ISSUE 5

BUSINESS Woman

FEMALES IN FRANCHISING



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The importance of variety and inclusion in franchising

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what-franchise.com/women-in-franchising

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Introduction to franchising

Catching you up on everything you need to know about this unparalleled business model

For many entrepreneurial, career-driven women, the past year would have highlighted that working for somebody else can sometimes be a precarious thing. The problems of a pandemic meant that many faced redundancy, or lengthy periods of furlough with uncertainty on the horizon.

While the franchise industry hasn't been completely immune from the huge shockwaves brought about by COVID-19, being part of a franchise network has proven reassuring for many. Not only have franchisors endeavoured to support and guide their franchisees throughout the toughest times of the previous year, but brands have introduced innovations and processes to make the experience of running a franchise location more seamless than ever before.

If you've not previously dipped your toes into this form of business ownership, or you're looking to dive deeper into what franchising has to offer, then this magazine will be the perfect handbook for your future.

A business built on mutual benefit

At its core, franchising is an inherently supportive business model. Whereas other forms of employment may sometimes feel thankless, being a franchisee means that your franchisor is constantly looking to support your growth and answer any questions that you may have along the way.

Why is this? Because your success equates to their success. All good franchisors look to make sure their franchisees are functioning as efficiently and successfully as possible – not just to avoid terminations and/or resales, but because a happy franchisee is a profitable franchisee.

Franchising is rarely a one-to-one relationship between a single franchisor and franchisee, though. Many networks facilitate and encourage peer networking between franchisees, so that each and every member of the brand can learn from one another. Often, any problem you come up against will have been experienced by another business owner within the network, and the solution can be little more than a phone call away.

Flexible around your lifestyle

Another huge draw of franchising for individuals coming from a more corporate, nine-to-five life is that you can often run the business exactly when you want to. But don't just take our word for it: make sure to check out the 'side hustles' list from page 57, which outlines 20 of the leading franchise opportunities that you can either run from home, or alongside other forms of employment.

Elsewhere in this issue, make sure to check out our exclusive interviews with inspirational female leaders, as well as many franchise opportunities that could be the pathway toward an entrepreneurial step in your career.



FRANCHISING
FACTS AND FIGURES

Need-to-know numbers and trends about the franchise industry

SOURCE: GUIDANT FINANCIAL & SMALL BUSINESS TRENDS ALLIANCE

31%

of American SME or franchise owners are **female in 2021**

up from 27% in 2020



OVER

ONE THIRD

of all female business owners hold a

BACHELOR'S DEGREE,

with 27% having a

MASTER'S



29%

of female business owners said that the main reason they became a business owner was because they were

READY TO BE THEIR OWN BOSS



THREE-QUARTERS

*of female business owners report being **somewhat or very happy** with their choice of career*

THE TOP INDUSTRY THAT WOMEN OWN BUSINESSES IN IS HEALTH, BEAUTY, AND FITNESS SERVICES

The importance of diversity and inclusion in franchising

The franchise industry is renowned for its welcoming nature – here's why that matters

WORDS BY KIERAN MCLOONE

Franchising is a possible pathway to entrepreneurship for many, but particularly for those in society that may not see themselves as business owners if they were to go down other routes. In fact, nearly one-third of all franchise locations in the U.S. are owned by minority groups, compared to just 18.8 per cent of business owners that run non-franchised enterprises, according to research conducted by the International Franchise Association (IFA).

"The franchising community learned a long time ago that diversity is an important step toward business growth and success, and we've continued striving for it," says Mary Thompson, second vice chairman for DiversityFran, and COO of home services franchisor Neighborly. "It helps that the barrier to entry in franchising can be lower than opening a business on one's own since the franchise owner is immediately handed a blueprint for running the business versus having to create that system alone."

It's that blueprint that has pushed many individuals to head down the franchising route, as opposed to creating their own business and trying to run it independently. This was certainly one of the first things that Thompson noticed about franchising when she first started in the industry several years ago.

"In the 30 years I've been involved in franchising – either as a franchise owner or on the franchisor side – one of the things I've appreciated most about this business model is how many opportunities it presents to people from all walks of life regardless of age, gender, race, or culture. Franchising is about following a system, leading people, and generating results. As a woman who wanted to control my own destiny, I found being a franchise owner helped me follow my dreams."

Strength through inclusivity

The world over, franchising has always been a diverse industry that welcomes driven individuals from all walks of life. This is particularly true in the States, where 31 per cent of all small business or franchise owners are women – an increase on the 27 per cent recorded in 2020 by Guidant Financial.

But what factors have allowed this number to steadily rise? For Authority Brands, an American-based home service franchisor, the answer comes in its acknowledgement that diversity and inclusion go hand-in-hand with prosperity.

"Our franchise owners come from all types of backgrounds and differ in age, race, gender, religion, and professional and personal experiences. A strong franchise network benefits from a diverse base of franchise owners," says Mike Pearce, chief development officer at Authority Brands.

"Our owners find that one of the most beneficial parts of being part of a franchise system is the ability to learn from fellow franchise owners. If a franchise owner is having a problem, they can call anybody in their system and get a variety of different solutions. When you have a diverse set of franchise owners, every franchise owner can benefit from their business and life experiences."

Neighborly has a similar peer-support system in place, which has proven to not only attract a diverse range of prospects, but keep them engaged with a network that values their voice.

"A number of our Neighborly brands have implemented mentorship programs that pair like-minded individuals from similar backgrounds to help new franchisees grow with the support of a mentor who'd had similar experience," explains Thompson. "As franchisors search for new franchise owners, it's important to attract diverse groups of potential owners through all-inclusive recruiting efforts."

Promoting diversity from the top-down

As well as individual franchise brands ensuring that their networks are as diverse as possible, institutions exist on a national and even international scale that advocate for best practices on behalf of the franchise community.

The Diversity Institute at the IFA, for example, sets out to "expand and nurture a more diverse franchise community," as its chair, Earsa Jackson, explains. "In February 2021, the Institute launched the Black Franchise Leadership Council (BFLC). The BFLC was designed with a mission to promote awareness of franchising to black entrepreneurs. Its mission is also to assist member

companies with creating a culture of inclusion and educate stakeholders on effective ways to improve black representation in franchising."

Despite all of the positivity surrounding diversity and inclusion in franchising, there is still lots of work to be done to make the space as beneficial for minority groups and underrepresented individuals as possible.

"Many of the recurring challenges I hear about from diverse franchise owners fall under what I call a gap in 'generational knowledge' of business. Many have to overcome a deficit created by sure lack of exposure to business ownership," says Jackson. "If you grow up in a household where business is regularly discussed and you are exposed to that environment, you are learning about business just merely by being present.

"For the individual entering the business sphere with no prior exposure to business, there is likely a steeper, but surmountable, learning curve for the individual without any prior exposure to business. It is important for brands and companies to assess potential based on factors that can be normalized to account for the generational knowledge transfer as failure to figure out ways to normalize this factor will continue to exclude great talent from the ranks of companies."

So if you're an aspiring business owner who thinks that franchising could be a pathway to success, don't let preconceived notions or discrimination dissuade you. As Mary Thompson advocates: "Not once did anyone in franchising ever tell me being a woman made me unsuitable for successful franchise ownership. In fact, I heard just the opposite."

"Not once did anyone in franchising ever tell me being a woman made me unsuitable for successful franchise ownership"



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BUSINESS Woman

YOUR ESSENTIAL START-UP TOOLKIT

Whether you're sitting on the business start-up fence or have taken your first step on your entrepreneurial adventure, we've created this business start-up toolkit to make your journey that much smoother.
From grants, courses, seminars and events to the top female-friendly franchises to invest in, here is a whistle-stop guide to entrepreneurship 101. We even have advice from boss ladies that were once in your very shoes

WORDS BY AMANDA PETERS



CLAIM £5,000 TO START YOUR OWN BUSINESS



A sector that has proved to not only be recession-proof but also pandemic-proof is the home care and property maintenance industry. For instance, Fantastic Services expanded into 20 new areas across the UK and experienced revenue growth of 7.8 per cent despite the pandemic. And to pay it forward, the company is offering a total of up to £1m worth of cash grants to help 200 people start a working franchise. The opportunity involves managing a small team and delivering one or a range of its services.

To qualify

Anton Skarlatov, co-founder and CEO of Fantastic Services, said: "Our grant programme is designed to help those who have lost their job, self-employed tradespeople, as well as small businesses within the service industry that were negatively impacted by the pandemic."

The programme is suitable for tradespeople or technicians with experience in the service industry or people looking for alternative business opportunities. Once approved, applicants will be trained and on the field in less than two weeks. They'll be providing their chosen service under the brand name of Fantastic Services, so they have to be eligible to work in the UK, have customer service experience and at least one member of the team has to own a driving licence.

For more information and to apply for the grant, visit **fantasticfranchise.com/fantastic-grant/**

NASE member companies get access to grants for expanding

The National Association of Self-Employed (NASE), an American non-profit association providing educational resources, benefits, and a seat at the table in Washington, D.C, has awarded nearly $1m in grants since 2006.

The NASE Growth Grant Program awards $4,000 grants to member companies that identify an ailing aspect of their business that could be resolved through funding. These grants can be used for marketing, advertising, hiring employees or expanding facilities.

For more information, visit **nase.org/become-a-member/member-benefits/business-resources/growth-grants**



ADDITIONAL FUNDING RESOURCES FOR WOMEN

- Grants.gov: A database of quick access to federally available grants.
- Grants for Women: A comprehensive list of numerous business grants, scholarships and education grants available to female entrepreneurs.
- Encouraging Women Into Franchising (EWIF): Provides advice and guidance to women interested in getting into franchising.
- Small Business Administration (SBA): A resource for entrepreneurs, especially franchisees as financial institutions will even expedite the loan processing for SBA-approved franchises.

Empowering Women in Business

Organised by the British Franchise Association, EWIB takes place on 21 October in Oxford, UK. In partnership with event sponsor McDonald's restaurants, it is one of the UK's best female-only business events.

EWIB's focus this year is on overcoming barriers in business; themes and discussions will cover overcoming imposter syndrome, risk-taking, managing stress, as well as the process behind developing a personal brand.

Suited to any woman keen to progress in business and connect with other like-minded women, the day will comprise keynotes, panels and workshops.

For more information and to register, visit: **thebfa.org/product/empowering-women-in-business-21st-october**



ASPIRING WOMEN ENTREPRENEURS GET A LEG UP THANKS TO THE DBWC

The Dubai Business Women Council (DBWC) was established in 2002 for the personal and professional development of businesswomen in the Emirate of Dubai.

In March this year, it held a virtual session titled 'Women in Franchising'. Moderated by Sary Hamway, founder, and CEO of Franchise Trainer, Dr Ljiljana Kukec, co-founder and president of the Croatian Franchise Association, and Farrah Rose, winner of the 2020 Global Franchise Award and head of international development at The Franchising Centre, the webinar aimed to understand the foundation of the franchise business model and how it can empower female entrepreneurs.

Its next initiative, the She Leads 2.0 programme, will help 10 women-led startups with launching and scaling up their promising businesses by providing a week's worth of an incubator programme that involves coaching and training sessions.

For more information and to enlist in the programme, visit **lp.creativezone.ae/dbwc**

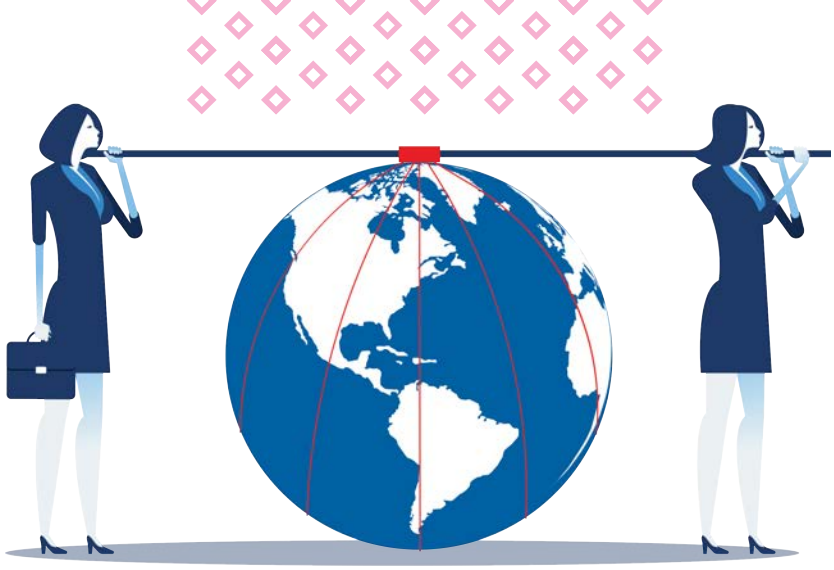


SHETRADES HUB LAUNCHES IN RWANDAN

Under the International Trade Centre (ITC), SheTrades is a global initiative aiming to connect female entrepreneurs to the international market. The hub is a decentralised platform implemented and funded by a local host institution with the goal to increase women's economic empowerment and local ownership.

The latest SheTrades Hub was launched in September this year in Rwanda and will join a network of more than 10 hubs across Africa, Asia and Latin America. For more information, visit **shetrades.com/en/shetrades-hub**

UPS IS HELPING FEMALE ENTREPRENEURS GO GLOBAL



In conjunction with government entities, trade associations and NGOs, UPS, through The UPS Foundation, has set up the UPS Women Exporters programme. The aim is to equip female entrepreneurs with tools, resources and training to help them venture into international markets.

So far the programme has helped more than 6,000 female small business owners around the world fathom the export process as well as expand their teams and international reach while also investing in their local communities.

Now the programme will be available in Latin America, and special activities will be held in 14 countries: Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Jamaica, Mexico, Panama, Peru, Puerto Rico and the Dominican Republic.

For more information, visit **ups.com/mx/es/services/small-business/women-exporters-program.page**

Entrepreneur's ESSENTIALS

The Entrepreneur's Essentials course

The Entrepreneur's Essentials is a course for new and aspiring female business owners by Sally Rice of Heartspace Development. As well as being a founder of three businesses, Sally is a new business mentor whose passion is to help ambitious women transition from the corporate world to setting up their own businesses and become thriving entrepreneurs.

Sally spent 13 years working in the corporate world, ending up as a director on the board of a £20m company but burnout, stress and wanting more purpose in her work prompted her to reassess her priorities and to pursue the entrepreneurial life.

"We tend to have our own specific challenges as women, both internal and external that can stop us from reaching our full potential, so I concentrate on not only mastering your mindset monkeys but also providing practical advice and solutions so you can feel confident about the direction of your business and motivated to take action," said Sally.

Entrepreneur's Essentials takes you through six core modules to help participants go from feeling unclear about where to start, overwhelmed by all the things you feel you should be doing to feeling confident in knowing the next steps you need to take and focused on the actions that are going to make a real impact.

The Entrepreneur's Essentials course runs October 2021 – January 2022 and to register, visit sally.heartspacedevelopment.com/

For Sally's free downloadable guide to the 'six secrets to smash that transition from employee to entrepreneur', visit **6secrets.heartspacedevelopment.com**

HOW TO BE A BOSS LADY

- "You don't walk up to an Olympic race as the only boat at the start line and it is exactly the same in care. You win the race by constantly moving forward and looking for marginal gains" **– Christina Handasyde Dick, founder and CEO of Guardian Angel Carers**
- "So I looked to find a position within an established estate agency branch, but nobody was taking on staff and the wages on offer were awful. So I thought: why not set up on my own?" **– Laura Dytham, easyProperty franchisee**
- "When evolving Dickey's, we've not only had to meet the needs of our guests, but we also live in a world where Instagram eats first. Everything is tied back to how folks are interacting with their technology, which includes how they dine" **– Laura Rea Dickey, CEO, Dickey's Barbecue Pit**
- "Failing to incorporate resilience into a holistic franchise development programme leaves the growth of the franchise to the winds of uncertainty" **– Rochelle Clarke, CEO of Succession Strength and founder of ContinuityStrength**
- "Being a good people person is absolutely number one. For people to engage with first aid training, they need to feel relaxed, supported and valued, so it's vital our Mini First Aid trainers can deliver on this. Many of our franchisees have experienced a real-life first aid situation themselves and this has stayed with them and inspired them to be brilliant trainers" **– Kate Ball, director and founder of Mini First Aid**
- "At a professional level, the learning curve has been incredibly steep, which is satisfying, and it's hugely rewarding to see the franchise growing strongly as a result. I had been worried that after a couple of years I might get bored, but I'm constantly learning and the job is so multifaceted that there is always something I can do better" **– Katherine Watmough, Monkey Music franchisee**

The state of women in franchising

To borrow the phrase from CNN's Jake Tapper, the last 18 months were a "hot mess inside a dumpster fire inside a train wreck". And despite the setback that women faced having to be the primary caregivers to both children and elderly parents, female-owned franchises have continued to be on the rise for the past decade.

Franchise Business Review's Women in Franchising 2021 special report highlights that while COVID-19 may have put the brakes on entrepreneurial ventures in 2020, this year is already showing an uptick in female business ownership, with nearly one-third of all franchises currently being women-owned businesses.

For the report, *Franchise Business Review* surveyed 8,453 women franchisees from 289 leading franchise brands to gauge franchisee satisfaction and performance to compile its lists of the top-rated franchise brands for women.



32% of all franchises opened in the last 24 months are led by women

38% increase in women-owned franchises over the last decade

29% of all franchises are female-owned

$123K ♂ ♀

average annual earnings reported by male franchise owners v/s $95K average annual income reported by women franchisees

POPULAR BUSINESS SECTORS FOR WOMEN FRANCHISE OWNERS:

Childcare
64% of franchisees are women

Travel
63% of franchisees are women

Fitness
55% of franchisees are women

Education
51% of franchisees are women

Franchise Business Review's top 50 franchises for women

1. 360clean
2. A&W Restaurants
3. Aire-Master of America
4. Amazing Athletes
5. Assisting Hands
6. AtWork Group
7. Better Homes and Gardens Real Estate
8. British Swim School
9. Cruise Planners
10. Dogtopia
11. Fastest Labs
12. FASTSIGNS
13. FirstLight Home Care
14. Freedom Boat Club
15. FYZICAL Therapy & Balance Centers
16. Home Instead
17. HouseMaster
18. Kampgrounds of America
19. Keller Williams
20. Kona Ice
21. LearningRx
22. MaidPro
23. Mr. Appliance
24. Mr. Electric
25. MY SALON Suite
26. NextHome
27. Nothing Bundt Cakes
28. Office Pride Commercial Cleaning
29. Our Town America
30. Payroll Vault
31. Pet Supplies Plus
32. Pinch A Penny
33. Pizza Factory
34. Precision Door Service
35. Realty ONE Group
36. Rhea Lana's
37. Senior Care Authority
38. Soccer Shots
39. Sola Salon Studios
40. Supporting Strategies
41. The Joint
42. The Learning Experience
43. Tropical Smoothie Cafe
44. United Country Real Estate
45. Visiting Angels
46. We Insure
47. Weichert Real Estate
48. Wild Birds Unlimited
49. Wingstop
50. Yogi Bear's Jellystone Park Camp Resorts

THE IMPORTANCE OF SUSTAINABILITY IN 21ST CENTURY FRANCHISING

Consumers today place significantly more value on sustainability and eco-friendly principles than previous generations, and companies are responding accordingly

WORDS BY RAGHAV PATEL



THE AUTHOR
Raghav Patel is a digital content writer for Global Franchise

Sustainability has been at the fore of the world of business for over a decade now as we see the effects of climate change the world over, and even events like the 2013 Dhaka garment factory collapse serve as a reminder to the world to not be wasteful and seek renewable processes and products that do not hurt the planet.

This change has been driven by consumers. As consumers have noticed the effects of the products and services they buy, they've either shifted to sustainable alternatives or publicly pressured companies to make changes in the direction of sustainability.

Franchising, with the power of brands, stands to gain significantly from this as well as contributing to the health of the planet.

> "It's not feasible to stay away from this issue"

Why consumers care

Climate change has been the single biggest topic of discussion around the world for over two decades. Not only has it been a hot topic, but its practical effects are also seen in the world occasionally, serving as a brutal reminder of what can happen when the planet isn't cared for.

Many modern consumers don't silo issues like they may have done in the past. They don't expect to purchase environmentally damaging products or services and offset that with a donation to a charity.

Much of the drive for sustainability has been pushed by millennials and Gen Z, who both hold climate change as one of their top three concerns according to a Deloitte survey, with it topping the list of concerns for Gen Z. These are the generations that will populate boardrooms and executive meetings in the future, guiding business in the direction of sustainability because it's what they know and what consumers want.

Brands like Volkswagen suffered enormous costs to the tune of £38bn because it tried to cheat sustainability measures and fool customers. The brand still hasn't recovered its pre-scandal share valuation and ended up damaging dealers, shareholders, and even the image of Germany to a small extent. It simply doesn't pay to be anything but a sustainable business in the long run.

Deloitte's March survey into consumer views on sustainability found



that 28 per cent of respondents stopped purchasing certain brands or products because they had ethical or sustainability-related concerns about them. That represents a significant portion of people who feel that they can no longer support a brand that does not align with their values.

Consumers' wants and needs are also translating into franchise concepts. There are a variety of sustainable, green franchises to invest in that have popped up recently; one even uses plastic waste material to create driveways.

Consumers have always wanted to connect to a brand's personality, and that is no different today. The only difference is that consumers today place significantly more value on sustainability than previous generations, and companies are responding accordingly.

Current sustainable brands

The world of franchising has recognised the importance of sustainability both for the world and as a strong aspect of a brand's offering. Often, the most polluting industries are ones the average consumer has no interaction with.

Brands like FASTSIGNS are well known in the business world, but maybe not so much amongst the general public. Printing can be a resource-heavy task, but FASTSIGNS has invested in using as much recycled material as possible and using eco-solvent inks. This isn't new for FASTSIGNS either; in 2018, a local manager in North Little Rock, Arkansas encouraged people to re-use and re-purpose old signs.

"A big thing we're trying to combat is single-use plastic," said Brittany Nichols, general manager of FASTSIGNS North Little Rock, Arkansas. "I thought, 'let's change these from a single-use piece of plastic by giving them a longer life and repurposing them'."

Brands that have no obvious environmental impact are thinking about what part they can play, too. Little Kickers is an educational football program, designed to teach children from one and a half to seven years old how to play sports in a fun and fair manner while also teaching fundamental skills such as colour and number recognition, taking turns and how to share. The franchise plans to change its kit production process to a more sustainable one, reducing its impact and any concerns parents may have over the brand's commitment to sustainability. "This will involve us shifting our current production of over 125,000 football kits and other merchandise away from petrochemical-based fabrics – which is the norm in the industry – to using fabrics made out of recycled plastic from the ocean," said Christine Kelly, founder of Little Kickers. "Once our Little Kickers have finished with their uniforms, they will then be delivered to young footballers in developing countries through a partnership with Sal's Shoes, which further enhances the sustainability of the programme. Since children of Little Kickers age are the cohort who will be most affected by climate change, we feel the need to do everything we can to minimise our impact on the environment."

> "These are the generations that will populate boardrooms and executive meetings in the future"

These two very different brands represent the sea-change taking place in the business world, and franchising is not insulated from it, nor does it want to be. Sustainability is there to reduce the effect on the planet, but can also represent commercial opportunities for businesses that seek to address the issue.

Sustainability is non-negotiable

The impact of ongoing climate change will cause significant problems to the world and people in vulnerable areas, which alone is a threat to business.

The other threat comes from brand image, and being seen to not care about the planet and the people who reel from the effects of climate change. This is a simultaneously immediate and long-term threat.

While the majority of the current generation of consumers do not place too much stock in sustainability, the generations to come consider it amongst, if not the single most important issue in their lives.

It's not feasible to stay away from this issue. Brands must double down on sustainability initiatives and constantly innovate new ones to both reduce their impact on the planet and convince consumers that they are a brand which cares.



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10 reasons to invest in a franchise

From reducing the risk of starting your own business and being able to enter a completely new industry to benefiting from heightened brand awareness and bulk buying power, here's why we recommend you become a franchisee

Business format franchising has a long and varied history in the U.K. Its origins date back to the mid-twentieth century and today is worth £17.2 billion annually to the economy, an increase of £2.1 billion since 2015.

The sector has evolved to now include an estimated 900 different brands – twice the number operating in 1996 – which all offer aspiring franchisees the opportunity to invest in a proven concept in a range of industries.

According to the latest British Franchise Association (bfa) / NatWest statistics, franchising employs 710,000 people who work in 48,600 franchised units.

While these are impressive figures – and usually come as a surprise to people who are only just beginning their research – why should you invest in a franchise instead of starting out on you own? It's a question we get asked regularly, so we've compiled the top 10 reasons you should buy into an already established brand:

1 Your chances of success are greater

Statistics from the bfa show that just 0.9 per cent of franchisees have closed their businesses because of commercial failure.

Compare that to the findings of company formation specialist Turner Little. When it analysed Companies House data, it established that 80 per cent of independent U.K. companies failed within their first year.

In addition, Office for National Statistics figures reveal that only 44 per cent of U.K. businesses of this type survived for five years.



2 Investors are provided with a 'business in a box'

The reason for franchising's high success rate is due to the fact that franchisees are provided with all they need to start, grow and establish their own business under the umbrella of a proven brand, including the all-important administrative and marketing functions.

This includes everything from comprehensive initial training to expert assistance in the start-up stages of the franchise. This support continues throughout the lifetime of the franchise agreement and includes face-to-face (often with a dedicated franchisee support manager) and telephone and email contact with head office.

The pandemic has underlined the value of the support provided to franchisees. Within a very short space of time following the outbreak of COVID-19, franchisors that were able to remain open adapted their businesses to include online offerings and new delivery and click-and-collect options that provided a vital financial lifeline to their networks.

Some franchisors also provided franchisees with regular updates on the fast moving situation they faced, launched online hub pages containing useful information and arranged virtual meetings to aid effective communication.



"Over the past 12 months we've been focused on introducing brand new recipes following the very latest trends in food consumption"

Justin Gilbert, director of business development at Papa John's UK

Combined, these factors inspire collaboration and a focus on the pursuit of a common goal: the maintenance of a highly successful national brand that's represented by a network of motivated business owners who provide a consistent service to customers. It's also why franchising has adopted the phrase 'In business for yourself, but not by yourself'.

3 You can develop a career in a new sector

Because of all the elements outlined in reason two, there are countless stories of people who have left either employed or self-employed roles to start a new career in a sector that they had no previous commercial experience in.

In fact, many franchisors prefer to recruit franchisees who have no prior knowledge of the industry in which they operate.

Palomie Patel worked in finance before she became the owner of F45 Training's Camden gym franchise in north London.

