could have a negative effect on our operating, marketing and financial performance if we are unable to find an adequate replacement with similar knowledge and experience within our industry. We maintain key-man life insurance with respect to Mr. Langan. Although Mr. Langan is under an employment agreement (as described herein), there can be no assurance that Mr. Langan will continue to be employed by us. The loss of Mr. Langan could have a negative effect on our operating, marketing, and financing performance.

Cumulative Voting is Not Available to Stockholders

Cumulative voting in the election of Directors is expressly denied in our Articles of Incorporation. Accordingly, the holder or holders of a majority of the outstanding shares of our common stock may elect all of our Directors. Management's large percentage ownership of our outstanding common stock helps enable them to maintain their positions as such and thus control of our business and affairs.

Our Directors and Officers Have Limited Liability and Have Rights to Indemnification