She explains: "After six years in the finance industry, though initially exciting and rewarding, I had lost interest in continuing along the corporate path.

"I hadn't given much thought to what I wanted to do next, but knew I wanted to pursue something I was passionate about and that challenged me."

After being a member of one of F45's London studios for a few months, Palomie found out it was a franchise. She decided to investigate further.

"Fitness had been a big part of my life for a long time, but I had never seriously thought I could align my career with that passion, so I was thrilled at the thought of being able to do just that," Palomie says.

"My husband and I set up a meeting with the F45 UK sales manager, who was incredibly helpful in answering questions and also put me in touch with a few current owners to find out more about what being a franchisee is like.

"After speaking to them and doing more research of our own, we were quickly drawn to the opportunity, particularly to how structured the franchise was and how efficiently it seemed to operate.

"Like any new business, there were



some challenges, but we had so much support from F45 headquarters along the way and aspects like their fantastic technology integration made life a lot easier.

"Despite being hit by the pandemic in our first year of business, I couldn't be happier to have made the transition."

4 When it comes to funding, banks look favourably on franchising

Historically, banks that specialise in the franchise market have tended to view individuals looking to commence a franchise in a well established and proven brand favourably. That's according to Richard Holden, head of franchising at Lloyds Banking Group.

He explains: "If you're investing in a tried and tested business model and are set to receive initial training and continuing support throughout the life of the franchise from the franchisor and their team, it's natural that experienced lenders will look more positively at these funding applications than they would with a new, unproven start-up business setting up from scratch that trades independently without these benefits.

"The likelihood is that a bank will have existing franchisees of the brand that already bank with them, demonstrating the ongoing success of the business model.

"Having said this, in the current economic climate and with the ongoing challenges of the pandemic it's vital to thoroughly research the brand and industry sector of your chosen franchise because banks may have concerns about the trading performance during lockdown, whether you're looking at investing in a well established franchise opportunity or not.

"There's no substitute for forensic study of the opportunity, speaking to the franchisor and several existing franchisees in the network, as well as the franchising experts at a bank, before making any commitment to invest."



5 Many franchise businesses benefit from high levels of brand awareness

Brand awareness is the degree of consumer recognition of a product or service by its name.

In franchising, the most obvious example of a company with high levels of brand awareness is McDonald's. The fast food chain, which was founded by brothers Richard and Maurice McDonald in California in 1937, now has over 38,000 restaurants in 100-plus countries that serve 69 million people daily.

When you invest in a franchise, in part you're paying for the use of a brand name, as well as a comprehensive package of training and support.

What's in a name? Companies with high levels of brand awareness often have significant credibility in their market, which boosts consumer confidence, leads to greater customer loyalty and enables new products and services to be introduced more simply and less expensively. This leads to more sales, which is great news for franchisees.

6 A franchisor's research and development activities keep you ahead of the competition

Franchisors commit significant sums of money to research and development, whether that's to streamline methods of operation through the introduction of new technology, improve environmental management through waste reduction or innovate when it comes to the introduction of new products and services.

Many independent businesses can't afford this level of investment, which helps franchisors maintain their competitive edge and benefits the franchisee network.

A good illustration of this is Papa

John's. In November 2020, the company won the Pizza, Pasta & Italian Food Association's Pizza Delivery Chain of the Year award for the second consecutive year. The accolade is given to the pizza delivery chain that's doing the most to drive the market.

Justin Gilbert, director of business development at Papa John's UK, says the company has continued to drive improvements across all areas of the business.

He adds: "Over the past 12 months we've been focused on introducing brand new recipes following the very latest trends in food consumption across the globe.

"It's this attention to innovation, combined with top quality ingredients, rapid delivery times, plus great customer service, which has enabled us to continue to grow in popularity in the U.K.

"What's selling at any one time can depend on the time of year or latest trends in the market.

"For example, the introduction of our 'Bee Sting' pizza, which combined a hot and spicy base of Amarillo chilli, topped with pepperoni, mozzarella, fresh green chilli and a sweet wild flower honey drizzle to balance the sting of the heat, was a big hit.

"Also, with more people taking on a plant-based diet than ever before, our new vegan pizzas have also proved particularly popular.

"As a brand, we actively encourage customer feedback. This information is used to develop our offering and menu selection. Only if we understand and respond to our customers' needs, experiences and their whole journey with us can we keep delivering their favourite pizzas, which means more success for our franchisees."

7 You're more likely to run a profitable business

In the latest bfa / NatWest franchise survey, 93 per cent of franchisees said their businesses were profitable. And at 14 per cent, the proportion of those claiming to be highly profitable is the largest on record.

Another standout statistic from the study is that 60 per cent of franchisees turn over more than £250,000 a year. Some established franchisee's incomes are significantly higher.

Right at Home is a leading light in the home care sector. Almost 50 per cent of its franchises over two years old are currently reporting an annualised turnover of over £1m.

CEO of Right at Home, Ken Deary says: "The fact that such a high percentage of the network has hit this revenue milestone clearly demonstrates the biggest benefit of franchising - that success can be replicated by following a proven business model.

"Our franchise owners are supported to embrace all aspects of the Right at Home system. They also have a range of options for sharing best practice and learning from one another's experiences.

"As a franchisor, we've always strived to maintain consistently high standards right across the network, so the owners have a really well reputed brand behind them and access to specialist support in all areas of the business via our team at national office.

"Importantly, this includes keeping their finger on the pulse of their business finances and working to achieve the best possible profit margins without compromising the quality and value of their services.

"Demand for great CareGivers has always been a significant challenge to growth in our sector, but the economic changes of the last 12 months and our extensive support with recruitment have helped us achieve record network growth in 2020."

8 The franchisor has considerable buying power

A franchisee typically buys the products and services needed for their business from the franchisor or its nominated suppliers at a cheaper price than if they were running an independent company.

This is because of the bulk buying power of the franchisor, which in many cases will be purchasing for a network containing multiple businesses. Some of this discount is passed on to the franchisee network.

The type of arrangement is specific to each franchise and is detailed in the franchise agreement.

Franchisees in the Taylor Made Franchising Group benefit in a variety of ways from being part of a franchise.

Managing director Darren Taylor explains: "Our PVC Vendo franchisees,



"We were quickly drawn to the opportunity, particularly to how structured the franchise was and how efficiently it seemed to operate"

Palomie Patel, F45 Training franchisee

who wash commercial fleet vehicles, benefit from a group-wide purchasing deal with cleaning products supplier Autosmart. We purchase detergents on behalf of the entire company, selling them on to franchisees at a considerably reduced price.

"In 2016, we bought the U.K. dealership for the handheld American Alpine Magnum stump grinder. As the sole importer of these grinders into the U.K., we're able to sell them to our Stumpbusters franchisees at significantly reduced prices."

As well as specialist equipment, Taylor Made franchisees also get access to cut-price promotional items.

"Many of our franchisees use flyers and various other pieces of marketing material to promote their businesses," Darren says. "We have a virtual ordering system set up whereby franchisees log in to a central portal and amend a pre-branded, pre-designed template, which is then printed and delivered to their door.

"The design and branding has already been done and naturally, as we are ordering repeatedly, we get a good price from the printers. This kind of marketing can be costly and time consuming for a single operator business."

9 A lot of franchisors offer a protected territory as part of their franchise package

This means you can rest assured that the same business operated by another franchisee or the franchisor won't pitch up next door, affording you a degree of security.

Protected territories are usually defined by postcode, population, demographics or geographical region and mean a franchisee can focus their efforts within a workable area.

Stuart Lee, director at Atlas Mapping, which provides franchise territory mapping services, says: "There are numerous benefits to both the franchisee and franchisor by offering protected territories.

"For the franchisee, it provides security and protection, so that franchisees don't compete over the same customers. However, being part of a franchise network also comes with the benefit of allowing neighbouring franchisees to help where required.

"If a franchisor has also carried out appropriate due diligence or commissioned a professional mapping company to help with territory creation, it also ensures there are enough potential customers for the business to work.

"Be aware though that the most common mistake Atlas Mapping supports franchisors and franchisees with is that the territories awarded are too large. It's easy to think that bigger is better, but actually this can stretch franchisees too thin, leading to customers not being serviced and ultimately creating a strained relationships between franchisees and the franchisor.

"When territories are professionally created, they should make sure there is enough opportunity for a franchisee to stand a good chance of succeeding and also be serviceable. The specific factors for this depend on the business model being franchised and what the sales expectations of franchisees are.

"Territories should also take account of the local transport infrastructure and topography, so that they remain sensible. It's not ideal for all territories in a network to offer 'the same' opportunity, as this isn't realistically possible. The population across the U.K. is not spread evenly, so it shouldn't be expected that franchisee territories would be the same also."

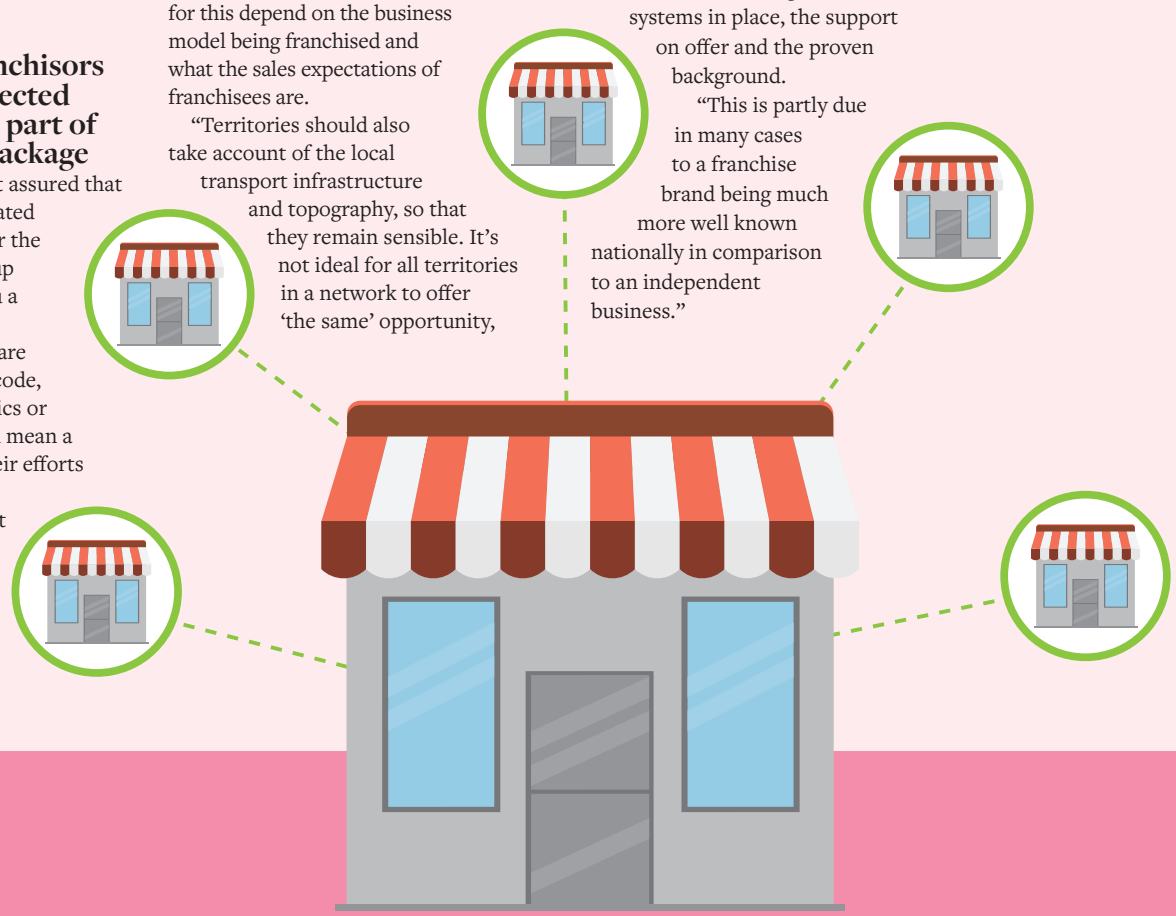
10 You have a valuable asset when the time comes to sell

Franchisees sell their businesses for a multitude of reasons, which is why 'resales' – where an investor buys an already established franchise rather than open a new one – are common in the U.K. (around 50 per cent of franchise brands offer resale opportunities, the bfa reports).

As well as being an accepted way of getting into franchising, the resale value of a franchise may be higher than an independent business of the same size.

Michael Bohan, director of Franchise Resales, a company that helps people buy and sell existing franchises, says: "A successful franchise resale, combined with the backing of a strong franchise brand, provides a much better return on investment. This is owing to the systems in place, the support on offer and the proven background.

"This is partly due in many cases to a franchise brand being much more well known nationally in comparison to an independent business."



YOUR 10-POINT CHECKLIST FOR STARTING A MANAGEMENT-STYLE BUSINESS

By following this step-by-step process, your initial journey into owning a management-style franchise should be smooth sailing

Investing in a management-style franchise offers savvy entrepreneurs the opportunity to put their skills in management and organisation to good use. This model is often most successful when the owner sees the value in the support of others to make it a success as, although you will be working on the business at a strategic level, you may not be working 'in' the business every day.

It's therefore critical that imperative strategic decisions, like recruiting the right people for the right job, are given the time and expertise required. Here, Kevin Thackrah, director of pet care franchise Petpals, talks us through the steps to expect when investing in a management-style franchise. Having recently unveiled the new management model, Kevin draws from the recent formalisation of the management franchise opportunity several of his franchisees have been operating.

STEP 1: Do your research

It's essential that you take the time to explore all possible avenues when it comes to selecting the most suitable franchise before you invest. Also, make sure you're not guilty of disregarding sectors because of a lack of experience – when it comes to management franchises, experience of the specific service you'll be providing isn't necessarily a prerequisite for success. As you'll be recruiting a team of staff to support you in your new endeavour, the experience needed to be an effective manager comes down to good organisational skills and leadership qualities.

STEP 2: Meet with the franchisor

This is a crucial stage of the initial enquiry and research phase. Meeting with the franchisor is an opportunity to ask questions that you may not have found answers to during any online research. And don't be afraid to ask as many questions as you need to – it's in the franchisor's best interests for you to be completely satisfied with your investment. At the end of the day, a franchisor's success is wholly reliant on the dedication of their franchisees and their success, so finding the prospects that are truly capable of following the model and committing to the brand will be their number one priority.

STEP 3: Speak with existing franchisees

Who better to give you a real insight into the daily operations of the franchise – the positives and pitfalls – than an existing franchisee? And if the franchisor attempts to manage which franchisees you speak with then proceed with caution, what are they trying to hide?

Use this as an opportunity to ask the nitty-gritty questions that the franchisor may not be as well placed to comment on – like what, if any, additional operational processes they've put in place to increase productivity, how to spot the key talented individuals in their business and, obviously, what their relationship with their franchisor is like.

STEP 4: Due diligence including territory mapping

Most franchise opportunities will allocate you an exclusive territory to protect the customer base that you will go on to create and grow – this is a key part of their commitment to your investment. If you decide to invest in an existing franchise where a franchisee is vacating, the parameters of that territory should already be established and you'll have the chance to maximise the return from a good client base.

But bear in mind that this isn't necessarily the case across the board – some franchise brands don't warrant the need for exclusive territories at all. At Petpals, our franchisees' territories are completely protected, as this is an essential element when growing your franchise.



"Most franchise opportunities will allocate you an exclusive territory to protect the customer base that you will go on to create and grow"



THE AUTHOR
Kevin Thackrah is the director of Petpals, the U.K.'s largest multi-service pet care franchise

STEP 5: Business plan

A business plan is an essential step for any entrepreneur and vital to your success. Your franchisor will equip you with a whole host of information – like start-up and running costs – and will then happily support you to put together your business plan, as it's very likely they will have supported the other franchisees in the network to write theirs.

Your business plan must include factually correct information relating to the description and overview of the business and service – particularly as you'll be operating within the parameters of your franchise agreement. You will also need to include a comprehensive marketing plan, proof of detailed due diligence and market research – carried out by you, the franchisee – a detailed financial management plan and your projected growth within the first five years. And because you're investing in a management-style franchise, even though you could be working hands-on, initially you should provide detailed information about your employee structure and how you're proposing to develop the business day-to-day.



STEP 6: Secure funding

Before you can even consider investing in a franchise, you'll need to ensure you have access to the required liquid capital to get the business off the ground. This funding could come from your own personal savings, or you may need to look into borrowing from a lender. Franchising is usually seen as less of a risky investment by banks – especially those used to working with franchise brands. Contact one of the leading high street banks – most of which have experience of working with franchises – to explore your options.

STEP 7: Search for talent

As the name suggests, at the core of developing and growing your business, you will be managing other people. Therefore, recruiting the right team of people to deliver your service or product is crucial.

Although the decision will ultimately be down to you, any quality franchisor will offer guidance on how to recognise talent at the interview stage. It's also imperative that you feel comfortable with the interview process in its entirety; this is also something your franchisor can help with. Utilise their experience in successful recruitment and call on them for advice where it's needed.

STEP 8: Marketing and PR – including launch programme

From the moment of investment, there should be a whole host of brand profile-raising marketing materials at your disposal, before, during and long after the launch of your business. It's a given that this activity is especially crucial in the weeks surrounding your launch or official takeover date. But what franchisors can offer you does differ from brand to brand. Some franchisors may take the lead entirely and guarantee you initial business leads and others may have a defined set of activities where you take responsibility for ensuring they're completed.

STEP 9: Ongoing talent management

At the end of the day, quality recruitment is a marathon, not a sprint. Getting the right team in place is a balancing act and to keep quality loyal staff requires a great workplace culture where people feel rewarded. So, keeping on top of your people management and development is imperative.

Although your franchisor won't be working on your business with you on a daily basis, they'll give you the tools to recognise trends and monitor progress, ultimately highlighting when you'll need to ramp up recruitment efforts as your business grows and provide guidance and advice along the way.

STEP 10: Review business plan including exit strategy planning

Ongoing support should be available throughout the lifecycle of your franchise, including the time at which you choose to plan for retirement or move on to pastures new. A quality franchisor will ask you what your ultimate aim is from becoming a franchisee before you invest.

At Petpals, we're proud to have honest, ongoing conversations with our franchisees about their options when they do choose to plan their business exit. In some cases, they'll have already found a suitable prospect to take over from them. Otherwise, we're happy to support sourcing a replacement so that you get the best possible return on your investment.

By following this step-by-step process, your initial journey into owning a management-style franchise should be smooth sailing. Think of this 10-point checklist as your starting point to guide you through your shortlist of franchise opportunities and onwards through your investment.

How to mitigate the risk of marketing-related lawsuits

Franchise marketing is an invaluable tool, but make sure to avoid these seven pitfalls

WORDS BY TIFFANY SHIMADA



THE AUTHOR
Tiffany Shimada is a partner at Dorsey & Whitney LLP. With a background in intellectual property valuation, Tiffany deeply understands and respects the worth of intangible assets and enjoys helping clients maximise their value

Franchise owners undoubtedly understand the importance of good branding. A good brand is a source indicator and calling card for customers to recognise and relate to a company, its goods, and its services.

Beyond consumer recognition, a good brand is also valuable financially, as brand owners must account for goodwill as an intangible asset on the balance sheet. Because goodwill – and good branding – ultimately increases the bottom line, franchise owners would do well to focus on how to maximise brand value and minimise the threat of potential lawsuits.

Here are seven tips on how to stay on-brand and out of trouble:

1 Get it in writing

Every key agreement involving the brand should be in writing, including licensing, distributorship, and marketing agreements. Make sure to include social media brand ambassador and influencer agreements as well, as they are legally an extension of your marketing plan.

As a brand owner, you must maintain control over the messaging behind the brand, as well as the quality of the goods and services offered under the brand. If a franchise owner loses control of the brand, or brand messaging, it can lead to significant losses in reputation, goodwill, and even loss of the brand itself.

Therefore, the best way to protect the brand is ensuring the right contracts are in place to assert and maintain control of brand messaging.

2 Maintain brand guidelines

Franchise owners are dependent on franchisees maintaining and consistently using a brand to deliver a message about the goods and services. The only way to ensure consistency is to create and actively maintain brand guidelines along with product and service quality standards.

Are there certain fonts or colors that are integral to the branding? Are there key brand differentiators that should come across in messaging to customers in certain jurisdictions? These guidelines should be spelled out clearly for all franchisees, and where relevant, subcontractors.

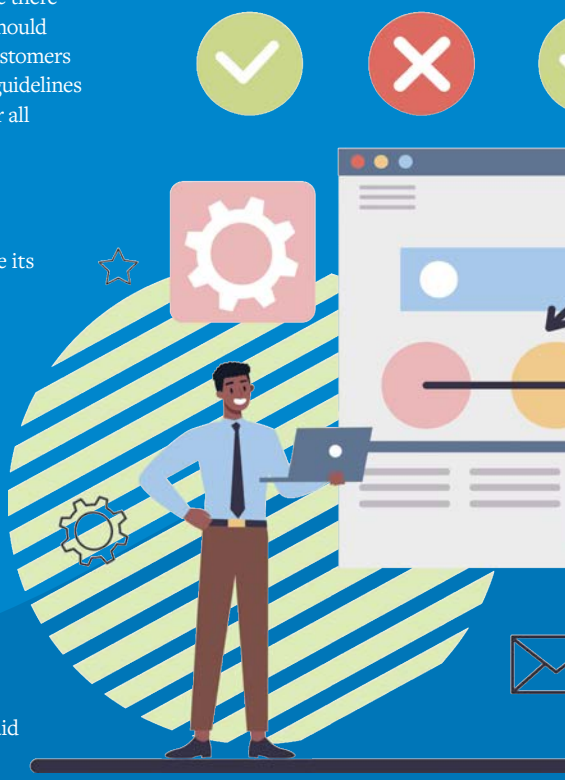
A worst-case scenario for a franchise owner is to have a franchisee go rogue and initiate its own branding content.

3 Know thyself

What are consumers saying about the brand? Under U.S. advertising law, and particularly claims related to products and services, brand owners carry a responsibility of knowing what consumers are generally saying about a brand.

This, of course, does not mean that a franchise owner must be aware of everything said about their brand, but there must be a general understanding of consumer perception of the brand. Franchise owners should actively monitor social media, conduct consumer surveys, and engage in market assessments to gain a better understanding of their brand and its impact.

For example, a superiority claim that a product or service is "number one" can lead to successful false advertising claims brought by competitors if, in fact, the advertised brand does not have the highest market share in its category,



"While the policies behind such punishment might put a franchise owner on the right side of the law, the court of public relations can be even more severe in its punishment"

according to recent cases brought before the National Advertising Division of the Better Business Bureau.

Further, both express and implied claims should be substantiated and/or carry disclaimers to prevent false advertising claims.

4 Communicate clearly and conspicuously

"Clear" and "conspicuous" are key standards under the Federal Trade Commission's guidelines for advertisers and endorsers (Section 5 of the FTC Act, 15 U.S.C. 45). Brand owners must be transparent and conspicuously disclose information about their products and services, being careful not to promote misleading or false information.

Ultimately, franchise owners carry the additional burden of making sure franchisees are also communicating clearly and conspicuously in their advertising. While this burden (and damages) may be shifted contractually, liability for false or misleading claims ultimately falls on the brand owner.

Instituting regular audits or monitoring of advertising claims, and regularly assessing whether that program needs improvement, can help mitigate damages even in instances where the messaging fails and false advertising or inadequate disclosure becomes a viable claim.



5 Listen to your fans

Numerous franchise owners have made news for heavy enforcement against employees and fans alike for violating branding policies on social media (e.g., employees sharing "hacks" or secret menus). While the policies behind such punishment might put a franchise owner on the right side of the law, the court of public relations can be even more severe in its punishment.

In many cases, the infringer is not just a fan, but a brand ambassador or influencer, whose posts or videos are resonating with the very customers a brand owner would dream to have on its side. In these instances, it is best to join in on the fun and figure out how to take control of the messaging.

Through contractual tools like influencer or employee social media contracts, a brand can still allow a star fan or employee the space to use their winning persona to market the brand, but also maintain control over the ultimate brand messaging.

6 Do your homework

Franchise owners must understand social media beyond their own branding. In addition to social media platform rules, there are courts of public opinion that work in mysterious ways.

Popular culture can insist that an influencer is famous one day and a social pariah the next, and the next platform du jour is in development, while the tried and true platforms are losing market share.

It is not enough to have a team of marketers that understands the brand and its place in promoting the company mission. There must also be an understanding of the current pop culture and the brand's place within it vis-à-vis the key customers to make a memorable, and not infamous, impact. In practice, before utilising a meme or any pop culture reference, a brand owner should explore the meaning behind the reference, including its origins, and how it has aged over time.

Some pop culture simply does not age well, and franchise owners should be cautious of misguided efforts to be "more hip" that could ultimately hurt their brand.

7 Do your due diligence

Before adopting or expanding a brand, make sure to clear it for availability. Trademark rights are jurisdictional, meaning each country has its own laws and registration system. A brand might have sufficient protection and recognition in its original market, but will need to rebrand as it expands and grows into different markets and cultures.

A franchise owner should not assume availability or even that the brand will translate across borders. Due diligence and preplanning go a long way in saving time and money, and it is best to scrap an idea or brand earlier in the process rather than waiting to receive a letter asking to "cease and desist".

The same idea goes for brand marking (such as TM / SM / ®), as most countries consider using the "®" notice in their country without a registration to be improper and may even impose fines against use of the symbol.

Ultimately, franchise owners can mitigate the potential risk of lawsuits by staying in sync with the brand, relevant market, and overall messaging.

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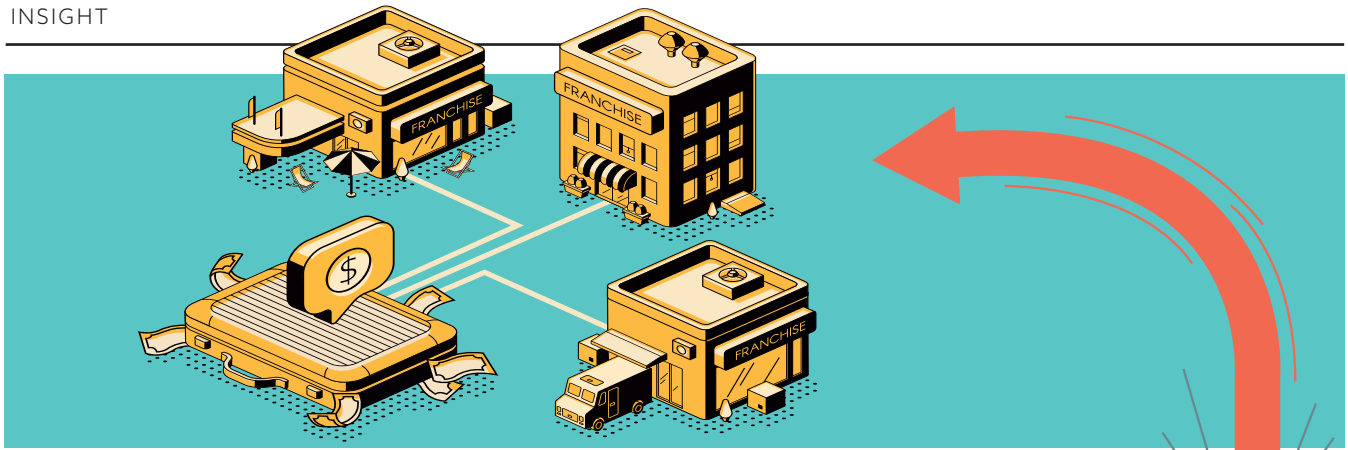
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How founders can be more resilient

Why failing to incorporate resilience into a holistic business development program leaves the growth of the company to the winds of uncertainty

WORDS BY ROCHELLE CLARKE



THE AUTHOR
Rochelle Clarke is the CEO of Succession Strength and the founder of the ContinuityStrength online business continuity plan platform

Photo by Libia Arteaga

There was the story of the wife who struggled but ultimately failed to right the business after her husband who was the business' official owner/operator unexpectedly fell ill. Or the story of the married co-owners whose previously successful business fell apart after becoming a pawn in the mud-slinging of their contentious divorce proceedings, leaving employees, customers andsuppliers stunned.

These have more in common than may meet the eye. In both cases, the business was forced to respond to an event that they never saw coming and could have never anticipated. As a business owner, these examples are not unique, you have heard disruption stories that are similar to these and you will continue to hear even more as your portfolio grows. The fact of the matter is that disruptions are a part of life. As unpleasant as they are, even businesses are not immune from the negative effects of an unplanned disruption. But while stories like these and the impact that they could have on your franchise may be on the back of your mind, they may fall into the category of events that you may feel powerless to act on. How does one protect a franchisee from disruptions? How is it possible to secure all of the franchisees in your portfolio? After all, resilience could hardly be covered in a franchise agreement. Right? This might sound like an odd comparison, but I think franchisors could take a page out of the resilience book of banks and hospitals. These institutions are mandated by law to have certain protections in place that protect their operations from planned and unplanned disruptions. There is a reason for this. Experience has proven that having the right measures in place goes a long way in ensuring that the business is prepared to respond appropriately and minimise the impact of unplanned events.

"In the United States alone there are 12 million small businesses owned by baby boomers. Approximately 70% of them will be retiring soon"

Two types of disruption

The truth of the matter is that resilience is an inside job. There are two major types of disruptions that a business will face: unplanned and planned disruptions. A lack of attention to either of these could have a devastating impact on the long term growth prospects of the business.

Unplanned disruptions, by definition, are unexpected events that seemingly come about with no forewarning. They can wreak havoc on a business because they take resources (both time and money) that would have used to fuel the business' growth – resources that may not have been previously set aside.

Statistically, one in every two businesses will face a major disruption in its lifecycle. These disruptions are typically named 'The Five Ds' and they refer to an unexpected death, disability,



"Failing to incorporate resilience into a holistic franchise development program leaves the growth of the franchise to the winds of uncertainty"

divorce, distress and disagreement. While the COVID-19 pandemic may fall under the category of distress and its impact on businesses cannot be understated, the likelihood of one of the other four major disruptions is probably easier to imagine; although, the impact of any one of these could be devastating for a business, particularly a small business.

The second type of disruption is planned disruption. As defined, these types of disruptions are anticipated and are typically included in the business' operational plans; relocations and system upgrades may quickly come to mind. However, there is one type of planned disruption that is increasingly on the minds of business owners and the organisations – like franchisors – that support them.

That type of disruption relates to the long term future of the business and what happens when this generation of leadership retires. The sheer number and rate of baby boomer retirements are predicted to have a significant impact on the businesses they lead. In the United States alone there are 12 million small businesses owned by baby boomers. Approximately 70 per cent of them will be retiring soon. Unfortunately, without the right planning and preparation, only 20-30 per cent of these are likely to be transitioned – via succession or sale – successfully.

How to make your network resilient

Businesses are not powerless. Since every franchisee plays an integral role in ensuring the franchise's overall success and survival, franchisors are taking steps to proactively secure the resilience of their network of franchisees. Many have taken steps to ensuring that franchisee growth is protected in both the short and long term.

It takes a combination of actions to de-risk a business and ensure that it is as resilient as possible. Some of the ways that resiliency could be incorporated into franchise development programs in a holistic way include:

Insurance: This is usually an obvious choice for risk-conscious business leaders; many will stop here. The trick is to ensure that businesses get the right type of insurance with the right amount of coverage. Some business owners opt to cover their business with personal insurance but this is not usually advisable. Insurance, it should be noted, provides a payout when certain covered events are met. However, the payout is not always guaranteed. Business operations may grind to a halt while the insurance company determines the eligibility for payment of a claim. It should therefore be seen as a second line of resilience defense and should always be used in combination with some other resilience measure.

Short-term planning: The best option for securing a business' operations from unplanned events that can happen at any time, is through a business continuity plan. Business continuity plans are for unplanned disruptions that may happen in the short term. These contingency plans help a business to confidently respond to unplanned events so that they could minimise the impact of the disruption on the business' operations and recover quickly. A 2013 CMI study indicated that business continuity plans helped 87 per cent of businesses to become more resilient with 82 per cent recovering more quickly from a disruption.



Long-term preparation: Business transition (succession or exit) preparation takes care of planned disruptions that will happen at some point in the future. Just like human life, with or without planning or preparation, the natural transition of a business is a certainty. Business transition planning or some form of exit preparation ensure that right steps are taken, increasing the likelihood of a successful transition. Succession plans are for businesses intent on executing internal transitions – oftentimes, but not always, to someone in the family; while businesses interested in transitioning externally do so via some form of sale.

Agreements: If multiple owners are involved, buy-sell agreements are a good option for managing the purchase or sale of interests of the business if certain triggering events occur. Many business operators are so preoccupied with the day-to-day reality of running a business that they hardly have the time to anticipate and put plans in place to manage risks. The challenge for franchisors could be exponential based on the size of their portfolio of franchisees. Instead of ensuring that one business receives access to resilience tools, they need to ensure that every franchisee in the portfolio has similar access. However, this could be overcome by centralising the franchisor's resilience approach.

The benefit to a franchisor of centralising a resilience approach lies in the peace of mind that comes from incorporating a scalable and consistent process and tools. Failing to incorporate resilience into a holistic franchise development program leaves the growth of the franchise to the winds of uncertainty.

THREE WAYS THAT FRANCHISORS CAN HELP THEIR FRANCHISEES TO BE MORE RESILIENT

Short-term planning: Business continuity plans for short term, unplanned events

Long-term preparation: Succession and business transition planning for successful succession or sale

Agreements: Buy-sell agreements to manage the interests of multiple owners.



"Franchisors are taking steps to proactively secure the resilience of their network of franchisees"

How to maintain your digital marketing momentum

For a franchise, digital marketing is an integral part of keeping a brand in the spotlight. Here are six ways you can keep your campaigns alive

WORDS BY JILL GOODWIN



THE AUTHOR
Jill Goodwin is a content champion for a variety of online publications. She often covers topics that cater to business owners and entrepreneurs

It's been a tough year for many businesses, with the global pandemic affecting everyone's way of life.

In times of crisis, businesses often forget about their marketing strategies because there's so much else to focus on. It can be even easier to forget about marketing when you're part of a franchise – the brand is well known and you can rely on the franchisor's marketing efforts while your attention is elsewhere.

However, this is not an advisable course of action. It's critical that you keep your own marketing going at all times. If you pause it, you may find it hard to regain momentum when you want to start up again.

"If your franchise keeps its marketing campaigns moving forward, it won't take long before the rewards are evident"

Marketing, especially digital marketing, is all about staying front of mind for your target audience. This way, when times are tough your customers still remember you.

That being said, think about streamlining your marketing efforts and ensuring your digital marketing is working for you. This will ease the load on your business, while still keeping that momentum going.

Here are six ways you can keep your franchise's digital marketing strategy on track, at all times, even in the wake of a pandemic:

1 Stick to the channels that reap rewards

Digital marketing has many channels, from blogging and email marketing to Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn, YouTube, Twitter, Pinterest, TikTok – the list goes on.

It's so tempting to try to be active on as many of these as possible. However, by doing that you're splitting your focus and giving yourself a lot of work to do as you try to create great content for each stream.

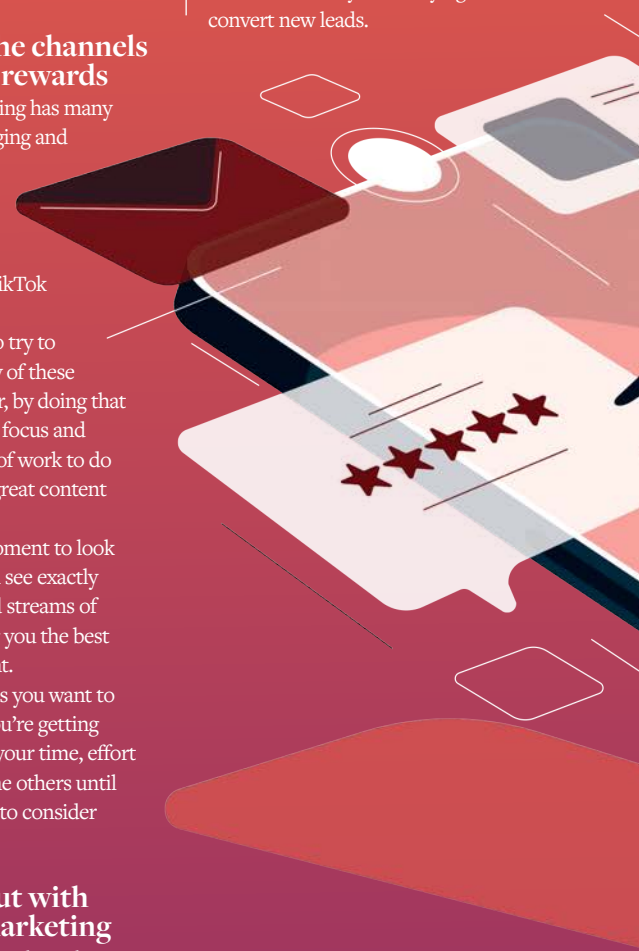
Instead, take a moment to look at the stats. You can see exactly which platforms and streams of marketing are giving you the best return on investment.

These are the ones you want to focus on, because you're getting something back for your time, effort and money. Pause the others until you have more time to consider them properly.

2 Reach out with direct marketing

There's still nothing that can replace the punch direct marketing has.

If you have an email database of regular or past customers, send them a message. You're far more likely to bring in sales from previous customers than you are trying to convert new leads.



Just make sure you reach out with an offer that makes it worth their while to return.

3 Remember the human connection

Social media is all about building a community and creating a connection with your customers. Therefore, it's important that you have a space for this in your digital marketing.

Your customers want to connect with your franchise and not the main franchisor brand's Facebook page, for example. Having your own profiles gives you a space to post photos of your staff members and clients, as well as tell your franchise's story.

4 Keep creating top quality content

Digital marketing is all about great content. This includes engaging photographs, fun videos, informative blog posts and educational infographics.

If you're going to keep your digital marketing going at all times, it's essential you ensure the quality of your content doesn't diminish.

You can also look at new kinds of content to create – podcasts, ebooks and industry reports are all very useful tools for marketing your business. Just be sure to work out what will add value to the lives of your customers and help you increase sales.

5 Refresh your existing content

While we're on the subject of content, it's important not to forget about the content you already have.

A great way to boost search engine optimisation for your website is to update old blog posts with new keywords or change a few details in the copy to bring it into the here and now. Refreshing what you have gives you new, relevant content to post on social media and pushes extra traffic to your website.

Updating existing articles with how the pandemic has changed your business or the steps you're taking to adjust to the new normal and make customers feel safe is a great starting point.

These topics highlight your business ethics in the face of adversity, which is always a positive marketing angle.



6 Build your media partnerships

From guest posting to influencer marketing, there are plenty of ways to spread the word about your brand.

Guest posting is when you write an article or a blog post for someone else's website and link it back to your business. This gives you several things: the opportunity to reach a new audience, good SEO backlinks to your website and a chance to establish your brand as an industry leader.

If you can, try to build partnerships with websites where you can write regular guest posts throughout the year.

Influencer marketing is almost the opposite of guest posting, in that the other person creates content about your brand.

However, it has the same effect in that it's another website or social profile that's linking back to your brand. This is good for SEO and gives you the chance to reach a new audience.

An influencer is someone who has a large following on social media and can influence what people buy or where they go.

When a brand partners with an influencer, they usually get free products or services from the brand in return for posting about their experiences favourably.

Linking up with influencers that align with your brand is a relatively simple way of boosting your social media marketing strategy and it's a great way to gain exposure on platforms you may not have a huge following on.

Digital marketing is an excellent way to reach a large audience. If your franchise keeps its marketing campaigns moving forward, it won't take long before the rewards are evident.

The brilliance of resilience

Developing a mindset that can successfully deal with adversity is key to helping you through tough times

WORDS BY VICKI MITMAN



THE AUTHOR
Vicki Mitman is an executive coach and mentor, as well as a franchise specialist solicitor with NMW

Resilience is one of those words we hear quite a lot. It's a word most people like and may associate with people they know or even themselves. But what do we mean when we talk about resilience?

It's been defined in a number of ways, but in short it refers to a person's ability to take on pressure or stress in a positive way and to recover from adversity. It's the ability to cope with a crisis, or series of crises, and return to normal (or pre-crisis status) quickly. Resilience can also be the capacity of a system (whether individual or an organisation) to deal with change and continue to develop.

When employed successfully, resilience can help us to adapt and innovate in an unpredictable world. Without it, we're prone to crumbing when things don't go our way or being overly sensitive to small setbacks. This can lead to increased stress, failing to move forward or, worse, giving up.

Due to the pandemic, the need to adapt ourselves and our businesses has been crucial over the past 12 months and there have been some fantastic examples of innovation.

From restaurants setting up takeaway services and cook-at-home options and gyms renting out exercise equipment and providing virtual PT services to children's activity classes moving to online platforms and sending out resource packs for kids to get involved from home and organisations running entirely virtual conferences, we've seen some brilliant examples of what people and organisations can do when normal business is interrupted.

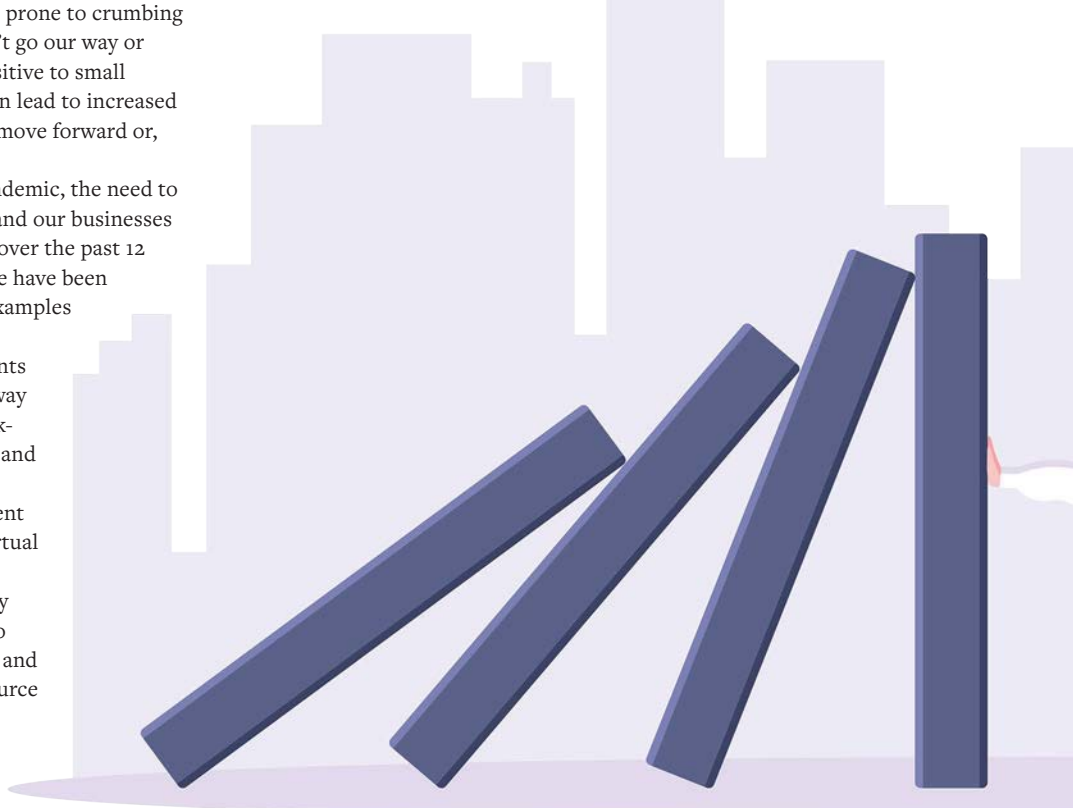
Resilience is not a trait that people either have or don't have. It involves behaviours that can be learned and developed in anyone. Like building a muscle, increasing your resilience takes time and practice. It can be seen as creating a mental resource bank that you're able to draw from when times get tough.

Strategies for dealing with difficult situations

When things become challenging, it's easy to overthink and complicate matters. However, keeping it simple may be a better way to deal with difficult situations. Below are some thoughts and strategies for when times are tough:

- Accept that sometimes bad things happen. It might not be fair or affect everyone in the same way, but bad things do happen and we have to choose the right way for us to proceed. We can either fight it or accept that it has happened and channel our energy into finding the best way forward.

- You don't have the monopoly on this problem – it has affected someone else before and will likely do so again. You're not alone and there may be people you can reach out to for ideas or options on how to move forward.



"Like building a muscle, increasing your resilience takes time and practice"

• It won't last forever. Most crises are temporary and in a few months may just be a distant memory.

• Allow your feelings about the situation to arise, but only for a short period of time (maximum five minutes). Acknowledge how you feel about the situation, but spend more energy working out a way forward than worrying about the fact it's happened.

• Here's a thought taken from the well known 'serenity prayer': accept the things you cannot change, have the courage to change the things you can and the wisdom to know the difference.

• Think about what you need for personal resilience and schedule it into your routine. This could be anything and everything that helps you bring your best self to your work, including exercise, diet, meditation, reading, personal time, family time and thinking/reflecting time. Whatever you need to be brilliant.

Building a culture of resilience in your organisation

This often begins with a reflection on the organisation's culture as a whole. Culture can be hard to grasp, as there are certain intangible aspects. However, it's most often described as 'The way we do things around here'.

One of the most effective ways to improve resilience in an organisation is to build a coaching culture, which focuses on the well-being of the team as well as individual personal development.

Organisations with a coaching culture excel. A study by management consultancy MetrixGlobal on the return on investment of executive coaching found that: 'Coaching produced a 529 per cent ROI and significant intangible benefits to the business'.

Importantly, the research cited certain benefits of coaching on leadership development, decision making, team performance and motivation. However, coaching should not be seen as a remedial tool to correct bad performance, but as an element to assist in achieving a high performance culture.

Top management consultant Peter Drucker wrote that: 'A good organisation structure does not, by itself, guarantee good performance, but a poor structure makes good performance impossible, no matter how good the individual managers may be. To improve organisation structure will, therefore, always improve performance.'

Creating a coaching culture provides a framework for improving the behaviours of an organisation in a conscious way. This can, in turn, create resilience and engender well-being. The goal of building a resilient organisation filled with resilient people will pay dividends.

In our personal and professional lives, we aim to create a balance between the challenges we face and the resources we have available to deal with those challenges. Working to create a resilient mindset and maintaining a catalogue of tools and techniques to assist with maintaining such a mindset is key.

Adversity isn't permanent and even terrible events can produce something good. Creating a mindset and a team that search for the good and can look for creative and innovative ways to deal with adversity or lessen the burden will be helpful in building a resilient organisation.



PIVOT YOUR PASSION FOR PETS INTO A PROFITABLE BUSINESS

A growing number of pet owners need a helping hand when it comes to looking after their animals. Here's how you can offer an essential service as a franchisee

WORDS BY LINDA WHITNEY



THE AUTHOR
Linda Whitney writes about franchising for the Daily Mail, What Franchise and many other publications

Pets are getting more popular. People have been buying pets to keep them company during lockdowns and those who already have pets are valuing them more. It all adds up to an increase in potential business for pet care services franchisees.

Dr Rebekah Fox, a cultural geographer at Warwick University who studies human-animal relations, says: "The Kennel Club has seen a 180 per cent increase in enquiries from potential dog owners, while the RSPCA has seen a 600 per cent increase in visits to its puppy fostering pages and pet insurance providers have noted a 78 per cent increase in people registering new pets in the week prior to UK lockdown."

According to a survey reported in pet trade publication Pet Business World, nearly half of all British pet owners got at least one new pet during lockdown and 10 per cent of British households without pets intend to get one in the next six months.

So the stage is set for a surge in interest in pet care franchises. If you're thinking of investing in one, here's what pet care franchisors look for:

You need more than just a love of animals

A love of animals is essential, but it takes a lot more than that to make a success of a pet care franchise. It's not all patting dogs and cuddling cats - you will be running a business, so franchisors look for prospective franchisees with a readiness to take on a whole lot more than just dealing with animals.

Jo White, growth director of animal care franchise We Love Pets, says: "When choosing franchisees, as well as a genuine love of animals we prioritise attitude, which means a positive, resilient mindset and a determination to be a business owner."

Communication skills

Do you prefer animals to people? If so, a pet care franchise may not be for you. The ability to communicate with people is essential, because it's owners who will be buying your services.

"You have to be able to get on with all types of people and be confident enough to educate owners in the best way to deal with their pets," Jo says.

Franchisees with home boarding pet franchises, who provide holiday care for dogs in the homes of hosts, sometimes must ask difficult questions and even turn down hosts or dogs.

Lisa Suswain, founder of dog boarding franchise Wagging Tails, says: "Our franchisees - along with their dogs - assess all our potential carers and their homes. Not everyone will be suitable to become a Wagging Tails carer, so we train all our franchisees to handle these situations.

"They must also be confident in utilising our training, so they need to be passionate about dealing with people, as well as dogs."

Also, some dogs are not suitable for home boarding.

"Franchisees must be able to politely decline dogs that perhaps are not fully house trained, destructive or not suitable for the carers we have available," Lisa says.

"Our priority is getting the right carers for the dogs, which gives owners peace of mind. If we can't tick all the boxes, we won't allow a board to proceed, so our franchisees must be confident in turning away bookings that are not right."

Marketing capability

You don't need marketing experience to become a pet care franchisee, as franchise head offices typically provide brand-wide marketing and give each franchisee a website advertising their services.

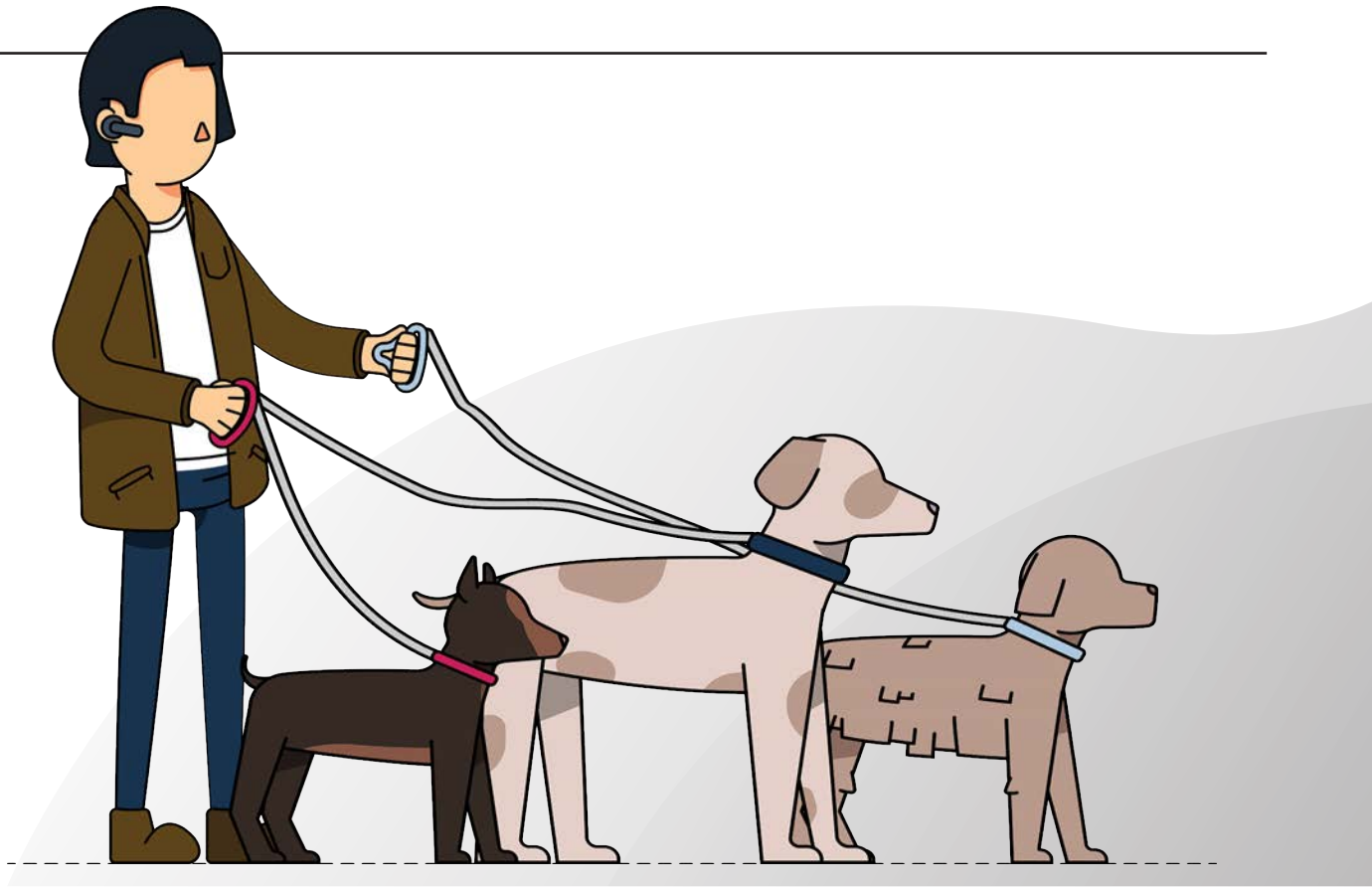
However, franchisors expect you to market your service locally and provide training and assistance to help you.

Pre-pandemic lockdowns - and in the future - marketing could include taking stands at local events such as pet shows, county shows or country fairs, explaining your service on visits to local veterinary centres, pet shops and direct to pet owners while out walking your dog or marketing your service door-to-door.

Lockdown has meant that face-to-face marketing has been curtailed and online marketing has increased through franchisees' social media accounts.

Eagerness to learn

Pet care franchises value your existing knowledge of animal care, but they also provide pet care and



"As well as a genuine love of animals, we prioritise attitude, which means a positive, resilient mindset and a determination to be a business owner"

business training and, in some cases, courses leading to qualifications.

For instance, the OSCAR pet food delivery franchise offers franchisees an Ofqual recognised nutrition qualification that allows you to use the designated letters CertCan (QCF Level 3) after your name, while We Love Pets franchisees get free courses leading to City & Guilds level 2 qualifications in pet sitting and dog walking and level 3 in animal nutrition.

The right premises

Most pet franchises can be run from home. However, if you're delivering pet food and accessories you'll need enough room to store stock and some franchises require space to build animal accommodation.

Abi Purser, founder of the Longcroft Luxury Cat Hotel franchise, says: "As well as a love of cats, our franchisees must own their property and have a suitable space to install the cat hotel.

"Planning permission is required, but with 25 franchisees in different areas we now have plenty of experience in dealing with local authorities and help franchisees with applications."

All cat hotels must pass a three-hour inspection by the local authority before a licence to operate can be approved.

"We have processes in place to help new franchisees ensure licences are granted," Abi says.

The hotels offer cats a luxury home from home, including wrought iron designer cat beds in individually decorated bedroom suites, gourmet menus, grooming services, a choice of music and team members whose sole job it is to come in and entertain the feline residents. Abi's franchisees also handle cat relocation.

Management skills

As well as managing pets, you will have to manage your business and, in some cases, staff.

Jo White of We Love Pets says: "Our franchisees usually start by doing dog walking and pet sitting themselves, but as the business grows they take on staff to help, so you have to be comfortable managing people."

THE BENEFITS OF BUYING A PET CARE FRANCHISE

Becoming a franchisee is easier than starting up a pet care business alone, partly because you must comply with the regulations around pet businesses.

Franchisors will help you to get:

- A licence from your local authority if you run a cattery or kennels, board cats and dogs in your own premises or run a business that arranges cat or dog boarding. Operating unlicenced can mean an unlimited fine or up to six months imprisonment.
- A DBS check if you hold keys to customers' homes, so you can go in to feed the animals.
- Insurance, including public liability insurance, in case your business results in harm to a person or property, and employers' liability insurance for staff.
- Planning permission if you're building housing for pets.

Franchises also provide training, access to courses that can lead to qualifications, marketing materials and promotional assistance, access to expertise (many offer a hotline to a qualified vet), access to a network of fellow franchisees, business software, supplies (in the case of pet food delivery franchises), a uniform, vehicle livery and a name that is already well known.

THE MARKET

Latest (2019) figures for pet ownership from the Pet Food Manufacturers' Association:

Dogs: 9 million
Cats: 7.5 million
Indoor fish tanks: 2.7 million
Outdoor fish ponds: 1.3 million
Rabbits: 600,000
Indoor birds: 500,000
Guinea pigs: 400,000
Domestic fowl: 400,000
Tortoises/turtles: 300,000
Hamsters: 200,000
Snakes: 200,000
Lizards: 200,000

Also, 27 per cent of households own more than one dog and 39 per cent own more than one cat.



Pet tales...

• "We looked after a chicken called Betty, who went around neighbours' houses begging for food. She also liked company and used to go inside and sit on the sofa and was fond of getting into cars. One day the postman got to the end of the road and found he had a chicken stowaway. Fortunately Betty was famous locally, so he knew where to return her."

• "One of our franchisees looked after a Shetland pony while the owner was away, which included taking it for a walk around the village alongside the owner's Jack Russell terrier. People stopped and petted both the pony and the dog."

• "We always ask cat owners for a bio of their cat before it arrives. One owner said: 'Think Jack Dee with whiskers.' When the cat arrived it was true - it looked just like Jack Dee!"

"It all adds up to an increase in potential business for pet care services franchisees"

Kelly Brighton: We Love Pets

"It's the most rewarding work I've ever done"

Kelly Brighton, We Love Pets' Romford, Essex franchisee, says: "I've boarded lizards, bearded dragons, chinchillas, cats, dogs, small furry animals and horses.

"The most notable was living in a house with chickens, rabbits, five dogs, two cats, 11 lizards and a tarantula. Spiders are the only things I'm not keen on - but I love everything else."

Kelly and her four employees organise pet boarding with host families and pet visits, including ensuring that cats get the mental stimulation they need.

"When we go to feed and clear litter trays, we also take our own sets of cat toys, so they get some new things to play with," she says. "We also play hide and seek with them by hiding cat treats around their homes, in increasingly hard-to-find places, which stimulates their curiosity and gives them something to do."

One of Kelly's specialities is horse care, gained through earlier work at an equestrian centre.

"We feed and water them, give them supplements or any medication, ensure they're wearing the right rugs, turn them out into their fields, muck out and re-straw their stables and in the evening tuck them up for the night," she says.

Kelly is now studying equine psychology alongside running her franchise.

"This is a 24/7 business, 365 days a year and as well as pet care you have to do admin, accounts and always maintain the highest customer service and pet welfare standards," she says. "But it's the most rewarding work I've ever done."



Daisy Carrarini: Longcroft Luxury Cat Hotel

"We've received all sorts of requests, including providing Evian water fountains"



Daisy Carrarini left a career in luxury retail to open a six-suite Longcroft Luxury Cat Hotel in her Orpington garden, which she runs around caring for her family and cat Terry.

Daisy used a Longcroft hotel to look after Terry when the family went on holiday and moved house - and decided to open her own.

She says: "We opened in June 2019 and it has been very fulfilling. It can be hard work - you have to be very organised, but also flexible and understanding about the human needs of customers, as well as always maintaining consistent, high quality care for your feline guests.

"We've received all sorts of requests, including providing Evian water fountains, pussy cat FaceTime calls and Persian kitties being hand-fed tuna with a fork."

Having been a Longcroft customer, Daisy knows the importance of meeting the needs of cats and owners, especially first-timers: "Some people need reassurance, some need quick information and others just a 'cat chat'. Every customer is different and we take time to meet their individual needs."

Daisy also handles cat emigration: "I recently looked after a gorgeous kitten for a few months while her owners settled in their new home in Australia. As well as helping to coordinate the logistics of the move, such as vet appointments and an airport chauffeur, I played messages to kitty so she didn't forget her owners' voices.

"One of the most rewarding things is the lovely feedback I receive from owners and the knowledge that they're happy and confident to use our hotel again."





Nine tips for starting a business in an unfamiliar sector

How to ensure that your new company is thriving, not surviving, from day one

WORDS BY ANNIE EDMUNDS



THE AUTHOR

Annie Edmunds left the world of finance to open F45 Maida Vale and has never looked back. She now has a network of dedicated clients and is preparing to open her second studio

Understand your "why"

Understanding why you want to start your own business is essential! Your brain starts firing in directions it hasn't before as a whole new world opens up. Being your own boss and setting your own standards is exciting, but as the reality of ensuring the business is profitable sets in, it is important to remind yourself why you started in the first place. Reminding yourself of your mission and your overall "why" will help you stay strong in the face of adversity. It is okay if your "why" changes over time too, but make sure you don't lose sight of or forget about it, as it'll be your friend when you're lacking that 'spark' or motivation.

"Try and schedule in parts of your job as a business owner that you love"

Be prepared for change

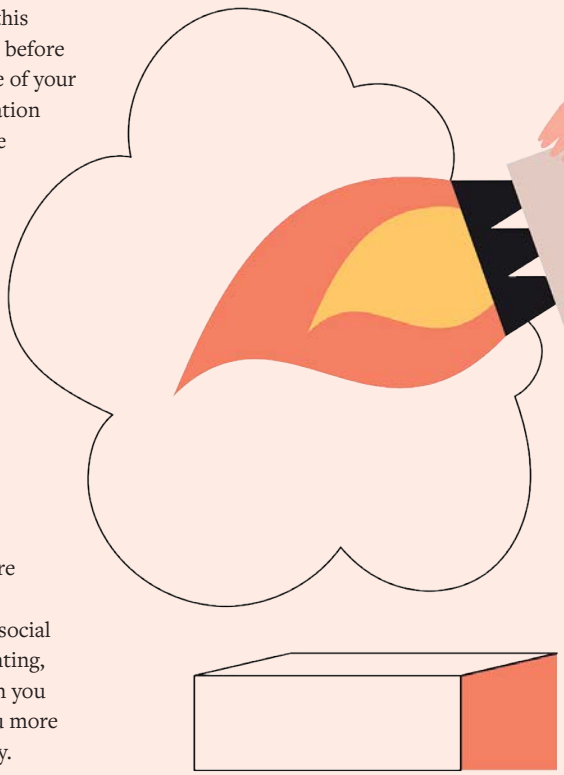
If you're moving from a full-time job or a job with set hours, be prepared for a change in your schedule and routine. Your business is your own, so you won't want to let any area fall short. I'd recommend being savvy when planning your time to ensure you don't burn out. Try and schedule in parts of your job as a business owner that you love – for me, it's teaching F45 workouts. This was non-negotiable for me, and I never gave up the elements I enjoyed to ensure I was having fun whilst working hard. Unless you start off with a full set of staff or business partners, you will be expected to carry a lot of weight yourself. You will be the social media manager one day and the sales rep on another. This is part of the job and it will most likely be a change from your previous lifestyle.

Get qualified

If you are moving into an industry where a qualification is required – for me was a personal training/fitness instructor qualification – get this underway and ideally finished before you enter the full launch stage of your business. Getting my qualification before I started was one of the best decisions I made, as it meant I could teach as well as run the back-of-house. This also gave me a first-hand understanding of what was required of the staff I hired, as I had the same qualifications as them. If you are entering an industry where you need qualifications that may take years then this might not be possible right away. But if there are smaller qualifications you could get prior to launch – in social media management or accounting, for example – do it! It will arm you with knowledge and make you more equipped in your new industry.

Start networking

Having a network of other business owners cannot be valued highly enough! If you are not too well connected yet, immerse yourself in your industry by researching similar and competitor businesses. Attend relevant events in your



industry, and try some of the other similar services being offered to see for yourself what others are offering. If some businesses are not direct competitors but complementary businesses you can work with, get yourself an introduction with them, and understand that there is a level of respect owed to older businesses. If you are coming in as the new kid on the block, see how you can help them with what you are offering. Online business networks are great, but a business relationship flourishes with a personal connection! I am a member of BNI UK that has connected me with multiple complementary businesses that I use daily to help both me and my clients.

Be accountable

The buck stops with you. Mistakes will inevitably happen and when they do, understand why they have occurred and learn from them. Write yourself task lists so that you can be accountable to yourself. If you have an investor or someone close to you, ask them to be your accountability buddy and book in a slot with them once a month to bounce ideas off. If you have staff, ensure they are fully aware of their roles and responsibilities so you can keep them accountable. If something goes wrong that is outside their remit, know that you need to step up and take responsibility for that. Be accountable for your time and energy expenditure. If you're feeling depleted, ensure you are giving yourself a day off sometimes, and know that you are not an endless tank of energy. Being a good leader requires you to be well-rested and energised.

Identify your unique sales position

Most businesses are new ideas, so there will be others in the industry offering the same as you are. But remember, no one is exactly like you, and you will have the opportunity to put your stamp on your business. Brainstorm and find out what you will be doing differently from your competitors. It can be something simple but make sure your clients get to experience what makes your business unique.



"Brainstorm and find out what you will be doing differently from your competitor"

Don't scrimp on services

You will need some services to help you run your business. If it is IT systems, software and even marketing and social media, don't scrimp on these and cut corners to save small amounts of cash! Good systems are the nuts and bolts of your business and will ultimately reflect your services. Find service providers that will support you and your vision and if there is a platform that is too clunky and takes too much of your time, change it! Ask around to see what is working for other businesses, and have introduction meetings with your providers to ensure you can work well with them before signing contracts.

Be ready to do the dirty work

You need to be ready to do everything that is required to make your business run. Or pay for it to be done but let's face it, in the beginning at least, the luxury of spending money left, right and centre is not often an option. You may be on the emails, the calls, the meetings with the CEOs all in the same day to later scrubbing floors and cleaning bathroom facilities. It's all part of your journey. Be humble, and proud of all the work you do.

Be customer-obsessed

I can't stress enough the importance of being customer-obsessed. Whilst customers are not always right, you do need to try and empathise with them as much as possible, and help if you can. It's important to have structured boundaries and not to take abuse. But also know that your customers have chosen you out of the competition, so do all you can to make them sure of their choice.

"We were absolutely delighted that she loved our brand"

Following her appearance on Dragons' Den, Kate Ball, director of Mini First Aid, describes the experience and how it felt to secure investment from 'crafting queen' Sara Davies



Why did you decide to go on Dragons' Den?

There were a couple of reasons. We wanted both the expertise of a dragon investor who would add vigour and experience to our business, but also to raise the profile of Mini First Aid.

After such a challenging year with the pandemic, we just wanted to give our franchisees the opportunity to be busy teaching first aid again and get more parents, carers and children learning first aid after seeing the show.

What was the experience like?

The experience was hugely nerve-wracking. The wait in the lift seems like an age - especially when attempting to keep small children quiet!

We decided to take four of our six children into the den with us to demonstrate children learning first aid. I think a lot of people thought we were crazy, but our business is built on family. The kids are at the heart of what we do and we work flexibly - so they had to be part of it.

As well as juggling the kids, the main source of nerves is the pressure you're under. We know our business inside out, but we also knew we only had one go - there are no retakes or pauses - to represent our business and potentially gain an investment.

For the main part, we were really happy with how it went, but both of us got stuck on numbers. Matt [Ball, Kate's husband and Mini First Aid director] is the absolute pro when it comes to the business numbers, but for a moment, following a question from one of the dragons, Matt's mind went blank and I just stood staring at him wanting the ground to swallow us both up.

How did it feel when you secured investment from Sara Davies?

Sara was the dragon we wanted. We love her ethos, we knew she had children and would get what we do and we knew she could do great things for the product side of our business.

We were absolutely delighted that she loved our brand, what we stand for and saw our business as an investable opportunity.

What's it been like working with her and what's she bought to the business?

Sara and her team have been hugely supportive in practical business support, mentoring and helping us explore and expand our ideas for what Mini First Aid can achieve.

We're busy developing new Mini First Aid products for retail and working on a number of media activities with Sara to promote people learning first aid.

What inspired you to start mini first aid?

I mentioned it briefly on Dragons' Den, but it was basically down to my younger brother Matt.

Matt had undiagnosed cardiomyopathy, a serious condition

"The wait in the lift seems like an age – especially when attempting to keep small children quiet!"



of the heart, and we very sadly lost him when he was 23. So ever since then I've been passionate that as many people as possible can learn first aid because you just never know when you might be needed to save a life.

When did you franchise it?

I set up Mini First Aid in 2014 from my kitchen table in Leeds.

Initially, it was local parents and carers coming to my classes, often with children in tow to learn lifesaving first aid techniques for babies, toddlers and primary school-aged children.

I could tell there was a need and desire to learn first aid in a relaxed and informal way and for people to gain the peace of mind they need to safely parent their children.

I felt that if the business could succeed in Leeds, then why not right across the UK, so we launched our first franchise in Bristol in 2015. We now have 65 franchises and I'm absolutely thrilled that this means so many people in the UK can now access our classes.

What do you look for in a franchisee?

Being a good people person is absolutely number one. For people to engage with first aid training, they need to feel relaxed, supported and valued, so it's vital our Mini First Aid trainers can deliver on this.

A sense of humour is also great. First aid can be a very serious topic and sometimes a well-judged lightening of the mood can work wonders, especially in the kids' classes.

And just someone who is passionate about the importance of first aid. Many of our franchisees have experienced a real-life first aid situation themselves and this has stayed with them and inspired them to be brilliant trainers.

What do they get for their money?

Full training and certification as a paediatric first aid instructor, arranged to fit around the franchisee's professional and personal life, plus franchise systems, including their own website, email address and Facebook business page.

They also get resource packs, including comprehensive digital media and promotional materials, training on how to administer their business, including access to a Mini First Aid mentor to support the launch process, and probably most importantly, membership of our closed Facebook page, which is an invaluable resource where our franchisees share tips, inspiration and experience.

Developing people is part of the Mini First Aid ethos, so support is ongoing for the life of the franchise, whether it be business management skills, social media training or the development of new courses.

We also hold a free annual training weekend, including loads of workshops to help franchisees develop their business, media and teaching skills.

We're really proud of the support we offer our franchisees and it's absolutely crucial as they are Mini First Aid.

Where do you see the business being in five years' time?

With almost full capacity in our UK franchises, we're looking to expand abroad and are excited to be moving expansion along after a pause during COVID.

"I'VE FOUND A SECOND DREAM CAREER"

Award-winning Monkey Music franchisee Katherine Watmough explains her motivations for buying a franchise and why more women should follow in her footsteps

Not many people get to live their professional dream, but as a lead concert violinist I did. However, the demands of the job were incompatible with how I wanted to raise my two boys and three years ago I turned my world upside down by calling curtains on that career and buying a franchise.

It wasn't an easy decision, but I'm surprised and delighted to have found a second career that I'm equally passionate about and which suits me better at this time in my life.

The music, the travel, the glamour

I started the violin aged two and by the age of four I dreamed of becoming a professional violinist – the music, the travel, the glamour. I worked hard to be the best I could and enjoyed an incredible career playing in West End musicals, accompanying some of my idols and travelling the world with the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra.

Behind the glamour was, of course, a lot of hard work, including endless hours of practice, time in airports, relentless networking and unusual, often anti-social hours. It was hard on my children, my (pre-COVID) support bubble and me. While it was just about manageable, I felt I'd plateaued as a musician – it was exhausting me and cracks were certainly appearing.

Time for a change

I felt trapped. Sadly, the live music industry has few family friendly – i.e., flexible and stable – career opportunities. While I wanted a change, I needed to work and had a very specific skill set.

As I had no business experience, the idea of running my own business had never so much as crossed my mind until one day I was chatting with Jayne, a friend and former colleague. She had bought a Monkey Music franchise – the UK's trusted programme of pre-school music classes – and asked if I'd considered doing the same.

I was sceptical, but talking with someone whose background was similar to mine and who had been there and done it was fantastic. I'd recommend it to any potential franchise owner because these people can give you a frank assessment not only of what it takes to be successful, but also of the pros and cons relative to your current lifestyle.

Realising my dream

Once Jayne had opened my eyes to the possibility, I researched franchise options further – reading articles like this one, talking to franchisees and investigating different franchisors and Monkey Music on my own terms.

Despite Jayne's example and encouragement, my lack of business experience made me nervous. I hadn't the first clue what was involved, apart from the challenging prospect of



"So much of what had made me a successful musician transferred to running a franchise"

keeping business accounts.

Jayne put me in touch with Angie Coates, the founder of Monkey Music, who told me: "While ultimately your franchise's success depends on you, we don't expect any new franchisees to be Deborah Meaden or Yo-Yo Ma.

"If you believe in the value of an early music education and work hard, ask the right questions and listen to advice, we can provide the support, encouragement, tools and training to help you succeed and realise your dream for your business."

She was right. So much of what had made me a successful musician transferred to running a franchise.

Professional musicians set their own standards, hold themselves accountable for their performances and are constantly striving to improve. They are self-starters, self-disciplined and resilient. Those attributes provided the foundation for my franchise, while Monkey Music provided me with the training and support I needed to develop the skills to run the franchise.

Commitment and ambition

I won't claim for a minute it was, or is, easy. It requires just as much commitment and ambition as my music career ever did, but I have been surprised by how much I've enjoyed it.

At a professional level, the learning curve has been incredibly steep, which is satisfying, and it's hugely rewarding to see the franchise growing strongly as a result. I had been worried that after a couple of years I might get bored, but I'm constantly learning and the job is so multifaceted that there is always something I can do better.

Furthermore, as my business grows I can see new opportunities, both with the current franchise and through buying additional franchises and growing my team.

I won't claim there aren't bad days or even, occasionally, weeks. However, they are the minority and there were at least as many when I was touring and playing.

Flexing around my needs

The great thing is that as the business owner I'm in control of my life. Running a Monkey Music franchise is a full-time job – I suspect that's true of any business, if you want to do it well – but it can flex around my needs and those of my family.

The company's strapline, 'Sharing precious time together', applies equally to my family life as to creating the right atmosphere for the families we deliver music classes for. I often work evenings and a bit at the weekends, but it means I'm there for my boys when I want or need to be.

However, if the lifestyle were the sole benefit that being a franchisee afforded me, I don't think I would have achieved the business growth I have.

I've found a franchise whose ethos and purpose fits with my passions. I still get to play my violin when teaching classes, I get to help other parents enjoy time with their youngsters and every week I see the wonder and excitement I felt for music when I was a child in hundreds of young eyes.

Best of all, my previous customers will often send me pictures of their children learning to play instruments and when I see the little ones holding violins I can't help feel I may be inspiring them to follow in my footsteps.

I've found a second dream career that three years ago I hadn't even imagined existed - I hope you find the same.

37%

Of new franchisees are women, an increase of 20% since 2015.

Source: 2018 British Franchise Association NatWest franchise survey.







5 successful female entrepreneurs we can all learn from

Angelica Malin makes her top picks of inspiring female founders from around the world

From tech entrepreneurs to lifestyle gurus, Angelica Malin's pick of inspiring female company founders from around the world show that anything is possible when you believe in yourself and take action to turn your dreams into reality:

1. Whitney Wolfe Herd: the youngest female CEO to take a company public in the US

Whitney is the world's youngest self-made female billionaire. If that's not enough, she's also damn cool.

Whitney founded dating app Bumble in 2014 after leaving Tinder, which she co-founded. She wanted to create a platform where more women have power and control, hence her unique feature of women making the first move on the app.

In February 2021, Whitney became the youngest ever female CEO to take a company public in the US, during which its shares shot up to more than $76 each, meaning Bumble is currently valued at more than $13 billion.

Self-made women like Whitney account for less than five per cent of the world's 500 biggest fortunes, according to Bloomberg, so it's no small feat.

2. Tania Boler: broken the taboo surrounding women's health issues

The CEO and co-founder of femtech Elvie launched her business in 2013 with the mission to bring women's technology out of the dark ages. Elvie is a brand created by women for women and has two signature products that have proved a smash hit globally: the Elvie Pump silent wearable breast pump and the Elvie trainer for pelvic floor training. Both products have revolutionised the market and broken the taboo surrounding women's health issues, which mothers often face after childbirth.

Elvie now has over 100 employees in London and New York and in 2019 announced an incredible €37.5 million Series B round of investment, the largest ever raise for a femtech business in history.

3. Anne Boden: awarded an MBE for her services to financial technology

Anne is CEO of Starling Bank, which she founded in 2014 after a 30-year career at some of the world's best known financial institutions, including Royal Bank of Scotland and Allied Irish Banks.

A trained computer scientist, Anne saw the potential in the banking industry for digital technology and solutions to revolutionise the way people bank. Building an app from scratch, she had a vision to improve banking for all and build Starling into a global brand.

To date, Starling Bank has raised more than £363 million in investment



"Whitney is the world's youngest self-made female billionaire. If that's not enough, she's also damn cool"



Angelica Malin is editor in chief of *About Time* magazine

and Anne was awarded an MBE for her services to financial technology in 2018.

4. Marie Forleo: assisting the next wave of entrepreneurs

A marketing expert, Marie is also a thought leader and best-selling author in the US.

Through her website and social media, she reaches over 190,000 people worldwide. Marie's signature course, the B-School, which has had over 40,000 members join, helps business owners gain clarity on their concept, nail their marketing, boost sales and reach new audiences through expert content.

By hosting podcasts and informational videos on her MarieTV YouTube channel, as well as through free webinars, she's helping inspire the next wave of entrepreneurs globally.

Marie is an inspirational self-made millionaire who's featured on the Oprah Super Soul Sunday series and has even given a keynote talk on the floor of the New York Stock Exchange.

5. Grace Beverley: builder of multiple seven-figure fitness brands

An influencer and entrepreneur, Grace has built multiple seven-figure businesses in the fitness and activewear space.

Beverley is the owner and CEO of three different, highly popular fitness businesses: B_ND, a gym equipment shop; fitness app Shreddy; and Tala, an ethical activewear brand.

Tala has been a huge hit among young women, with its ethical credentials and flattering designs, making £6 million in revenue since launching last year.

At only 23 years old, Grace has achieved an amazing amount at a young age, using savvy marketing and building a strong personal brand through her Instagram channel, which has over a million followers, and by documenting her fitness journey on YouTube.

Make 2022 the year to launch your business

If you've been inspired by these female business leaders, why not make 2022 the year to launch your own business?

Angelica's book, called *#SheMadeIt*, is a tool kit for female founders in the digital age, giving you all the advice and actionable tips needed to plan, launch and build your own business using the digital tools at your disposal.

Remember, what you create today will have a ripple effect for years to come, so dream big and believe in yourself to build something amazing.

“I wanted to show my kids you can be a mum and still have a career”

Despite a series of setbacks in her life, Laura Dytham’s inspiration for getting back into the workplace as an easyProperty franchisee can be found close to home

Laura Dytham is one of a growing number of women who’ve become their own boss in recent years. What makes her stand out is her remarkable story. It’s an extraordinary one by anyone’s standards.

Not only did Laura decide to become an easyProperty franchisee just before the first lockdown was imposed on the UK public in March 2020, she’s survived a violent and abusive marriage, recovered from thyroid cancer and had a hysterectomy operation cancelled no less than five times because of the pandemic.

Laura also runs her hugely successful business in her hometown of Sandbach, Crewe and the surrounding area of Cheshire while looking after her four young children.

Laura used to work as an estate agent and spent time at a law firm helping solicitors with conveyancing before she started her family. At that point she took a career break. It was during this time she first came across easyProperty.

Part of easyGroup, which was founded by Sir Stelios Haji-Ioannou of easyJet fame, the business is an online estate agency. Its low overheads compared to traditional high street estate agents means franchisees “can offer a more competitive, cost effective service”, according to easyProperty.

Seeking to transform the way people sell their properties by using cutting edge technology and utilising the skills of a network of home-based franchisees, easyProperty is planning significant growth in the next 12 months.

Why not set up on my own?

Of her decision to re-enter the workplace, Laura explains: “I wanted to get back into something to show my kids you can be a mum and still have a career.

“So I looked to find a position within an established estate agency branch, but nobody was taking on staff and the wages on offer were awful. So I thought: why not set up on my own?

“After I saw an advert for easyProperty, I got in touch with the company and, following several conversations, decided to invest and become one of their franchisees.

“However, the month I signed up I got the date for my hysterectomy operation and then the first lockdown happened as well.”

Nevertheless, along with two other people who were also starting out as easyProperty franchisees, Laura started her initial training.

“Every day we would spend time on things like how to take photographs of properties for sale,” she says. “We also had access to property experts, who gave us tips on running a successful property business, plus we had social media training.

“I was trying to juggle being part of the training groups and home schooling four children at the same time, which at times wasn’t fun. At one point I thought I was close to having a nervous breakdown, but I think a lot of people were feeling the same way at that time.”

Hands-on role in the business

Now well established, Laura’s role as an easyProperty franchisee is to market properties in her local area. As part of its marketing commitment to its franchisees, easyProperty also posts properties on online estate agency portals like Rightmove and Zoopla and erect the ‘For Sale’ boards.

“I do pretty much everything else,” Laura says.

“I take the photos and produce the

"When I'm valuing properties, I tell my vendors that I have to do the school run every day, but I'm available for them in the evening or at weekends"



Today, Laura is once again happily married

floor plans, but the good thing about easyProperty is that they provide you with all the software. So, for example, once I've done a floorplan It will immediately be available on the easyProperty portal."

She also makes full use of social media.

"A lot of estate agents don't use social media and I think they're missing a trick because I get so many people interested in viewing properties through my social media," Laura says.

"Lots of people contact me saying they've been following me and they love the videos I post."

We're like a big family

As part of the easyProperty franchise network, support is also readily available when Laura needs it – whether from the franchisor or fellow franchisees.

"We're like a big family," she says. "All the franchisees keep in touch with each other online and help out if there's something I'm not sure about.

"That's a big benefit compared to going into business on my own. Without being a franchisee, I just wouldn't have that kind of support network available to me – it's been invaluable."



Laura's advice if you want to start your own business

"Stop putting it off and just do it.

"It's hard work, but if you're doing something you love, it's so enjoyable.

"I'm so glad I did it myself. My kids get to see me running my own successful business and hopefully that will inspire them and give them the confidence to do it themselves in the future.

"I definitely wouldn't change a thing."

"The property market has been blessed because lots of people have decided that it's time for a change"

Juggling a busy work and family life

Like many women running their own business, Laura has to juggle a busy work schedule with an equally active family life. But her upfront approach to this conundrum has turned what could possibly be seen as a negative into a considerable positive.

"When I'm valuing properties, I tell my vendors that I have to do the school run every day, but I'm available for them in the evening or at weekends, so if they need to contact me they don't have to wait until the following day to speak to me," she says.

"If I get a phone call when I'm doing the school run, I can phone the person back and because of the lockdowns so many people have had to work from home while looking after children that it's acceptable now."

She managed to sell all three

During her time as an easyProperty franchisee Laura's sold a total of 35 properties, with a further 19 sold subject to contract. The most valuable properties she's had on her books were three houses that went for £475,000 each.

"They were on a little estate and the person who built them was struggling to sell them," Laura says.

"He'd been with two other estate agents, so I asked if I could help him and managed to sell all three. Needless to say, he was very pleased with me!"

Expansion on the agenda

With a growing reputation as a flexible, forward thinking estate agency owner and a buoyant property market, Laura is aiming to grow her business beyond her original trading territory this year.

"The property market has been blessed because lots of people have decided that it's time for a change," she says.

"They've either been stuck in the city in a flat or had to spend time apart from family and the housing market was able to open up after the first lockdown and it's stayed open since then, so thanks to the stamp duty holiday the whole industry has been very busy."

As for expanding the reach of her franchise, Laura adds: "People keep requesting for me to go further afield as my reputation has grown.

"They have been recommending me via word of mouth, so I'm looking to expand the territory that I currently have to cover more areas. I'll also be taking on my first member of staff soon, so that's exciting.

"I want to build my business slowly because I don't want it to become too big too soon. I'm a great believer in testing things to see if they work first."

With her positive outlook – in spite of everything she's been through in her life – and her tenacity as a business woman, you won't find many people backing against Laura achieving her ambitions.



Interview: Laura Rea Dickey, CEO, Dickey's Barbecue Pit

We catch up with the CEO of this international barbecue brand, to talk digital overhauls, overseas adjustments, and the importance of the family name

INTERVIEW BY KIERAN MCLOONE



"We're a very tech-savvy brand," explains Laura Rea Dickey, CEO of international fast casual concept, Dickey's Barbecue Pit. "I like to describe us as a very spry senior citizen, if you will."

For any other brand, that comparison may come across as facetious at best, but for Dickey's, which turned 80 years old this year, it's a surprisingly apt one. The brand has been built with an 'evolve or die' mentality for a number of years now, and this has been largely driven by Laura, who occupied the chief information officer role before her current position.

One of Laura's first major innovations for Dickey's? Its SmokeStack software, which aggregates all customer data and turns it into actionable information for franchise owners and corporate alike.

"We had good data in some parts of the company, but it was all very siloed; it wasn't actionable, and it wasn't accessible in a timely manner. In 2008, after the recession, we put together a 12-year roadmap – we had to become best-in-class in technology in the same way that we were in our food, our folks, and our training," says Laura.

"The first thing that we set out to do was SmokeStack. It was pulling all of the data available to us and putting it onto one big data platform, and making that accessible. We started to see some really great insights across the business where we could connect what our guests were telling us with marketing and advertising and inventory. Prior to our data initiative, we were getting sales data a week after the fact. Now, it's real-time data updated every 15 minutes across the entire system."

Staying ahead of the times

Laura's approach as CEO of Dickey's has centred around her knowledge and expertise of the latest technological trends; evident by the brand's latest partnership with Combo Kitchen to bring 100 Dickey's ghost kitchens to the US. Delivering good food is always objective number one at the organisation, but ensuring convenience is maintained is a close second.

"Our guests have led innovation, because we live in an Amazon world where it's 'I want it when I want it, where I want it, and I want to access all of it from my smartphone'," says Laura. "Guests have evolved expectations and restaurants aren't immune to that. When evolving Dickey's, we've not only had to meet the needs of our guests, but we also live in a world where Instagram eats first. Everything is tied back to how folks are interacting with their technology, which includes how they dine."

The Combo Kitchen deal extends to the other brands under the Dickey's Barbecue Pit family, including Wing Boss and Big Deal Burgers. Its aim is to build on the 550-plus Dickey's portfolio that exists today, but as mentioned, Laura believes that the core of each location needs to be as recognisably Dickey's as its original site in Dallas, Texas.

"You have a set of fundamentals – whether it's for brick-and-mortar or a virtual kitchen – that have to be in place," says Laura. "You have to have good food, you have to be about guest service, and you have to be really good at your craft.

"I think ghost kitchens are a wonderful opportunity to extend brands, and I think the market is much more palatable in the US, as so many more folks have become comfortable with third-party delivery where they're not interacting with a brand directly."

Putting an international foot forward

Dickey's was founded in 1941, and began its franchising journey over 50 years later in 1994. But the Texan icon only began international expansion in 2018; today, you can find a

Dickey's in Pakistan, Japan, Singapore, the UAE, and soon, Australia. The question is, for a QSR concept on the up, why did Dickey's wait so long to venture beyond the States?

"I definitely think that international franchising is something that we had as a goal for a long time. But it was about making sure that we had the fundamentals in place; that we could absolutely deliver on the Texas barbecue experience anywhere in the world," explains Laura.

"It took us until 2018 that we felt comfortable that we could deliver on everything that we wanted the brand to be. So that if a guest was sitting in Dubai, that experience wouldn't be that different than if they were sitting in Dallas, Texas in our original location. We needed to make sure that we had a great local partner, which worked for us with our first international deal in the UAE. We also had the technology fundamentals by that point, as well as supply chain and everything else that we thought was truly necessary in delivering a Dickey's experience."

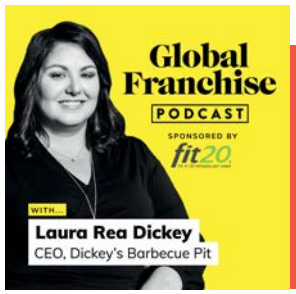
When travelling overseas, many brands – especially those in the restaurant industry – feel the need to adapt their offerings to suit a local market. But for Laura, this process was approached exactly like the brand's ghost kitchen expansion; keeping the core of the experience the same was essential.

"In an international market, we look at it as us being a guest. It's our responsibility to be conscientious and make sure that we make it a good place for the brand internationally. That included adjusting around 10 per cent of the menu to what was locally appropriate.

"We look at that as an adjustment, but keeping the core experience. We still have the same processes and recipes, and you'll interact with a certified pitmaster, but you may have additional side items available."

Built for the long term

If the Dickey's growth story shows us anything, it's that putting the customer experience at the forefront of any kind of development is a must if you're in it for the long term. This is the same across the brand's tech enhancements, international adaptations, and even its internal hires.



This interview was taken from our episode of the *Global Franchise Podcast* with Laura Rea Dickey, in which we talk about cloud kitchens, international growth, and many more elements of the Dickey's Barbecue Pit success story. To listen to this podcast episode and many other conversations with franchise leaders, head over to **globalfranchisemagazine.com/podcast.**

The brand has had somebody with 'Dickey' in their name as CEO for decades, but being part of the family isn't a golden ticket to the top. Instead, each and every person involved in Dickey's executive team has proven themselves as suitable for their role.

"What I respect so much about my father-in-law is that he required that anybody who would work in the business, but was part of the family, to first go out on their own. They had to be successful; he required that of both of his sons," says Laura. "There's no separation between work and life when you're wrapped up in the brand in that way, and that affects the investment that you make into the business, because it's a passion that we love. Each generation has left their own mark on Dickey's, in their own way."

Now under third generation family management, Dickey's has truly entered the digital age and shows no signs of slowing down its technology adoptions and enhancements. For Laura, keeping this evolution as streamlined as possible is the key to ongoing success: "Our philosophy is looking at how we can make the technology support the business, without having to ask our restaurateurs, partners, and customers to change how they interact with the brand."

"You have to have good food, you have to be about guest service, and you have to be really good at your craft"





“You win the race by constantly moving forward and looking for marginal gains”

Although Christina Handasyde Dick, founder and CEO of Guardian Angel Carers, took a detour to represent Britain in two Olympic games, she was always destined to be an entrepreneur

INTERVIEW BY AMANDA PETERS

Taking care of the elderly and sailing are Christina Handasyde Dick’s (formerly Bassadone) two big passions. And when the time came to choose between one or the other, she decided to pursue both.

Growing up on the South Coast as part of a sailing-obsessed family, it was inevitable Christina would catch the sailing bug. For several years she proved her sailing chops, even winning the 420 Ladies World Championships in 2000. But Christina had her sights set on something bigger – the Olympics.

Now it may seem unusual for a competitive sailor to then end up founding a home care business, but Christina’s passion for looking after the elderly stemmed from her childhood.

A compassionate soul

“My parents divorced when I was 12 and my mother and I lived with Granny Gardiner in her house by the sea while my father moved in with his mother. So I grew up living with both my grandparents from my early teens,” explains Christina.

It was this period of her life that her fondness for older people began. “I think that gave me heart and compassion for seeing them as they got older and needed more support,” she continues. “My mother’s mother went from having companionship and light touch care through to having lived-in and life care until she eventually passed away in her

own home."

Although heart-breaking, Christina felt privileged to have been part of that journey as a teenager. Her compassion for the elderly was so strong that when the time came to volunteer at school, she chose care over cadets. "The choice was easy," she says. "I chose to volunteer at the local elderly home. I used to visit a lovely lady named Doris and we would play Scrabble, do her weekly shop, have cups of tea and go through her photo album."

Going for gold

Christina was on track to pursue her degree at university when one day she had an epiphany.

"It was the summer before I started at Southampton University. I had won the 420 Ladies World Championships and it was also the Sydney Olympic Games. I was sitting on the sofa watching the British sailors win their gold and silver medals and one of the silver medalists had also coached me in youth sailing.

"I felt inspired by everything that they had achieved and just decided there and then that it was what I wanted," explains Christina.

Fearing her father would "kill" her if she dropped out, Christina juggled university and training for the Olympics for two years.

"It was very close between me and a couple of other teams and it felt like a make or break moment – I had to make a decision if I was all in or not. So I postponed my final year of uni," she says. "I kept my student loan and took out a credit card to pay for a private coach, Tom Saunt, to give us a jump ahead of our British competitors." And that made all the difference.

Despite being the underdogs, Christina and her partner went on to qualify and compete in the 2004 Athens Olympic Games. Apart from her grit and determination, this out-of-the-box thinking led Christina to later establish Guardian Angel Carers.

After taking another year off to compete at the Olympics, Christina went back to university "to keep her father happy" and got her degree in 2005, with her focus on entrepreneurship, small business management and new business development.

Still only 22, and not having won a medal in her first Olympics, Christina decided to give it another shot at the Beijing Olympic Games. However, a medal was not on the cards for her, having placed sixth overall.

"Whether you win or lose at the Olympics, recovery is not quick. You've been working towards this big goal for so long and it's all that you focus on. It's kind of your everything, your purpose – you"

A massive comedown

By anyone's standards, representing your country twice at the Olympics is an outstanding achievement, not to mention an amazing life experience. However, what was to come would "break" her.

"Shortly after that Olympics, three weeks after we returned from Beijing, my father passed away," says Christina.

This was the beginning of a painful personal year: her father's death, the split from her sailing partner, coupled with breaking up with her boyfriend of many years while also having to deal with the comedown from the Olympics.

"If I'm really honest, it broke me," reflects Christina. "Whether you win or lose at the Olympics, recovery is not quick. You've been working towards this big goal for so long and it's all that you focus on. It's kind of your everything, your purpose – you. It was a massive comedown."

Makings of a leader

At this moment when many would give up, Christina decided to work through it by moving to New Zealand for six months. "I went to life leadership college, which





essentially was a bible school, and I came back calmer as I had made the decision not to continue Olympic sailing," she says.

This was also the time of the 2008-09 financial crisis and employment was not easy to find. She says: "My confidence was not hugely strong after everything I had been through over the previous year. But I'd been talking to a friend who helped me to see that what I loved was helping people. I needed to find a way to do that and combine it with my love for 'organising' and problem-solving."

So, she established Task Angels in 2010, the sister company to Guardian Angel Carers. "We were mostly doing domestic cleaning and looking after people's second homes," explains Christina.

The lifestyle home management company grew quickly from her mother's kitchen table into a team of three, she laughs: "Mum told me it was time to get an office". Christina then bought a modest houseboat on the nearby canal, which flourished into a "proper office" and a team of 25 within two years.

"We also ended up doing quite a lot of elderly homes – cooking and cleaning. I recognised that there was a real opportunity in this area for a good professional and compassionate local home care company. But it needed to be regulated by the Care Quality Commission (CQC) so we started a separate business – Guardian Angel Carers.

"I had a colleague at the time who had worked in home care and she gave me the confidence that we could do this and we haven't looked back since," says Christina triumphantly.

No resting on your laurels

When Guardian Angel Carers was launched in 2012, there was already a long client waiting list. "We had several of our Task Angel clients who we were providing daily meals, companionship and shopping, but a couple of those clients were getting to the stage where they needed more personal care.

"Their families were so keen to continue with us that they were happy to wait until we achieved our CQC licence. They had to wait months as we went through the application process," explains Christina.

It was then that she knew she was on to a winning concept. Christina and her HQ team have continued to use her out-of-the-box thinking to gain that edge in an already crowded home care market. Her 200-plus head office team and franchise family are growing strong, with franchisees ranging from nurses to former RAF pilots.

"I am not intimidated by the crowded market. You don't walk up to an Olympic race as the only boat at the start line and it is exactly the same in care. You win the race by constantly moving forward and looking for marginal gains," she says.

Innovation and using technology in care is what has helped Guardian Angel Carers stand out, especially since the pandemic. "We have always been an early adopter with the use of technology to improve business efficiency. For instance, it has been several years since our carers have had an app on their phones to clock in and out," says Christina.

"There was no change in the ways of working for our care team when the pandemic hit. We already had a system of working in bubbles, which we then called 'cells'. I am happy to say that we have had no deaths from COVID of clients or colleagues."

Looking ahead

Christina is laser-focused on growing the brand through franchising across England. She explains: "Given the complexities of care with regulatory requirements, I am not pushing an international focus for the next few years.

"I really want to make sure we do an 'outstanding' job in delivering an excellent support service to our franchisees within England before we push the limits anywhere else."





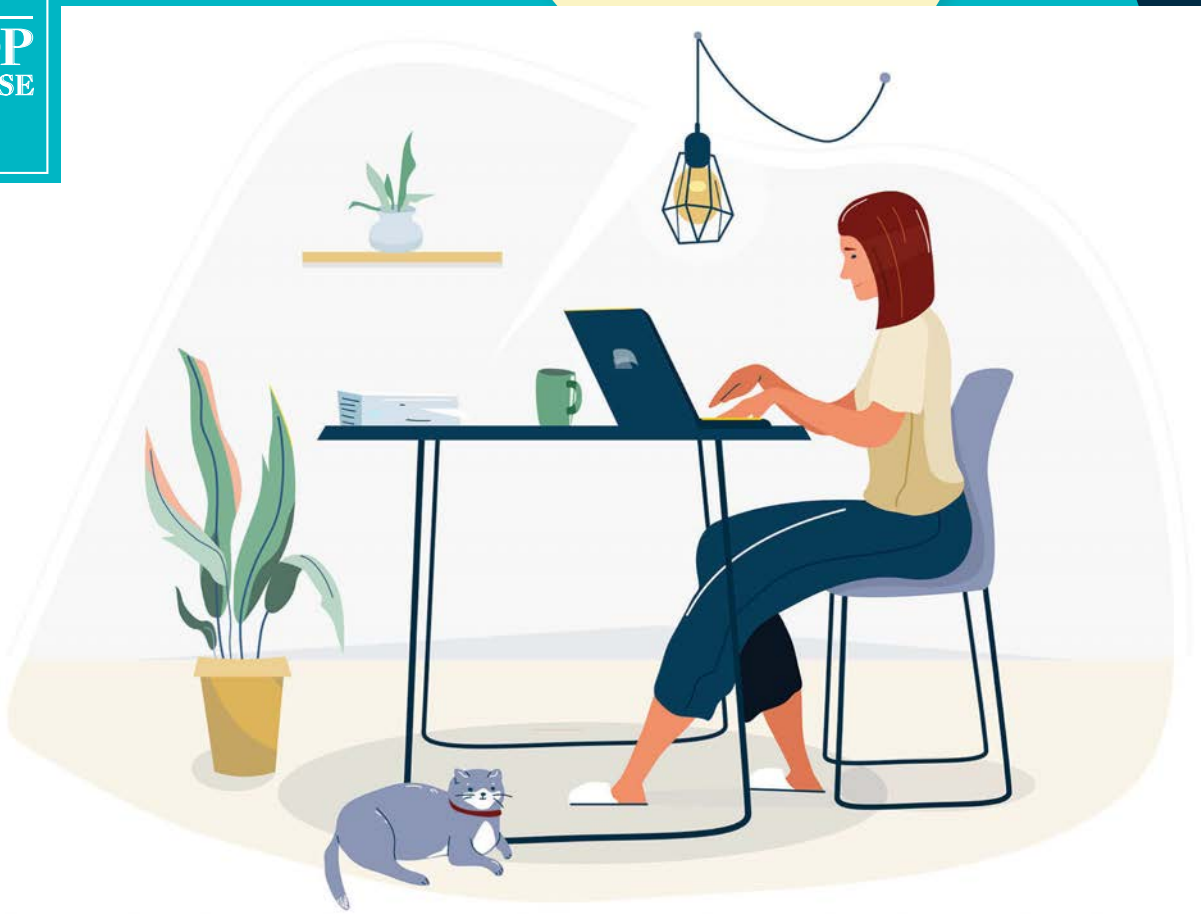
Introducing the

BUSINESS Woman
FEMALES IN FRANCHISING

20 TOP FRANCHISE SIDE HUSTLES

Creating a stream of passive and reliable income is what we all dream of. Investing in the volatile stock market is fraught with risk, but some business women have begun to make use of the free time around their careers to tap into their entrepreneurial spirit. They've started their own franchise businesses. Here are the top businesses that can be run part-time or flexibly today

20 TOP FRANCHISE SIDE HUSTLES



Savvy businesswomen are making use of the free time around their jobs to manage and set up franchised businesses. Whether it's a boutique work-out experience or starting their own eSports league, these side-hustles are guaranteed to provide a solid stream of passive income without eating up the entire day.

This start-up business trend started with the credit crunch in 2008, and was exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic; when many women found out that job security looks different for male and female employees. There has to be a backup plan. *The Guardian* reported in May that 178,000 women were made redundant between September and November 2020 – a whopping 76 per cent higher than the 100,000 made redundant during the credit crunch.

Coupled with historic pay gap issues between men and women, many businesswomen have tried to insulate themselves against these barriers with entrepreneurship and being in control of their own destinies.

Many of these side-businesses can be run on a part-time basis with low-cost barriers of entry.

None of these franchise opportunities require constant management by the franchisee. It allows the owner to work on non-operations-based functions of the business, such as marketing and finance.

"Many of these side-businesses can be run on a part-time basis with low-cost barriers of entry"

How practical is a side hustle in reality?

Giving up your career to dive head-first into running your own business is daunting. That's why so many businesswomen are picking up flexible franchise opportunities that don't require all of their time. Knowing that you always have your successful, ongoing career to rely on for your needs allows businesswomen to foray into the exciting world of entrepreneurship without fear, giving them the best chance for success.

Costs are often lower with these side-hustle-style businesses. There are franchises that only require an investment as low as £2,800, compared to larger opportunities that can top out at £138,000. The variety allows for businesswomen at various stages in their career to get their foot in the door with a cost level that is appropriate for them.

Travel can be costly and expensive, and as we all know, time is money. Spending hours travelling is not ideal, and represents time that can be better spent. Many of these side-businesses address that issue with semi-absentee ownership plans. It's relatively simple to manage a team remotely who have the expertise to the run the operational side of the business.

Side-businesses are such a great way to generate some extra income, or provide a much-needed project to focus on away from family life. Franchise businesses come equipped with everything needed for success and are often referred to as a 'business in a box', so it's no surprise that many side-hustles end up being full-time hustles.

Go through our list of accessible and low-cost franchise opportunities to see what works for you and get started! From every cost category to business category, there is something for everyone.



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CHEFS FOR SENIORS

Founded in 2013, Chefs for Seniors brings together in-home elderly care and professional food preparation into one franchising opportunity that's perfect for empathetic franchisees.

The brand was created by Barrett Allman; an executive chef who was struggling to maintain a balance between work and time with his family. He decided to use his skills to support those in need in his local community; all the while maintaining a level of flexibility that simply wasn't possible in his previous career. Today, around 30 per cent of Chefs for Seniors franchisees maintain their business in a part-time capacity.

Chefs for Seniors is also one of the lowest-cost food franchises currently available, with a total minimum investment of $11,375 for its basic plan. This price can increase steadily depending on how expansive an investor wants to make their operation, but just like the brand's founding pillars, this can be as flexible as you would like it to be.



On top of all of this, previous food industry experience isn't a requirement to join the network. While this naturally helps if you choose to be hands-on with your business, Chefs for Seniors is instead looking for individuals with great business acumen, a strong work ethic, and the ability to follow the brand's proven systems.



9ROUND

9Round's boutique class-based boxing experience has seen increased demand skyrocket in recent years, as more and more workout-hungry guests turn to its flexible fitness model. This flexibility is extended to its franchise offering, with the brand having the option of semi-absentee ownership for investors who want to maintain a career outside of their franchisee responsibilities.

"With 9Round's semi-absentee ownership model, franchisees can be 9Round owners while also maintaining their current job. This model allows for a close partnership between the franchisee and the location manager to launch a successful club that brings members back time after time," says Heather Hudson, COO and co-founder of the brand. "The semi-absentee ownership places a manager in charge of trainers and the day-to-day operations of the club while the owner oversees marketing, business finances, and other administrative work."

9Round's initial investment cost varies between $94,175 and $196,775, making it on the more affordable end of fitness franchising – perfect for entrepreneurs dipping their toes into this market for the first time.

GYMGUYZ

GYMGUYZ offers its clients a personal trainer service delivered to their front door. Via its iconic vans, the brand can provide a personalised offering that's built around the lives of its customers.

Conveniently, this level of customisation is extended to its franchisees. Founder and CEO Josh York started running the business from the comfort of his parent's dining room, and the brand is set up in a way so that each new franchise owner has the option to replicate exactly that.

This removes the need for a costly brick-and-mortar studio, which is one of the key factors that sometimes dissuades investors from entering this exciting space. Instead, GYMGUYZ can be run from wherever you choose, and the recurring revenue model means that successful owners will always have a comfortable flow of cash coming in.

The initial total startup costs for a GYMGUYZ franchise start at $92,200, with a franchise fee of $40,000. For these costs, franchisees receive constant training and support from head office, as well as assistance with the setup for a grand opening.



JUST BETWEEN FRIENDS



Just Between Friends is a consignment sale franchise that began as a small home sale in its co-founder Shannon Wilburn's kitchen in 1997. Since then, it has brought in millions of dollars for charities all across the US, and has empowered franchise owners – the majority being female – to create their own futures.

"Just Between Friends is a perfect opportunity for anyone with a strategic mind, winning attitude, and can-do spirit who owns a laptop and a cell phone," explains Dianne Davis, president, and VP of franchise development. "Our franchisees work from almost anywhere – home, ballfields, dance classes, carpool lanes – to organise and manage twice a year, pop-up children's resale events.

"Most of our franchisees are parents who had built stellar careers and then started families. By the time their second child comes along, they want to stay home and care for their kids while still contributing to their family's budget and their communities."

Many Just Between Friends franchisees continue to maintain a full-time career alongside their franchise opportunity, and the organisation has members who are also lawyers, nurses, accountants, and teachers.

XP LEAGUE



eSports is a very new franchise market, but one which is generating endless potential for tech-savvy franchisees that decide to dive in to development. One such brand generating buzz is XP League; a US-based concept that expanded to the States after mere months of launching.

The brand was founded by Jay Melamed after he endeavored to find a way to involve his youngest son in team-based youth sports. This familial angle attracts many franchise owners to the network today, with many volunteer coaches eventually transitioning into XP League investors.

"You can come into this and say you want to do it as a side hustle, by putting 20 hours a week into it. You run a couple teams out of two locations and keep it very modest," explains Jay Melamed. "Or, you can hire four people who are area coordinators, and play out of 10 different locations. You can scale it up and run 40 teams."

CRUISE PLANNERS

As an American Express Travel representative, the Cruise Planners franchise brand is backed by some serious business know-how. It also helps that it's one of the lowest-cost travel agency opportunities on the market today, with a franchise fee of $10,995.

Cruise Planners franchisees run their travel advisory business from the comfort of their own home, but are backed by one of the US' largest travel networks. It requires absolutely no prior experience, allows franchisees to work from anywhere and within hours that they set themselves.

The day-to-day of being a franchisee for Cruise Planners will see entrepreneurs help clients to plan trips and experiences of all kinds, and because there's no need for a physical storefront, costs are kept low and flexibility is held high. Franchisees have the option to work full-time or part-time, and what they'll get out of their investment is determined by their motivation and drive to succeed.



THE BEST MAGIC MIRRORS FRANCHISE



The Best Magic Mirrors franchise model is perfectly placed for part-time ownership due to its easy equipment storage and low setup fees. If you are looking for a low-cost, low-risk, high reward mobile business that delivers great flexibility and is built along strong family and lifestyle values, then this is the fun franchise for you. It really is a business in a prop box!

To sweeten the deal, £1,000 worth of bookings is guaranteed on day one to help you on your way.

"This amazing company has given me the opportunity to live the lifestyle I want, making my own decisions and having control of my own diary, whilst also providing the most incredible guidance and support to help make the business successful," says Windsor franchisee, Lauren Hill.

"It incorporates all the factors you could want in a career – fun, sociable, interactive, and knowing I can make someone's event super special is what makes it all worth it."

Founder Chris Goodchild started the company five years ago as a side hustle, so when the time came to franchise the business, he knew exactly what to do for franchisees who wanted to follow in his footsteps.



STEM FOR KIDS

Any parent wants the best for their children. Thus, a children's services offering has always been a lucrative business venture. To add to this, while the pandemic and subsequent lockdowns may have caused this sector to temporarily shut its physical doors, franchisors overnight changed their offering to a digital one to keep their franchisees' businesses booming.

The children's services franchise model definitely has its perks with children enrolled in school during the day, meaning most programmes that franchises offer are reserved for after-school hours and weekends.

STEM for Kids delivers computer coding, bio-medicine, engineering, automation, robotics and business to pre-K, elementary and middle school children in the form of camps, after-school and weekend classes, parties and in-school workshops.

As franchisees mainly focus on business development rather than teaching classes, the model allows for flexibility to work on the business part time if they prefer.

The first line on its franchise website fittingly states its USP – "Claim The Freedom to Work on Your Terms".

JAN-PRO

Established in 1991 in Rhode Island, US, and began franchising soon after, Jan-Pro Cleaning & Disinfecting offers cleaning services to a variety of businesses including offices, schools and government, as well as more niche cleaning services tailored to specific industry requirements, such as industrial cleaning, healthcare services and speciality cleaning for certain environments.

With an emphasis on 'cleaning greener', by using fewer harmful chemicals through the cleaning process, Jan-Pro has established a positive reputation around the world, while also allowing franchisees the flexibility to set their own schedule based on personal needs. Plus, you don't have to rent office space either.

"I realised life is really short and Jan-Pro has provided the opportunity that I'm home every day so I get to see my kids in the morning and night," say franchisees James and Alison Mairet.

It also offers a variety of ways to start a franchise, with investment levels ranging from as little as $1,250 and going up to $50,000. You can start off with $1,250 for the down payment and $900 for the Jan-Pro Development's starter kit.



XPRESSO DELIGHT

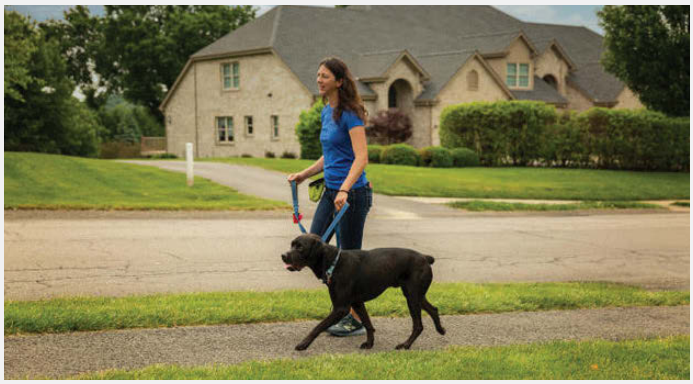
Videos of the average Joe raking in the cash with their vending machine businesses have gone viral recently. Vending franchises have proved to be the ultimate side hustle due to their streamlined model and setup-and-forgotten approach to business.

Coffee machine franchise, Xpresso Delight, is cashing in on the coffee and vending machine craze, offering franchisees the ability to invest in a "coffee as a service" model. Franchisees have to deliver and install the machine in a high-foot traffic area – such as an office – and service the machines once a week.

"Laundromats, restaurants, technology services, signage, all required too much time and capital to get started. Plus, I didn't see a big differentiator that would enable me to scale up quickly. Xpresso Delight met all my requirements, including low startup costs, limited time commitments, as I already have a full-time job," says Xpresso Delight Bronxville franchisee Matthew Dwyer.



FETCH! PET CARE



Fetch! Pet Care provides professional dog walking and pet sitting services, where pet care coordinators personally match all of their dog walkers and pet sitters to meet the specific needs of each pet.

"While Fetch! Pet Care's business model encourages full-time ownership; some part-time owners, who have built large, reliable teams, are able to manage other part-time businesses as well," says Maria Shinabarger, president of Fetch! Pet Care.

One such example is Jacque Peters, co-owner of Fetch! Pet Care North Pittsburgh. "In partnership with my father, we purchased the Fetch! Pet Care North Pittsburgh franchise in March of 2019," she says. "I had been working as a golf professional, and after becoming a mom, I wanted more flexibility and to work fewer hours each week.

"I've always loved animals, even fostering dogs with a local rescue. I recognised the ownership opportunity with Fetch! provided a great work-life balance with the potential for a significant income.

"Our pet care team consists of 76 individuals, and we're growing. Having this reliable team in place as well as strong relationships with our clients allows me to comfortably dedicate some time to other passions. In addition to being the owner of Fetch! Pet Care North Pittsburgh, occasionally I organise golf programmes and teach lessons to youth."

Fetch claims that with its turnkey solution you can open your franchise in less than 14 weeks. Costs range from $74,967 to $80,667 on the initial investment, and members of the military get $500 off the initial fee.

HOMEVESTORS OF AMERICA INC.

Real-estate franchise HomeVestors is appealing as a part-time business because it is focused on securing a few big transactions, rather than several smaller ones.

It also offers an associate franchise option that makes it more attractive since it has a much lower upfront investment, giving the franchisee the opportunity to see if it is a good fit before going all-in. They then have the chance to "earn" their way to a full franchise.

A person needs a minimum of $70,000 in liquid assets to buy a franchise and have enough on-hand to begin operating the business.

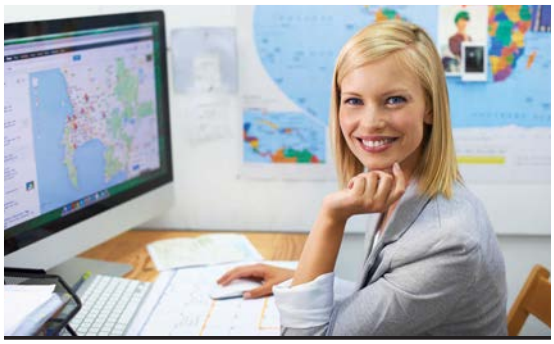
"I originally started my franchise because I didn't want to forever be in a corporate role. As a single parent with two kids, I saw that I could get into business immediately with HomeVestors," says Sheila Konecke, HomeVestors Washington D.C franchisee.

"For a decade, I worked full-time as an engineer in a manufacturing line, and ran my portion of the business, which was buying homes, on the side working with my brother, who was full-time.

"I was fortunate to have enough flexibility with my job that I was able to answer the phone or pick up messages when homeowners called about selling their house, and was then able to call them back and schedule appointments when I was available."



NOT JUST TRAVEL



This company's route to market is via home-based travel consultants, who join through sister franchise arm, The Travel Franchise.

Last year Not Just Travel introduced the Travel Consultant Lite package, which is perfect if you want to start a side hustle around your current job or other commitments.

For an upfront investment of £2,800 (plus VAT), it enables you to train as a certified personal travel consultant. No previous travel industry experience is required.

For their money, franchisees receive a personal website, fast-track training (currently delivered online), plus all necessary tools and technology.

Not Just Travel also charges a monthly membership fee, which covers ongoing support such as a personal travel coach, additional training, marketing materials and access to Facebook groups.

Since it was launched, The Travel Consultant Lite franchise has proved extremely popular, with Not Just Travel saying franchisees can potentially see a return on their investment after securing less than 20 bookings.

Founded in 2001, the company has over 850 franchisees in the UK and has won the Homeworking Travel Agency of the Year Award for the past five years.

The Travel Consultant Lite package is one of three franchise options offered by Not Just Travel.



FUN FEST HOLIDAY CLUB

The perfect low cost franchise if you have a young family or work in the school sector.

Children who attend a Fun Fest Holiday Club, which is Ofsted registered for children from three years old, can choose from a range of different activities every morning and afternoon, designing their own programme to suit their tastes and interests.

Business development director Lynne Newman says: "A single Fun Fest Holiday Club can be run on a part-time basis alongside other commitments, but it can also be scaled up over time by running additional clubs and services, such as a before and afterschool club.

"The nature of the business and the pattern of operating periods means a Fun Fest franchise tends to appeal to parents of young children and those who work in schools during term time. However, we have plenty of franchisees who don't fit either profile.

"In our recruitment, we're quite simply looking for people who we want to work with over the next five to 10-plus years. "Common characteristics include a good work ethic, aspiring to high standards and passion and enthusiasm for our brand."

FIRST CLASS LEARNING

Many First Class Learning franchisees successfully run their businesses, which provide children with individually tailored maths and English tuition, on a part-time basis, with their centres often opening once a week at weekends.

And while the company has over 300 UK franchises, extra help for school pupils has never been in higher demand, which means that in order for First Class Learning it achieve its ambitious growth targets it needs to recruit a significant number of new franchisees.

Chief executive Ed Hyslop says: "We're looking for motivated individuals with the desire to run their own business helping children overcome their personal obstacles in maths and English.

"Above all else, we're looking for people who share our passion for working with children and helping them succeed.

"Our business model ensures franchisees get a high percentage of profits as your class grows.

"Centre managers choose the days and times that suit their venues, as well as the fee structure for their centres.

"Our set up also offers a great deal of flexibility based on personal circumstances and therefore a great work-life balance.

"Beyond the financial rewards, the hard work pays off when parents share the significance of your role in helping their children reach their full potential."



MINI FIRST AID



You may have seen Mini First Aid on *Dragons' Den* this year, where founders Kate and Matt Ball secured a £50,000 investment from multi-millionaire 'crafting queen' Sara Davies for a 10 per cent stake in their business.

Mini First Aid was set up in 2014 to train parents, carers, children and adults in lifesaving first aid techniques for babies, toddlers and primary school-aged children following the death of Kate's younger brother, who had undiagnosed cardiomyopathy.

The company's first franchisee opened for business in 2015. Today, Mini First Aid has 65 franchises in the UK.

Franchisees receive full training and certification as a paediatric first aid instructor, their own website, a Facebook business page, membership of the company's closed Facebook group, digital media and promotional material and instruction on how to run the business.

What attributes should a Mini First Aid franchisee possess?

"Being a good people person is number one," Kate says.

"A sense of humour is also great. First aid can be a serious topic and sometimes a well-judged lightening of the mood can work wonders, especially in the kids' classes.

"And just someone who's passionate about the importance of first aid. Many of our franchisees have experienced a real-life first aid situation, which has stayed with them and inspired them to be brilliant trainers."

GET AHEAD



Rebecca Newenham: founder of Get Ahead

Get Ahead franchisees provide companies of all sizes with support services that range from bookkeeping, blogging and database management, to design assistance, telephone answering and help with social media.

As well as offering expert advice, the concept is enhanced further by the fact these services can be delivered on an hourly, project or ongoing basis.

Describing itself as a 'virtual agency', Get Ahead was founded in 2010 by Rebecca Newenham, who still runs the business today. The award winning company's network comprises 10 regional directors and 40 virtual assistants, who are based UK-wide.

Rebecca says: "To become a Get Ahead franchisee, you'll need to be confident and persuasive, enjoy face-to-face business conversations and be a great people manager.

"Often from a marketing, sales, business development or HR background, our franchisees are entrepreneurial and ambitious, yet also know that they thrive when part of a supportive team."

According to the company, franchisees can work as many hours as they wish, with several existing network members working school hours only. They invested in the franchise because it affords them the flexibility to be able to work where and when it suits them.

FAMILY LAW ASSISTANCE



Michaela Wade: co-founder of Family Law Assistance

Set up by Steven and Michaela Wade following a gruelling court process Steven endured in order to remain part of his child's life, Family Law Assistance wants to recruit franchisees who are compassionate, good listeners and patient but firm.

Over the last 14 years they've developed a system that enables people to work from home – aside from assisting at court hearings – when it suits them.

Franchisees aren't solicitors – they offer assistance in all aspects of family law situations in and out of court. They provide clients with an arm around the shoulder and a guiding hand, as well as assisting in the preparation of paperwork and dealing with correspondence.

Michaela says: "Most of the time, what we do has nothing to do with the law or legal system.

"A large part of it relies on empathy, understanding, reframing situations and helping people deal with the emotional side of the legal process they're going through.

"Our franchisees don't perform the same tasks as solicitors – it's chalk and cheese. Because of this, we're looking for people cut from a different cloth, which is why no legal experience is required to become a franchisee."

Initial training takes place over a six-week period. The weekly, three-hour sessions cover areas such as legal matters, coaching techniques and best business practice.

Ongoing training and support is provided as part of the franchise package, including weekly catch-up sessions and regular training and refresher sessions, to make sure franchisees get the most from this business opportunity.

RARING2GO!



Raring2go! franchisees operate their magazine and website publishing business from home, which means very low fixed overheads.

Their income comes from selling advertising space to a broad section of the local business community, who are looking to position themselves squarely in front of the family audience the brand captivates.

Advertising is sold in the local quarterly magazines and across various online opportunities on the Raring2go! digital platform.

Entry level investment is £6,995 (plus VAT) and includes all training and the cost of a franchisee's first printed magazine and first three months of licence fees.

This scales up to the platinum package at £15,995 (plus VAT), which includes the first four printed magazines and first 12 months of licence fees. This option means there are no overhead costs in the first 12 months of operation.

Freddie St George, Raring2go! managing director, says: "The Raring2go! franchisee network is composed entirely of women, who for various reasons looked at the business when at a pivotal time in their business and personal lives.

"For women currently facing that crossroads in their life and looking for a viable way to balance family life with a scalable business that delivers a healthy monthly income, Raring2go! is an excellent option."

DIDDI DANCE

Do you want to inspire children to get moving? Could you see yourself running funky preschool dance classes for boys and girls? Then check out the franchise offering from diddi dance, which is accredited by the Children's Activities Association.

Founded in 2003 and franchised in 2006, the company now has over 40 franchises across the UK, some of which are run in partnership with another individual.

As well as using the award winning diddi dance brand name, systems and know-how, franchisees receive full training, ongoing support from an experienced head office team, plus access to exclusively written music.

They're also awarded an exclusive trading territory, which includes approximately 12,000 two-four-year-olds.

diddi dance founder Anne-Marie Martin says: "Our franchisees are driven individuals who have a passion for giving children a love of moving to music that will last a lifetime."

Andrea Bickford of diddi dance Reading & Wokingham says: "There are three reasons why I chose to run a diddi dance franchise: my passion for dancing, a desire to run my own business and my wish to create a great work-life balance.

"I'm able to work my hours around what's best for my family at any given time. I also love the fact that I was able to start small, with just two or three classes, then grow as my children did."



BUSINESS Woman

Your extensive guide to life-changing investment opportunities you can start today

- Trending sectors and brands
- Franchises that offer flexibility and lucrative profits
- Life-changing businesses
- Be your own boss
- Explore a new career path



LINGOTOT

This company is a multi-award winning franchise offering language classes to children aged 0-12 in English, French, German, Italian, Spanish, Arabic, Welsh and Mandarin.

Lingotot's proven franchise model has been in place since 2010 and the company now has over 60 franchisees educating and inspiring children across the UK and Ireland.

No matter your linguistic background, Lingotot's franchise package suits all motivated, self starting individuals.

The company will set you up for success and stay with you every step of the way thereafter with ongoing, personalised support and a fabulous franchisee network behind you.

Minimum investment level: £8,200
Email: info@lingotot.com
lingotot.com



RHYTHM TIME

Rhythm Time is a parent's favourite. The company's award-winning music classes have been helping the early development of the under-fives since 1995.

As a business owner, you'll enjoy full support and training, enabling you to build a rewarding, family friendly business and work-life balance.

Rhythm Time has one of the most comprehensive franchise packages in the sector.

Rachel Turner of Rhythm Time Warwickshire says: "I absolutely love being a Rhythm Time business owner.

"I'm building a really successful business, supported by an experienced, highly recognised and respected company."



Minimum investment level: from £9,750
Email: rt@rhythmtime.net
Rhythmtime franchise.co.uk

COOK STARS

Love cooking and looking for a change? Find out more about a fun, flexible and rewarding career with Cook Stars.

A Cook Stars franchise offers you the opportunity to:

- Run children's fun cooking classes, parties and workshops
- Do something that you enjoy and that makes a difference to people
- Benefit from your hard work
- Take control of your hours and lifestyle
- Run your own successful business
- Be your own boss, but with the backing of an award-winning team who are there to support you all the way.

Cook Stars franchisees enjoy financial and personal success,



and the brand is looking for more enthusiastic passionate people to join.

Request a franchise information guide for more information:

Email: enquiries@cookstars.co.uk
Investment: £6,995 + VAT
cookstars.co.uk

DIDDI DANCE

To be a diddi dance franchisee, you don't need to be a qualified dance teacher. The brand teaches children to love moving to music and is looking for enthusiastic people to join its crew.

You will be your own boss and launch your local business, with the benefit of ongoing support from head office.

Your franchise fee covers:

- Five-year renewable licence
- Access to all original IP
- Exclusive territory
- Personalised page on the diddi dance website
- A comprehensive franchisee training course
- A fully integrated online booking and CRM system

Franchise fee: £4995+ vat
Website: diddidance.com/franchise
Email: franchise@diddidance.com

TAPPY TOES

Tappy Toes is looking for enthusiastic, bubbly people who are great with little ones, to take toddler dance classes to the next level.

The brand gets enquiries every day about having Tappy Toes toddler dance classes in different areas and simply can't do it all alone. Have you ever thought 'I'd love to run my own business' but wouldn't know where to start?

If you are looking for some rewarding and fun, flexible work, a Tappy Toes children's dance franchise could be perfect for you!

Why? Because it fits around your family life and is so enjoyable you won't even feel like you're working! And more importantly it affords you the flexibility to drop and pick up the kids from school and spend time with them in school holidays, so you won't be feeling that parental guilt we all struggle with!

Joining a franchise family gives you the support and back up that you need while having the freedom of working for your self. It will be your own business but you certainly won't feel alone!



Minimum investment level: £4,995 franchise fee (£500 start-up costs)
Email: claire@tappytoes.com
tappytoes.com



AQUABABIES GLOBAL

A great opportunity to join the world renowned Aquababies Global and be a part of the success of the first pioneering baby swimming school which started in 1991. Set up by Julie-ann James, the world's leading baby and toddler swimming consultant.

There are different levels of franchise package offering different levels of training and start-up equipment, but all include training, marketing, equipment and support.

Aquababies supplies structured lesson plans for babies, toddlers and preschoolers of all levels.

If you're interested in starting your own swim school and would like to benefit from working with the support of a world famous brand, this is the ideal opportunity for you.

Minimum investment level: £5,000
Email: rachael.green@aquababiesglobal.com
aquababiesglobal.com



RAZZAMATAZ THEATRE SCHOOLS

From humble beginnings to a successful business leader, Razzamataz Theatre Schools is immensely proud of company founder and managing director Denise Hutton-Gosney.

Affordability and opportunities are still very much at the core of the multi-award winning theatre school.

Razzamataz partners with *The Stage* newspaper to provide scholarships to thousands of children, as well as having its own registered charity, Future Fund, to help students going on to study performing arts after school.

Be part of a network that cares about students and the career path of its franchisees. It offers low cost entry and flexible working, plus franchisees enjoy profits of more than £100,000.

Minimum investment level: £4,997 (plus VAT)
Email: franchise@razzamataz.co.uk
razzamataz.co.uk/franchise-opps/franchise-package

Celebrating diversity and inclusion in franchising

BrightStar Care is a business based on a personal journey

In less than two decades, Shelly Sun has built her company BrightStar Care from a local business into a $569m national enterprise using a franchise model built for infinite growth. Through Shelly's leadership, BrightStar Care has grown to more than 360 locations nationwide and its franchisees employ more than 16,000 caregivers and 5,700 nurses, a majority of whom are women. Due to Shelly's tremendous hard work, BrightStar Care's hundreds of thousands of clients can rely on the highest standard of quality care for their loved ones.

Shelly founded BrightStar Care after struggling to find suitable care for her ill grandmother. Shelly and her family worked tirelessly to put together resources for their grandmother to receive home care, but there was a lack of options available in their area. The difficultly of the situation led Shelly to found BrightStar Care to fill the gap in the home health care market. BrightStar Care soon became the connecting resource that allowed seniors and those in need of care the possibility to age and receive treatment from the comfort of their own homes.



FRANCHISE TO LOCALISE AND DIVERSIFY YOUR SERVICE

After undergoing her own personal journey with home health care, Shelly knew how important it was to expand BrightStar Care, so communities everywhere had access to the the benefits of home care. Franchising gave BrightStar Care the opportunity to be local, scalable, and consistent with the quality of care they provided, this type of growth would have been difficult to achieve had BrightStar Care remained a corporate entity.

Today, most BrightStar Care franchise owners do not solely come from a background in health care or even a corporate background. In fact, many are first-time business owners or have experienced the personal journey of finding home care for a loved one and are passionate about making a difference in their community.

A number of BrightStar Care franchisees are also veterans who are passionate about providing veteran resources to those in need. Given Shelly's passion for helping especially women launch their own businesses, BrightStar Care has a robust list of female franchisees who opened up their own locations as a result of the company's well-established support and coaching resources.

COMMITMENT TO A HIGHER STANDARD OF QUALITY CARE

Another major pillar of Shelly's business model is BrightStar Care's commitment to the highest standard of quality care. More than 95 per cent of BrightStar Care locations are Joint Commission accredited – the gold standard within the health care industry.

BrightStar Care is also the only national home care franchise in the nation to receive The Joint Commission's Enterprise Champion for Quality award for nine consecutive years, since the award's inception. The brand's ability to maintain that standard during COVID-19 and beyond is a testament to the commitment and talent of this organization's leadership and team members.

Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, Shelly committed to safety as the company's number one priority, which allowed franchise owners the opportunity to grow and thrive despite ongoing challenges. As the delta variant is now on the rise, Shelly has remained true to her commitment to client and staff safety.

OVERCOMING INDUSTRY HURDLES

Shelly and her team have also witnessed a surge in the need for home care assistance and quickly learned that home health care is both a recession- and pandemic-

At a Glance BRIGHTSTAR CARE

Established:
2002

Number of Franchised Locations:
360

Location of Units:
39 U.S. states

Investment range:
$105,735 – $170,457

Minimum Required Capital:
$100,000

Contact: franchise@brightstarcare.com

brightstarfranchising.com/home-care/



resistant business model. To keep up with demand, BrightStar Care made further efforts to support its medical professionals, purchasing $2m worth of PPE to secure inventory for franchise owners early in the pandemic. The need for caregivers and nurses to care for clients is always on the rise, and the nationwide labor shortage of 2021 challenged that need. However, Shelly worked swiftly to ensure BrightStar Care locations nationwide were covered.

To assist with recruiting top talent and to retain their amazing fleet of medical professionals BrightStar Care franchisees pay caregivers and home health aides five to 20 per cent above minimum wage in most markets because they believe caregivers perform an essential service and should be rewarded financially.

Paying competitive rates gives each franchisee a competitive advantage when sourcing new talent to join the team. As a continued effort BrightStar Care also strives to make new employees feel supported and connected to the organization.

DIRECT LEADERSHIP FOR COMPANY-WIDE SUCCESS

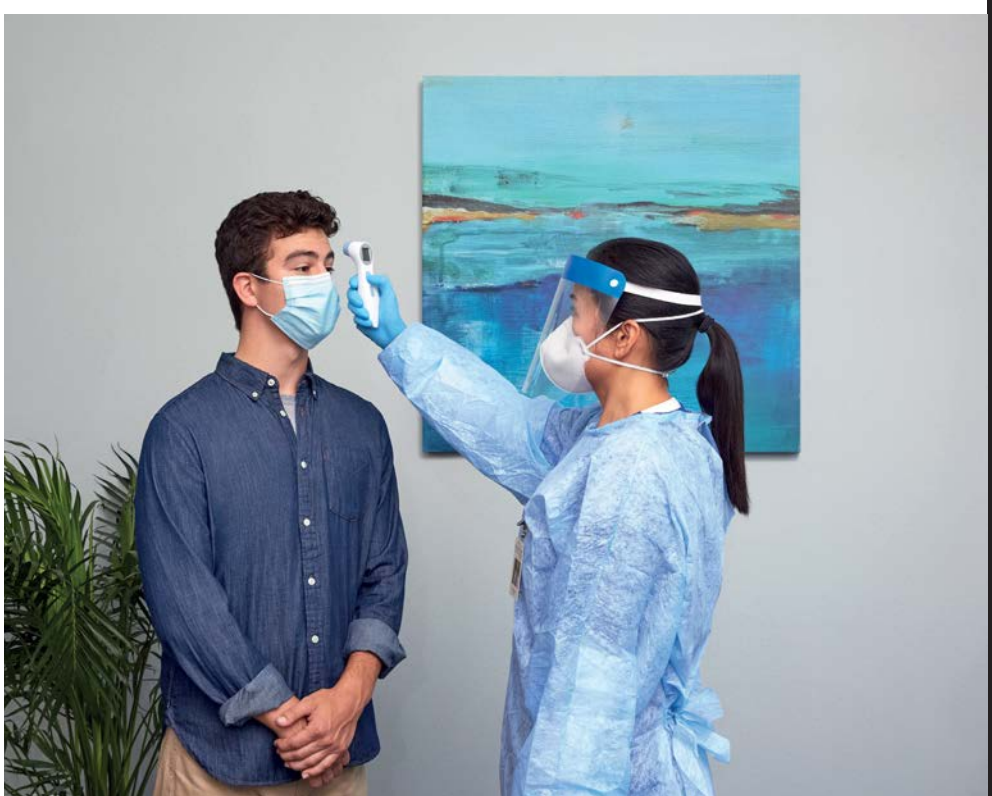
The company also makes provision for two-way communication between franchise owners and the corporate team, hosting quarterly town hall meetings, performance groups, an advisory council, annual conferences for both franchisees and frontline leaders, and personalised training for new franchise owners.

The goal is to clear a path to share best practices across the network. BrightStar Care also holds a very strong C-suite team, which allows Shelly to assist with more one-on-one time with franchisees.

Although there are more than 360 BrightStar Care locations across the country, she meets periodically with several owners at a time to learn about challenges and opportunities in their local markets, which allows her to prioritise resources at the national level.

Overall, Shelly's leadership style is grounded in BrightStar Care's core values – she knows that when her franchisees

"BrightStar Care is also the only national home care franchise in the nation to receive The Joint Commission's Enterprise Champion for Quality award for nine consecutive years"



succeed, their clients thrive and BrightStar Care can continue to successfully operate offering essential care.

RISING ABOVE THE COMPETITION

With home health care on the rise, BrightStar Care's offerings remain unmatched by its competition. BrightStar Care operates with five separate revenue streams allowing franchisees uncapped earning potential.

In addition to providing the highest quantity of skilled and non-skilled in-home care for clients, BrightStar Care provides medical staffing, offering personnel to hospitals, nursing homes, doctors' offices, labs, and anywhere home care staff is needed.

BrightStar Care also holds national contracts with government agencies that rely on its services; in these cases, corporate will tap franchisees to staff these national contracts, allowing for even more earning potential.

These additional services expand BrightStar Care's offerings as opposed to competitors in the space. In addition to compassionate caregivers, each BrightStar Care agency also employs a registered nurse at every location who oversees every case to develop a truly personalised plan of care for each client, setting a higher standard that many competitors do not offer.

INNOVATION TO REMAIN CONSISTENT AND CREATE SOLUTIONS

Shelly recognises that the health care market is constantly changing, with more seniors preferring to age in place, and with those aged 65 or older set to increase to 80 million by 2040, Shelly is focused on keeping BrightStar Care part of the solution to care. Shelly consistently runs towards change and has built BrightStar Care as a nimble company to adapt to the ever-changing health care landscape.

From a home health care standpoint, there is a lack of federal and state policies that enable the home to be a clinical care site for those in need, as BrightStar Care works to change those policies, organisations must update their recruiting policies to keep the workforce at bay to meet demand.

The pandemic intensified some of the biggest issues already facing the health care sector, but at the same time, it showed us how important it is to keep the most vulnerable safe at home. Earlier this year BrightStar Care joined Moving Health Home, a new coalition aimed at changing current federal and state policies that prevent the home from being an accredited clinical care site.



Home health care agencies and care facilities are experiencing challenges with finding caregivers and nurses; as a result, the quality of care could suffer in facilities due to the risk of overcrowding and a higher caregiver to resident ratio. To move in a direction where home health care can be a reality for all, permanent legislation that permits affordable in-home care, as an integral part of patient care, needs passage.

This is why Shelly believes the U.S. health care system is better served having more people stay home. Shelly leans into advocacy and has taken steps to mobilize the industry to ensure home care and assisted living care are part of the definition of health care.

ONGOING COMMITMENT

Shelly's leadership has also been nationally recognised over the years. In 2020 Shelly was named one of the top 25 highest rated CEOs during the COVID crisis by Glassdoor and she was named one of the Top 100 Female Founders by *Inc. Magazine*. Under Shelly's leadership, BrightStar Care has also ranked on *Entrepreneur's* Franchise 500 list for ten consecutive years.

"Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, many BrightStar Care franchise owners continued to thrive and grow, due in part to Shelly's leadership"

Shelly credits the company's successful expansion to steadfast market research, its ability to adapt to change, and a commitment to quality client care and safety above all. While BrightStar Care continues to advocate for the future of care to be in the home, keeping costs down for clients and franchisees while maintaining the highest quality standards through their Joint Commission accreditation has been BrightStar Care's North Star for success.

Accounting for your outgoings

At a Glance
d&t

This multi-award winning team of chartered accountants and expert business advisers has clients in multiple industries, as well as over 100 different franchise networks

For more information visit team-dt.com

Creating a household budget is key when applying for a loan, according to Phil Archer, manager at d&t, who explains how to produce one

When applying for a loan, one of the main things you need to consider is whether you can afford the repayments. This is also one of the things a lender will look at in your application.

One of the more accurate ways you can determine this, and an excellent way to present this in your business plan, is through a household budget.

Unless you're a natural at maths, you're not necessarily going to have been taught what to do when needing to track your finances.

A household budget is a plan that allocates your household income against where your money goes each month. This includes what you spend on rent/mortgage, food and utilities, to name a few. To put it in simple terms, it's the money you use to live off.



"Everything you do pay for needs to be accounted for somewhere"

So how do you create a template or even start to work out your household budget?

This article will give you a good idea about how to create a household budget and act as a guide as to where to start. As you need to include all your outgoings, it can be quite a task to remember where every penny is going.

WHAT SHOULD YOU INCLUDE?

The simple answer is everything your household spends each month.

You don't need a category for every single subscription you pay for. However, everything you do pay for needs to be accounted for somewhere. When it comes to things like food or clothes, which may vary month on month, a realistic average should be given.

Here is an example of a few things to consider:

- Mortgage
- Utilities
- Food
- Clothing
- Eating out (including the odd Costa treat)
- Car fees (hire purchase/leases, tax, insurance, maintenance, etc)
- Petrol
- Savings
- Loans/credit cards
- Subscriptions (Sky, Netflix, Amazon Prime, HelloFresh, etc).

HOW DO I FIND OUT THE INFORMATION I NEED?

Finding out the information you need to create your household budget plan is as simple as running through a bank statement.

You can check your monthly outgoings, or even as frequently as weekly or daily, using online banking.

Go through each transaction and put it in the correct category. You will also need to account for all regular income as well. If done correctly, this will account for all the money that's coming in and out.

WHY IS THIS SO IMPORTANT?

As stated above, producing a household budget is one way of showing loan providers you can afford to pay back the loan. It can also be a useful indicator of how much you can realistically afford.

It's also a good way to get a grasp on your household finances to help make sure they're in a good place before you take the leap into being a business owner.

It will highlight any areas you can make changes to in order to save a bit more, which will help increase your reserves in case you need something to fall back on.

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Changing the landscape of home cleaning

Molly Maid has plans to double its size over the next five years

At a Glance
MOLLY MAID

Established: 1984
Number of franchised outlets: 70
Location of units: Across the UK
Investment range: £18,975 (plus VAT)
Minimum required capital: £8,000
Contact: Aaron Watson, awatson@mollymaid.co.uk
mollymaid.co.uk/franchising

With a 35 year view of the UK's domestic cleaning industry, Molly Maid has seen many changes in the £2.7bn sector but president and CEO Kevin Hipkins believes a combination of the coronavirus and Brexit will see the company's franchise owners double in size in the next five years. In an interview with *Business Woman*, he shares some of his thoughts on why and what this will mean for Molly Maid.

What has happened in the industry post-pandemic and Brexit?
"The pandemic has meant that more families are concerned about the cleanliness and safety of their home, so we had already seen demand for our services increase starting from last June, but adding the impact of thousands of cleaners returning to their native countries in Europe because of Brexit has simply exploded demand for our services. In my 30 years having seen Molly Maid expand in Canada, the US and here in the UK, I have never seen anything like the current environment."

Have customers been asking for a different type of cleaning?
"Customers are much more aware of what they want to be done in their home and who is coming into it to clean. One of our long-standing branded cleaning products, is a specialist environmentally friendly sanitiser that was proven to kill the coronavirus so customers were obviously asking more about this and how it was being used in their home but it's so much more than just the products we use. Customers want to know that the people they trust into their home are safe and healthy and because of our HomeSafe procedures and the fact all of our cleaners are employees, it's something that we can make sure of. I think this is going to stay around for a long time too."

What do you see in the future for Molly Maid franchise owners?
"Prior to the pandemic we had several franchise owners turning over greater than £500,000 per year in sales but a few of these are now on pace to reach £1m because of the increase in demand that I mentioned. And some franchise owners have recently doubled the monthly sales they were generating in January of this year. It is incredibly exciting to see. We are already by far the most well-known brand in the industry and this growth is going see us become even more of a household name."

How are you preparing for this growth?
"We've invested heavily in two key areas – franchise support and our website. Earning the five-star franchisee satisfaction distinction, especially last year, shows how highly franchise owners rate our support and we're expanding this even more to help them grow. A new enquiry management system has been rolled out to help manage the huge increase in sales leads and a new company intranet using a leading platform is planned for September. And, our website which has already gone through several changes in the pandemic has just recently been updated again. You have to constantly improve to help franchise owners take advantage of the business environment."



"You have to constantly improve to help franchise owners take advantage of the business environment"

Take the smart route to business ownership

Franchising offers exciting opportunities if you're seeking a different route to self employment, Jane Masih, managing director of Owen White Solicitors, says

Who could have predicted the seismic impact COVID-19 would have on many people's working lives?

For some, one of the benefits of the lockdowns has been the time to assess the challenges and opportunities of self employment. The aftermath of the pandemic may prompt many to ask the question: if not now, when?

SAFETY NET

Franchising offers the benefits of being your own boss with the safety net of following a business system, know-how and brand provided by the franchisor.

What is a 'franchise'? In this context, a franchise is a licence granted by one party, the franchisor, to another, the franchisee, to use the franchisor's tried and tested business system, methods, experience and brand name. The licence is granted for a defined period of time and is to be operated adopting the franchisor's policies, procedures and rules.



In return, the franchisee is required to pay an initial licence fee, together with the costs of training, the equipment necessary to operate the business, branded marketing materials and advice to launch the business.

Throughout the term of the franchise licence, the franchisee will pay an ongoing fee or royalty in return for support and advice from the franchisor throughout the term of the franchise.

The ongoing fee is usually calculated as a percentage of the franchisee's sales, but for some franchise systems is a fixed fee.

In addition, the franchisee may be required to contribute to a central advertising fund operated by the franchisor and some other services, such as IT.

COMMON QUALITIES

In 30 years of advising franchisees, I've come to the conclusion that successful franchisees, regardless of brand and sector, share some common qualities, including:

- A willingness to carry out comprehensive research into their choice of franchise and ask searching questions of the franchisor before signing the franchise agreement
- Access to the necessary funding to pay the initial fee and possession of sufficient working capital to support the business
- Understanding and accepting that a franchise business requires hard work and considerable effort from the franchisee
- An ability to follow the franchisor's system and take responsibility to ensure their franchise is compliant with the system
- The realisation that the franchise is a business and not a job by another name
- A plan to build capital value for eventual exit from the franchise.

The franchise systems that offer success to a franchisee are to be found across a wide range of business opportunities and also have features in common, including:

- A willingness to invest in their franchise system to ensure it remains profitable for all participants
- Genuine interest in the success of their franchise network by providing continuous help and support
- Maintaining recruitment quality criteria as the network grows to ensure uniform standards of franchisees operating under their brand as far as possible
- Identifying franchisees struggling with their businesses at an early stage and offering realistic solutions while their remains value in the franchisee's business.

Franchising offers exciting opportunities for those seeking a different route to self employment.

However, it's important for a prospective franchisee to do their homework before committing to a legally binding contract and select a franchisor that demonstrates a genuine commitment to the success of the franchisees trading under its franchise brand.

At a Glance
OWEN WHITE SOLICITORS

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jane.masih@owenwhite.com
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What if things go wrong?

Kate Matthews, partner at Boddy Matthews Solicitors, explains how to resolve disputes on a step-by-step basis

Owning a franchise can be a fruitful business relationship, where success for franchisor and franchisee is interdependent. Clear and effective communication is a key factor for that success.

It's therefore all the more important to swiftly address concerns arising during the course of this relationship, however big or small, to avoid potentially long lasting adverse damage to the relationship or, at worst, its ultimate early termination.

A well drafted and ethical franchise agreement, as promoted by the British Franchise Association and the European code of ethics for franchising, will contain a clear alternative dispute resolution (ADR) clause. This clause will set out how to resolve disputes on a step-by-step basis.

How to choose? Which ADR step is best? What should I know?

STEP 1: COMMUNICATE

Lack of communication may often be the root of a problem.

While some disputes cannot be avoided, many can be resolved through clear, open and effective communication.

A cost effective solution may simply be to open a dialogue with your franchisor and together negotiate and work towards a resolution. This is often the first ADR step.

STEP 2: MEDIATE

Mediation is a private, confidential and flexible form of ADR, facilitating the parties in reaching an agreement where possible.

If the parties have agreed to mediate, discussions are carried out on a without prejudice basis. Therefore, it's not binding unless the parties, with the help of a neutral third party mediator, reach an agreement, which is then recorded in writing and signed by all parties.

A mediation can include all aspects of the relationship and is not limited to the legal issues.

A facilitative mediation can with agreement become an evaluative mediation if the parties so choose, where the mediator can provide a solution the parties agree to honour.

The franchise relationship can be preserved and it's cost effective. The bfa operates a mediation scheme.

STEP 3: ARBITRATE

Arbitration is more formal than mediation and an alternative to litigation.

The parties agree to resolve their disputes through arbitration, not court. While it tends to follow a similar structure to court proceedings, depending on the arbitration rules applicable, it's a private process that's confidential and binding.

The parties choose and pay for the process and the arbitrator/s and their expertise. Arbitration is usually less expensive than litigation.

STEP 4: LITIGATE

Litigation/court proceedings is often the last resort.

The parties follow court rules. An independent, impartial judge will make a binding judgement. Court fees apply, but not for the judge or venue.

TOP TIPS

- Avoid communication breakdown
- Seek an informal solution
- Negotiate
- Check the alternative dispute resolution clause and steps
- Check the governing law and jurisdiction
- Seek a solution using alternative dispute resolution



At a Glance
BODDY MATTHEWS SOLICITORS

For further information and advice, contact Kate Matthews at Kate@boddymatthews.com

"It's the most amazing thing I've ever done"

The rock-solid ActionCOACH system has allowed Natalie Jackson to provide critical support to her clients over lockdown, allowing them to thrive

Across the country, Action Coaches have been changing lives everywhere. The national lockdown presented a challenge and Action Coaches have stepped forward to support business owners in their regions.

Natalie Jackson, a business coach in Essex, has been working hard with her clients to weather the storm.

Although a variety of aspects had to change in her own business, including getting rid of her office space and working with clients remotely, Natalie's business has flourished – allowing her to reap the benefits both professionally and personally.

With the arrival of her first grandson, she has been able to spend more time with her family, while her coaching firm has grown since the beginning of the first lockdown.

And after achieving a personal best month of client income, it's due to clients such as Capital Stone Renovation that have helped make that happen.

ESTABLISHING THE FOUNDATIONS

Stonemasonry comes as second nature to Mark Johnson.

He had become highly skilled in the profession, working in a business with a partner, when an unfortunate series of events sent the company into liquidation.

Determined to continue with what he knew best, Mark started Capital Stone Renovation in 2012. Despite having the bulk of his loyal team still intact, he admits the first year of business was very difficult.

Mark says: "I had expertise within the industry, but it was the business knowledge I lacked somewhat.

"There were elements I knew, but that was the beauty of being in a partnership – we had complementary skills that helped to grow the business.

"When it came to going it alone, I noticed gaps in my learning that needed to be filled. My work with ActionCOACH has allowed me to learn every single day - and I couldn't be more grateful."

FROM THE GROUND UP

It was one of Mark's associates who introduced him to the term 'business coach'. They were having coaching sessions themselves and recommended the service in confidence.

Up to this point, Mark's work was reactionary and he knew he needed to be proactive to secure projects. Wasting no time, he contacted his local Action Coach, Kent Rhodes, and arranged a meeting with him to discuss what he could do for Capital Stone Renovation.

Immediately, Kent recognised Mark was floundering and identified areas that required improvement – some of which



Natalie Jackson coaching business owners to success

At a Glance ACTIONCOACH

Established:
1993 in Australia. 2001 in UK

Number of franchised outlets:
200-plus in the UK

Location of units:
UK-wide

Investment range:
£69,000

Minimum required capital:
£20,000

Contact:
If you want to offer businesses in your community the building blocks for success like Natalie and you're the kind of person who:

A. Loves learning and developing yourself;

B. Has enjoyed success in your career or sport; and

C. Is willing to invest if you see substantial rewards can be made…

Then find out more by watching the overview video at **actioncoach.co.uk/overview**



Natalie Jackson with Mark Johnson at the ActionCOACH annual BizX event

could be a quick fix and others needing a little more planning over time.

Mark was impressed with the business growth system, strategies and tactics Kent had access to and agreed to weekly one-to-one coaching sessions, starting in 2013.

For five years, Mark worked closely with Kent, right up until his passing in 2018. The reins were passed into the trusty grasp of Kent's coaching partner, Natalie Jackson, as she took over the business coaching firm.

PUTTING UP THE BUILDING BLOCKS

"One of the first things Natalie helped me to work on was the structure of the team," Mark says.

"Natalie supported me in overcoming our team challenges and very quickly tasks were getting completed much more efficiently.

"Natalie also got involved on a much deeper level. She helped alter the mindset of one individual who had the potential, but simply couldn't see it.

"With her calm – albeit very frank – attitude, she placed confidence in the team member to step up and unlock his true potential. He has since been promoted to operations director and has become pivotal in the success of the business, something I'm extremely proud of."

Capital Stone Renovation had operated with a two-pronged business approach since its inception – one side being its contracting division and the other a manufacturing service.

The latter, however, was very inconsistent with its profits, with some months seeing a loss. Just like the COVID-19 pandemic did to many businesses, it forced Mark to consolidate his records and make a tough decision.

"It's with Natalie's belief that several decisions have been pivotal for the business," he says.

"In 2020, I secured the largest ever single contract we've ever been given. We had completed a few small projects for Lincoln's Inn, a prestigious private estate in central London, home to a thriving society of barristers, and they recognised our potential in completing a much larger renovation.

"This particular contract was for £3.2m, which boosted my confidence massively. In this industry, growth only happens with an impressive portfolio, so securing them as an ongoing client was a great moment."

THE GRAND REVEAL

Despite lockdowns and various setbacks, Capital Stone Renovation is now entering its next phase. And the results speak for themselves – the profit alone was up by 16,000 per cent in one quarter of 2020. With that, the team were rewarded with good bonuses and pay rises. On the back of a milestone year, Mark is ready for the future.

"Profit alone was up by 16,000 per cent in one quarter of 2020"

"The next goal is about initiating an entirely fresh marketing campaign," he says.

"Our online presence has already received an overhaul, giving me the chance to attract bigger and better clients.

"Our new CRM system will help identify the quality of any leads and push us ever closer to upgrading our clientele. This has already paid off, as we've secured an impressive contract with Marriott Hotels.

"I'm extremely grateful for the support ActionCOACH has given me. Natalie has done an excellent job of continuing Kent's legacy and I couldn't have asked for a better person to be my business coach.

"I'm held accountable for my actions but, more importantly, I know I've got the support of Natalie whenever I need it. One thing's for sure, I wish I had an Action Coach when I was 25 and starting my own business."

Thanks to clients such as Mark, Natalie is thrilled with the success of her ActionCOACH business.

"It's the most amazing thing I've ever done," she says.

"I've recognised my one clear goal in life: to build a business that can allow me more free time. And helping others do the same is just the icing on the cake!"

From the kitchen table to a global education empire

Helen Doron Educational Group is revolutionising education, leading the change, and making a difference internationally



CEO and Founder Helen Doron

In 1985, living in a small, pastoral mountaintop village, Helen signed up her four-year-old daughter, Ella, her eldest of three children, for violin lessons in the nearby town. Those lessons were unique, teaching children how to play according to the Suzuki Method: first learn how to play by hearing recordings of the music being learnt at home every day in the background and getting positive reinforcement by the teacher in the class. Only when older would they learn how to read notes. This was just as children learn to speak their mother tongue by first understanding and speaking, and only then reading and writing.

As a linguistic scientist and university teacher of English, Helen thought that it was amazing to have a system of teaching music that imitates the way children learn their mother tongue. However, she realised that this is the way languages should also be taught: between lessons with repeated home background hearing of the language being taught, and teachers trained for positive reinforcement so the child feels successful.

So, a new method was born for children to be taught English easily and naturally, focusing on repeated background hearing and positive reinforcement of their efforts to speak – teaching a foreign language in the same way children learn their mother tongue at home, repeated background hearing, using songs, rhymes, movement, dancing, jumping, playing and many more activities kids like to do.

The young linguist started to record songs, rhymes, and short stories from her rural home, using her unique skills to teach English to children from nearby communities. The rumour about "the English teacher who teaches kids in a way you have never seen before" quickly spread, and Helen started to receive phone calls from different areas all over the country, asking her to come and teach their kids in the same way. "That was the moment I understood I had created a business", Helen reflects.

EDUCATING THE WORLD, ONE CHILD AT A TIME

As a result of the high demand, Helen started to train English teachers to teach using the method she developed: fun, joyful, natural, and full of positive reinforcement. As fast as the word spread locally, the news of the innovative, effective methodology arrived abroad as well.

At a Glance
HELEN DORON EDUCATIONAL GROUP

Established: 1985

Number of franchised outlets: over 1,200

Location of units: Albania, Austria, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, China, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Ecuador, Estonia, France, Germany, Hungary, Israel, Italy, Lichtenstein, Lithuania, Macedonia, Mexico, Montenegro, Panama, Peru, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Russia, San Marino, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, South Korea, Spain, Switzerland, Thailand, Turkey, Ukraine, Vietnam

Investment range: €200,000 - €300,000

Minimum required capital: €150,000

Contact: info@helendorongroup.com

helendorongroup.com



Master Franchise Conference in Dubrovnik, Croatia

In 1998, Helen sold her first Helen Doron English franchise to a franchisee in Austria, quickly followed by Germany, Poland, Italy, and more and more countries. As of today, passionate educators from around the world have joined the franchise family, and there are more than 1,200 Helen Doron learning centres and Kindergartens in 38 countries around the world, with a total of over three million students throughout the years.

Starting with local kids using homemade cassette tapes in peripheral areas, to a global education leader with more than 100 master franchisees and over 5,000 active certified Helen Doron teachers at present around the world, the company's success skyrocketed with currently 170,000 active students.

Known as Helen Doron English, the company continued its growth, adding a unique mathematics franchise, and Helen Doron International for kindergartens and primary under the Helen Doron Educational Group (HDEG) umbrella.

HDEG was selected Best Children's & Education Franchise in the world in 2019, and as a Global Mentor in 2020 and 2021, by the prestigious *Global Franchise* magazine.

CELEBRATING FRANCHISEE SUCCESS

Dozens of master franchisees are celebrating 20-plus, 15, and 10-year anniversaries with the company. There are a variety of promotional opportunities from within to maintain people already in the network by providing them with multiple growth prospects:

- Students who become teachers
- Parents who become franchisees
- Teachers who become franchisees
- LCFs who become MFs.

Also, there are many families who joined and stayed in the network – the group even has multigenerational teachers.

In a commitment to diversity and inclusion, the global children's educational franchise notably empowers women and enables them to succeed in business. A glance at the roster of the company shows that 75 per cent of the top management of the company are female, 85 per cent of the 100 master franchisees and 85 per cent of the 1,200 Learning Centre franchises are owned and run by women. Many of the company's master franchisees have won prestigious awards, as well.

"In a commitment to diversity and inclusion, the global children's educational franchise notably empowers women and enables them to succeed in business"

PROVIDING UNPARALLELED SUPPORT

HDEG's professional team provides support from start-up assistance through marketing, as well as sales, organisational, administrative, and pedagogic training. The business model is based on ongoing communication for each franchise to run smoothly and successfully.

Each master franchisee is assigned a dedicated account manager and receives frequent keep-in-touch calls and field visits to ensure that the opportunity is being maximised. Each and every franchisee in the network also receives ongoing business training, as well as comprehensive guidelines and manuals to help business owners in their initial steps.

Furthermore, all HDEG franchisees are encouraged to support one another through dedicated marketing and business support groups on Facebook, and annual franchise conferences bring together the entire network for training, education, celebration and reflection.

A BUSINESS BUILT ON ETHICS AND VALUES

Values such as caring, tolerance and compassion for others and all living creatures, together with familiarising children with the concept of taking responsibility for the environment, are at the forefront of all pedagogic materials and methods.

This brings tremendous value to Helen Doron students, by focusing not only on lessons but the additional benefit of nourishing the child's natural curiosity and empathy. These ethics are absorbed and engrained in childhood and naturally become their blueprint for life.

It is, therefore, no surprise that so many Helen Doron students grow up to become Helen Doron teachers themselves, passing on the lifelong values and skills that they learnt as children in the global network.

HDEG's yearly global campaigns emphasise different aspects of these values, empowering even the youngest students to make a real difference in their communities.

For example, the Young Heroes global campaigns are run yearly and manifest the principle of "More than English. Values for Life", each one with a different focus. The campaign is led by headquarters' guidelines and tools, including themed lessons, an original song and a marketing package, localised by the franchisees to best suit their country's and students' cultures.

The prizes are contributed to non-profit organizations to promote the campaign cause and company values. This helps franchisees in promoting their business as high-standard education providers.



International Learning Centre Conference in Lake Maggiore, Italy

Southern Fried Chicken is a recipe for success

The chicken brand is one of the top 100 franchises in the UK



Southern Fried Chicken is proud to be one of the top 100 franchises in the UK. With a history stretching back 50 years we have spread across the globe from our base in Berkshire to stores as far apart as Malta and Mongolia, Clacton and Congo; Southern Fried Chicken has the recipe for success.

It is not just our great-tasting chicken, world-class equipment, expert training, and our deep understanding of the QSR market built on five decades of experience; it is also our carefully selected partners. We look for people who share our values and commitment to delivering customer satisfaction every time, time after time.

Experience in catering is not essential. Our expert trainers will take you through a thorough training program that will provide all the skills and knowledge for running a QSR operation, from the basics of creating our signature Southern Fried Chicken to the intricacies of managing a profitable business. All we ask for is hard work, enthusiasm, and the ability to invest in your future.

GROWTH DESPITE ADVERSITY

Despite, or possibly because of, all the difficulties around COVID, Southern Fried Chicken has continued to grow. Recent store openings include two in Russia, one in Paris, and finally closer to home in Clacton-On-Sea.

The lovely husband and wife franchise team at Clacton-On-Sea first met us back in January 2021 and just a few months later work started on their high street location. Our project team got to work, laying out the kitchen and creating visuals for the shopfitter to work to, before providing a fully costed plan for the franchisee to work with to open their first store. With a deal for three stores signed, rapid progress was made for the opening of the first location.

In June we delivered and installed the specialised preparation, cooking, and hot holding equipment specifically designed and manufactured for this type of business by our partner company Vizu. Manufactured in our factory in Reading, the equipment has been developed, at every step, with Southern Fried Chicken in mind and has proven to be reliable and long-lasting in Southern Fried Chicken restaurants around the globe.



Following several weeks of onsite training from our operations manager the store opened for business in July and after some settling in the grand opening took place on August 27.

In a conversation on the day with our chairman Andrew Withers, the franchisee told us how happy he was with his decision to go into partnership with Southern Fried Chicken. He also complimented the team on the great support they had received and spoke about how positively Southern Fried Chicken had been received by his customers, with over 97 per cent positive reviews online. The couple is working on opening several more stores in the area.

If you have the drive, commitment, and energy to own and operate a chain of quick-service restaurant franchises, we would love to speak to you about Southern Fried Chicken and creating a profitable partnership for the future.

At a Glance SOUTHERN FRIED CHICKEN

Contact:
franchisingexpert@fast-food-systems.co.uk
Telephone: 01189 44 11 00
southernfriedchicken.com

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"I have someone to share the load with"

FASTSIGNS Crawley co-owner Melanie Martinez says she values the partnerships she's forged within her own centre and the wider network as a woman in business



If you're thinking about starting your own business, but don't feel you have the confidence to run one, is there someone you could go into partnership with?



For some women, this is the most empowering route – especially when they embark on franchise ownership.

RIGHT DECISION

Melanie Martinez, who co-owns FASTSIGNS Crawley, knew she'd made the right decision when she, her husband and a close family friend and colleague took ownership of the franchise.

Melanie explains: "Having someone to share the load with definitely makes it easier.

"Running a business can be time consuming, so having others beside me ensures I can meet my family's needs, while still fulfilling any business commitments.

"This sometimes means we work strange hours, but having a partner you can rely on gives you flexibility around the business."

In December 2018, Melanie and her husband, José, joined forces with friend and colleague Alan White to buy FASTSIGNS Crawley.

"We'd been working together in the centre for over two decades," Melanie says.

"I focused on sales and customer service, as I love meeting people. José focused on production and installation and Alan on graphic design and sales.

"We worked well together, playing to each other's strengths. So when the opportunity came up, we decided to buy the franchise."

GET THE TIMING RIGHT

For Melanie, timing was crucial. As a mum of two girls, she and José were adamant their jobs needed to work around being there for them.

"Having been there from day one, I'd hoped to buy FASTSIGNS Crawley when the original owner retired in 2008," Melanie says. "But our girls were too young for us to devote time to them and a new business.

"Now they're older, they understand what José and I are building and the impact on their future.

Having a non-family partner involved means Alan keeps the business running when we take a family break and vice versa."

As well as having the support of her business partners, Melanie finds the support of the franchise network hugely beneficial.

"A recent example of this was the pandemic," she says.

"At FASTSIGNS, we're a family of business owners, which really shone through in 2020.

"FASTSIGNS UK managing director, John Davies and his support team at head office were incredibly proactive on our behalf, sourcing relevant information so we could open our FASTSIGNS centres safely at the right time.

"We have a franchisees' WhatsApp group, so every day we'd check how each other was doing. I was so grateful to have this support; knowing we were navigating it together was reassuring for me."

SENSE OF PURPOSE

Starting a business at any stage can be both exciting and daunting, but Melanie says she wouldn't change a thing: "Other than starting earlier.

"FASTSIGNS operates in an exciting arena and we were right there helping other businesses and keeping people safe during the pandemic.

"This, as well as being part of a strong network and building something for our own future, gives me a sense of purpose every day.

"It's different being the owner - harder at times, but so much more rewarding."

At a Glance FASTSIGNS INTERNATIONAL INC

Established: 1985

Number of franchised outlets: 750-plus. 25 in the UK

Location of units: International

Investment range: £125,000-plus

Minimum required capital: £36,000

Contact: 01785 253140

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Flying high on a post-lockdown resurgence

Little Kickers has gone from strength to strength, even during challenging times

Established in London in 2002, Little Kickers was a 'first mover' in the international childrens' activity market. The multiple award-winning brand has enjoyed countless highs over the intervening years, whilst weathering some challenging economic times, including the financial crisis of 2008/9 and the global pandemic.

Yet, despite a debilitating global lockdown, the business has managed to hold its nerve, show its inner resilience, and further underline the importance of fostering a deep-seated appreciation for healthier active lifestyles among inquisitive pre-schoolers – at a time when child obesity and poor diets are on the rise and participation in outdoor sports activities declines.

There's plenty of research to suggest that children who are given a fun introduction to sport early in their lives are more likely to continue to participate in sport as they get older.

"Fortunately, our business model is such that our franchisees can just temporarily 'switch off' their classes from one day to the next with minimal effort, and customers remain registered on our systems so can automatically return to classes as and when they're able to reopen," comments Alan Kennedy, Little Kickers CEO.

"We signed up 12 new franchisees during 2020, many of whom were only able to start running classes at the end of March, when the UK finally reopened for business – it's testament to the resilience and strength of the Little Kickers brand and our team that people continued to take on franchises during such arduous times."



At a Glance
LITTLE KICKERS

Established: 2002
Number of franchised outlets: 350
Location of units: 33 Countries
Investment range: £15,000+
Minimum required capital: £20,000
Contact: john@littlekickers.co.uk
littlekickers.co.uk

"Much of Little Kickers' success stems from the fact that the business is constantly evolving and refuses to stand still and tread water"

FLOURISHING DESPITE LOCKDOWNS

Liz Oxley took on a little kickers franchise during the height of the pandemic, and has seen it flourish since classes started again in March.

"Having previously been a headteacher, Little Kickers was a completely new adventure for me, giving me the work/life balance I craved. I purchased my business back in March 2020 and eventually ran my first class in September 2020," explains Oxley.

"Despite various lockdowns, it has grown from strength to strength by following the simple yet effective Little Kickers business model. A year later I have 130-plus children registered with a healthy waitlist and a monthly income that would surprise you!"

The very fact that the business has grown 40 per cent since classes re-opened is yet further testament to the strength and far-reaching appeal of the brand and business model. In spite of lockdown restrictions still being

prevalent across various key markets in which Little Kickers operates, 2021 remains on track to be a record-breaking year for the business.

"Our post-lockdown resurgence," adds Christine Kelly, Little Kicker founder, "has been fuelled in no small part by the fact that growing numbers of parents appear determined to find fun-themed ways to get their kids both active and interacting with other children following months of lockdown inertia."

EVOLVING WITH THE TIMES

Much of Little Kickers' success stems from the fact that the business is constantly evolving and refuses to stand still and tread water. Even during lockdown, the franchisor team were hard at work producing free online content so that kids around the world could stay active during difficult times, whilst bedding down the team's most ambitious initiative yet to make Little Kickers, 'the most eco-friendly kids sports company in the world!'

"We recognise that the 18-month to seven-year old children who attend our classes are the very same cohort who will be most affected by climate change, which gives us a duty of care to protect their interests as best we can," continues Christine.

"Our first pivotal step was to switch the fabric in the 120,000-plus football strips we have produced each year from polyester to sea harvested ocean plastic. We also opened a UK fulfilment centre which significantly reduces our environmental impact because we can now send kits and other merchandise direct to our customers as opposed to via our franchisees in regional centres.

"We'll also stop dispatching our kits out in lazy, single-use plastic bags, opting instead for planet-friendly bio-degradable bags. We're also collaborating with Sal's Shoes to enable our Little Kickers to send their outgrown/finished with uniforms to young footballers in developing countries, to continue their environmentally-friendly journey."

The pandemic enabled Little Kickers to move to completely paperless operation whilst remaining on track to convert its remaining merchandise (hoodies, backpacks, water bottles, balls, and socks) to the most eco-friendly available alternatives by the end of 2022.

"A Little Kickers franchise provides a tried, tested and trusted model which has enabled hundreds of individuals to set up and run their own successful businesses"

With a 19-year track record of success, and an enviable global network of over 350 franchisees in over 30 countries, a Little Kickers franchise provides a tried, tested and trusted model which has enabled hundreds of individuals to set up and run their own successful businesses.

And when comparing September 2019 to post-pandemic Sep 2021 (forecast), Little Kickers' overall UK franchisee revenue is up 40%.

According to seasoned Little Kickers franchisee, Dave Homer, "We took on a Little Kickers franchise in the West Midlands in 2010. As a brand-new territory, we began our adventure with zero children.

"Yet with the on-tap help, support and guidance of the Little Kickers team, we today have over 1,300 registered children across three territories. Thanks to the Little Kickers business model, we have been able to go from a start-up to a turnover of in excess of £500,000 p.a. within 11 years!"

WHAT DOES LITTLE KICKERS PROVIDE TO FRANCHISEES?

A Little Kickers franchise is effectively a "business in a box" that allows franchisees to manage virtually all aspects of their business via web-enabled systems.

- Business administration system – a task-driven system that enables franchisees to manage the administrative processes (enrolments, waitlists, and payments) quickly and easily through a secure online platform
- Customer facing website – all classes are listed real-time on country-specific websites where customers can get logistical information about classes, enrol and make payments
- Communications hub – the business system is tightly coupled with Little Kickers' email application which not only gives franchisees access to email but also to online forums, shared videos, and training materials
- Marketing system – the web-to-print marketing system was specifically created for Little Kickers and enables franchisees to create professional, customised print materials in minutes. The system is updated regularly with new templates so the franchisees' marketing campaigns can continue to evolve
- Dedicated head office support manager – Little Kickers' experienced head office team are on hand to help franchisees at each and every stage of the business, working in tandem to help them achieve their longer-term growth goals and aspirations.





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Dani Smith: **enquires@WOIFranchise.com**

Start your own low-cost, high-reward mobile business



Chris Goodchild, founder of The Best Magic Mirrors, shares how the brand is set to take the franchise world by storm

I originally launched our photobooth business in 2015, prior to launching our British Franchise Association-accredited franchise in 2020.

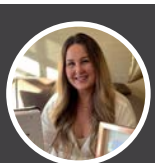
What we have developed is a low-cost, high-reward mobile business that delivers a great lifestyle and is built on strong family and lifestyle values; we'll show you how easy it is to achieve high earnings while loving what you do every day and being fully supported at all times.

Our combination of low management fees, taking a partnership approach with our franchisees, and our business coaching, account management, technical support and creative design services ensure we stand out in the wedding and events franchise market.

The industry is taking notice and we're being recognised by our peers, too. We recently won an important industry award and were named the 'Best Photobooth Experience in the UK' in the Global Wedding Awards 2021, run by *LUXLife* magazine.



LAUREN HILL, THE BEST MAGIC MIRRORS (WINDSOR)



Have you ever felt as though something has been missing from your career?

I was working in an industry which I enjoyed but I wasn't seeing the results I wanted; I just wasn't fulfilled and craved greater success. Then I was introduced to The Best Magic Mirrors.

This amazing company has given me the opportunity to live the lifestyle I want, making my own decisions, and having control of my own diary, whilst also providing the most incredible guidance and support to help make the business successful.

I am so proud to be a part of The Best Magic Mirrors family and love every day that I now get to wake up and create Magical Memories for my amazing clients.

THE DEMAND KEEPS GROWING

2021 and 2022 are set to be the busiest years for the wedding market, due to the high demand for dates because of postponements due to the pandemic. In addition, there's the £31.2bn events sector that also needs servicing.

With the addition of our virtual photobooths and memory mosaics, we are now welcoming clients from all over the world, which our franchisees will also benefit from. Born from the COVID-19 pandemic, this has proved to be a game-changer for the brand as we launch new and exciting virtual tech to service the demand and this hybrid event sector continues to grow.

At a Glance THE BEST MAGIC MIRRORS

Year established: Trading since 2015, franchising since 2020

Location of units: Windsor and Buckinghamshire, UK

Investment range: £18,000 - £21,000 + vat

Minimum required capital: £18,000 + vat

Contact: Chris Goodchild - 07966 053 439

thebestmagicmirrors.co.uk



THE PERFECT FRANCHISEE

Fundamentally, we're looking to partner with individuals who share our vision and passion for offering the best customer experience, while enjoying high earnings and lifestyle benefits.

While experience in the wedding and events industry is not mandatory, we're looking for operators with good business acumen and an ability to see the potential in commercial opportunities across online and face-to-face experiences.

Our franchise model is geared to return initial investments quickly and with our guidance and business development advice, there are many ways to showcase our products, including our newly launched virtual photobooths.

And to give you a head start, commission fees are waived for the first three months to help new franchisees become properly established.

Build a seven-figure business in a truly worthwhile industry

Bluebird Care is keeping the elderly safe at home



You can combine your passion for business and drive for success with Bluebird Care. With an average franchise partner achieving a £1m turnover within a three-year period, this is an opportunity worth investigating.

"A Bluebird Care franchise provides you with a low risk and proven business model"

A Bluebird Care franchise provides you with a low risk and proven business model, significant earning potential and a feeling of worth as you help the vulnerable in your community.

You'll also benefit from award winning support from experienced teams and a pool of wisdom from more than 220 existing Bluebird Care business owners.

THE MARKET

Bluebird Care provides care at home to the vulnerable and elderly throughout the UK.

Its care teams make home visits to customers and provide a range of domiciliary care services. They keep the elderly safe at home. And this is exactly where the elderly want to stay.

The recent pandemic has shown that the most vulnerable are safer at home, where infection control is easier to manage. Bluebird Care has seen an increase in demand for care at home services as a result.

This, coupled with the fact that the ageing population is increasing, means interest in the home care sector has never been greater. So there's never been a better time to start a home care franchise.

THE OPPORTUNITY

Bluebird Care's more mature businesses enjoy up to a £6m turnover, whereas a start-up tends to begin at £250,000. Many business owners achieve such great success that they buy multiple territories to further maximise the opportunity.

Jane Perry, franchise owner of Bluebird Care Edinburgh, Glasgow South and Ayrshire, says: "My husband John and I purchased Bluebird Care Edinburgh in 2007. I knew nothing about the care sector, so it was a steep learning curve.

"We purchased Bluebird Care Glasgow South in 2012 and Ayrshire in 2021. Now we have around 150 staff and more than 200 customers ranging in age from 31 to over 100."

At a Glance BLUEBIRD CARE

Established:
2004

Number of franchised outlets:
over 200

Location of units:
UK-wide, including Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland

Investment range:
total investment approximately £115,000

Minimum required capital:
franchise package is £37,500

Contact:
Polly Rogers
07912 771149
pollyrogers@bluebirdcare.co.uk

A BLUEBIRD CARE FRANCHISE PROVIDES

- A comprehensive business package that's built to maximise success
- Franchise owner training and a dedicated mentor
- Full access to a proven business model, operational procedures and policies
- Comprehensive demographic data
- Support from experienced regional managers in marketing, quality and business development
- IT hardware and software
- Funded rostering and care planning software for the first year
- Staff uniforms.

A DEDICATED ON-BOARDING MANAGER PROVIDES

- Entire business set-up support
- Support and guidance with finding premises
- Recruitment support
- Creating and supplying a full marketing pack
- Microsite set-up and all other business system access
- Full support with your regulatory registration
- Tailored business support for 18 months.

To invest in Bluebird Care, the fee is £37,500 (plus VAT) plus working capital. This equates to approximately £115,000.

High street banks typically lend up to 70 per cent of the total investment, which means you would need a minimum of £35,000 liquid capital to get started.


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Growth market

What's On In is the website for people wishing to find out what's on in their town, city and holiday location



Of the What's On In franchise, managing director Dani Smith says: "It was simple, we know the UK online advertising market is worth £189m and we saw the market was wide open.
"We also wanted to make our franchise available to anyone and that's why we priced it at £798. The return on investment is amazing. We also offer an interest free finance package and payment over three-six months."

USER FRIENDLY

She goes on to explain: "I needed to make sure our web platform was user friendly for the advertisers and that we could offer any business a free sales web page. 82 per cent of UK businesses have no website, so we needed to address this with a free web page for every advertiser."

THREE FRANCHISE PACKAGES

What's On In offers three types of franchise:

- Single franchise postcode
- Master franchise, UK or globally
- Corporate franchise, Europe and globally.

FLEXIBLE OPPORTUNITY

A typical What's On In website not only offers a franchisee an excellent income from advertisers, but also allows them to place affiliates on their website, which pay franchisees up to 70 per cent commission. There are three income streams:

- Income for main businesses
- Income from tradesmen
- Income from affiliates.

A franchisee needs no technical knowledge, as all loading of adverts is carried out by the What's On In support team. Bookings are made online via the website and payment is made within three minutes direct to the franchisee's PayPal account, which means excellent cash flow.

OPTIONAL 50-50 SYSTEM

What's On In has an optional 50-50 system, whereby you have a commission-only sales person building your postcode area for you, offering complete freedom, and is perfect for someone with an existing business or job who wants a 'hands-off franchise'. This option obviously requires less commitment from the franchisee. Potential monthly incomes are £5,000-£20,000, depending on commitment. Franchisees receive a fully exclusive postcode area. The exclusive online franchise members' area provides in-depth and comprehensive franchisee support and access to tips, advice and training tools.

LOW COST ENTRY

Dani believes What's On In offers the perfect low cost entry into the profitable franchise arena. New franchise opportunities are continually added throughout the UK. With its self service platform, high visibility, full tracking and low advertising cost, the What's On In franchise offers the ultimate in online advertising.

At a Glance
WHAT'S ON IN

Minimum required capital:
franchise costs £798. Interest free loan available

Contact: Dani Smith
enquiries@woifranchise.com
07860 833822

woifranchise.com



Entrepreneurs to descend on London

The International Franchise Show is a staple of the industry's event schedule

Each year thousands of budding entrepreneurs descend upon ExCeL London in hope of finding their dream franchise. Coined as 'the gateway to Europe', London welcomes millions of visitors from across the globe to major events each and every year.

A staple event in the franchise industry's calendar is Britain's biggest International Franchise Show, hosting more than 250 brands across 25-plus industry sectors. But what makes the show such a success?

Returning on October 1 and 2, 2021, this years' edition has never been more relevant in contributing to the British government's 'Build Back Better' coronavirus recovery campaign. As countries across the globe replenish jobs and work to rebuild economies, the International Franchise Show plays an important part in connecting entrepreneurs with businesses looking to expand their franchise operations.

DISCOVER YOUR DREAM OPPORTUNITY

Each year visitors come with an ambition to find out more about franchising, learn about the tried and tested model, or find their dream franchise opportunity. A comprehensive seminar schedule offers a diverse range of topics, covering the burning questions visitors want to know.

Our workshops and panels provide a deeper insight into the benefits and hurdles existing franchisees have already undertaken, and topical branded theatres help you hone in on the talks you want to hear.

This year we've added: a dedicated keynote theatre housing big names in the franchising world, a new Business Show zone, and a bespoke selection of digital offerings to provide you with knowledge and skills before the main event.

As we all strive to build back economies post-pandemic, the International Franchise Show is pivotal in getting people back into business. 'Becoming your own boss' is a desire that resonates with many of us, and a lot of people will have spent lockdown reflecting on their future careers, some of which may have been made redundant due to lockdown pressures and contemplating a new career path.



"Our workshops and panels provide a deeper insight into the benefits and hurdles existing franchisees have already undertaken"

Over the years the International Franchise Show has helped thousands of visitors make their move into new businesses within the dynamic fast-paced world of franchising. Face-to-face networking offers an unrivalled opportunity to seek out and learn more about prospective brands, and being amongst the UK's biggest selection of franchise brands under one-roof gives you the power to scour the halls for your perfect business venture.

A conveniently marked floorplan shows you exactly where to discover new franchise brands, as well as international pavilions such as the popular US franchise zone.

At a Glance
International Franchise Show
When: October 1 - 2, 2021
Where: ExCeL, London
Contact: mfvexpo.showinfo@comexposium.com (general enquiries), simon.chicken@comexposium.com (sponsorship and exhibitors)
thefranchiseshow.co.uk

Time to thrive

The home care services provided by Visiting Angels have never been more essential

There are few franchise opportunities that have grown substantially during lockdown.

Care franchising does offer a significant opportunity for the right franchisee. Since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, the focus on the efforts of those in the care sector has never been clearer.

Established in the US in 1998, Visiting Angels is a global care giant with community-based values. Today, the franchise is one of the largest care franchises in the world and proudly supports 600-plus franchisees in five countries. The business was launched in the UK in 2017 and has experienced phenomenal growth.

FIRST-HAND KNOWLEDGE

UK managing director Dan Archer explains: "Before launching the franchise, I wanted to launch and run a pilot business in the UK. I felt it was important that I was able to support our franchisees from a position of first-hand knowledge. My business in Sheffield is now turning over more than £1.7 million per year and supports 100 families, employing over 100 staff."

The solid foundations of the pilot business have also led to the expansion of a network of franchisees.

"We have nine offices across the UK and we had a socially distanced training course in May 2020, with eight new franchisees attending. I'm delighted that our model is one of the franchise success stories of the past 12 months."

ADDITIONAL SUPPORT

Many business opportunities claim to be recession proof. The reality of the past six months has been that some businesses making that claim have been forced to close their doors. Home care franchising, however, has never been more essential and thanks to initiatives such as the clap for carers movement, the wider population is now recognising this.

For many businesses, the struggle has been to survive, but Dan says for his business it has been a time to thrive: "We have faced a huge challenge as a nation and the health service and society at large has looked to social care companies like ours for additional support.

"Our operational business has never been busier and our franchise network has doubled in the last six months. As lockdown eases, we're seeing yet more demand for our service and the terrible situation with COVID-19 in residential care homes means more families than ever are choosing care at home as a safer alternative."

TREATING CARERS BETTER

Dan feels that treating carers better has been at the heart of Visiting Angels' success: "Our business was built on valuing carers more than other care companies. What has happened with the COVID-19 outbreak is that society has also started to realise that carers need to be valued better."

Visiting Angels calls this approach being carer centric. The focus is clear from the mission statement of the UK business to 'Become the UK Care Sector's Employer of Choice by 2022.'

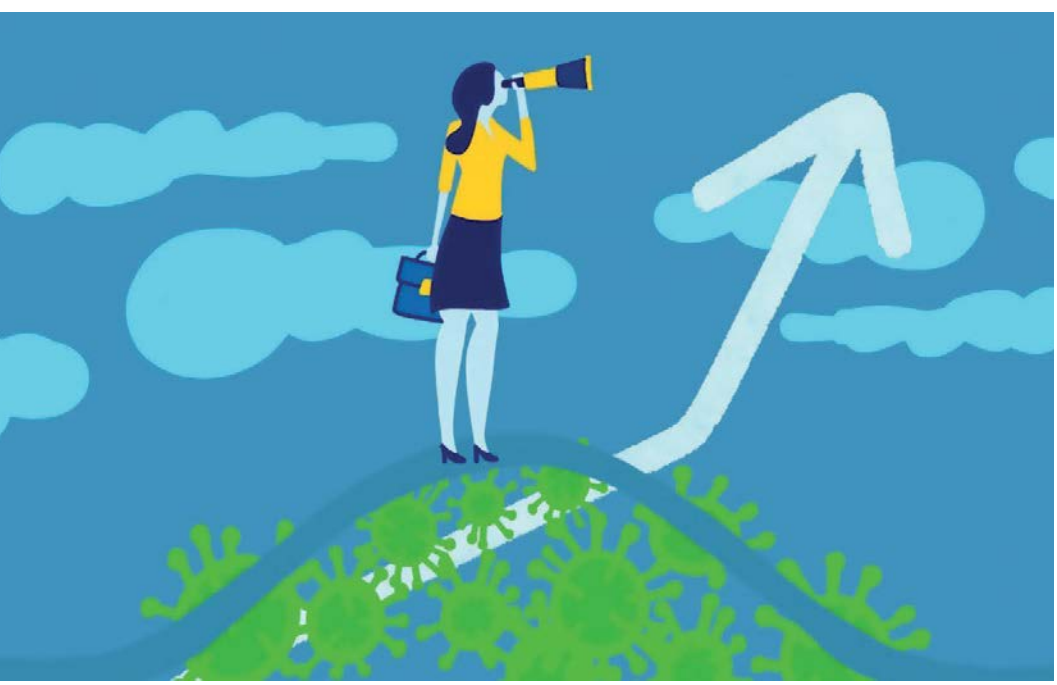
"I want our caregivers to want to work in care and choose to work for a Visiting Angels office," Dan says.

Many care workers are underpaid and poorly rewarded, but the approach taken by Visiting Angels is different.

Dan says: "We want to ensure our caregivers are among the best paid in the care sector. We pay more, we incentivise training and development, we reward loyalty and we offer excellent benefits."

By focusing on its caregivers, Visiting Angels has found it's able to ensure the company has a ready supply of them.

"We have found that the culture of caregiver support we have built in our offices has protected us from high staff turnover, meaning that the clients who we support get the same caregiver each week," Dan says. "Happy caregivers are best placed to ensure that clients are delighted."



At a Glance
VISITING ANGELS

Established: 1998 US. 2017 UK

Number of franchised outlets: worldwide 700. UK 15

Location of units: nationwide

Investment range: £80,000-£110,000

Minimum required capital: £30,000-£50,000

Contact: Dan Archer. 07584 178458

visitingangelsfranchise.co.uk





"Our franchise network has doubled in the last six months"

DRIVING DEMAND

Dan feels that society is also changing its view on the type of care provided:

"Research conducted by Hanbury Strategy, with support from the charity Independent Age, during April-May 2020 showed that around a third of people polled said they were now less likely to want to put their relative in a care home.

"Residential care has been at the epicentre of the COVID-19 outbreak. In our pilot business in Sheffield, we're receiving calls from relatives who are deciding that they would rather keep their loved ones at home to avoid the risks within care homes.

"A backlash against residential care was already driving demand for care in the home. If COVID-19 is increasing the feeling that people are safer at home, the demand for the Visiting Angels service is set to keep rising."

LEADING FROM THE FRONT

At times of crisis, the global Visiting Angels business has pulled together.

"We've led from the front in our local markets, with world class training for our carers to keep them safe and ensure clients are protected," Dan says.

"Shared best practice and group buying power for things like personal protective equipment have been huge benefits of being part of one of the world's biggest care providers."

Franchising provides the benefit of not having to go it alone. UK franchisees receive comprehensive training and support from both the UK and US management team.

The management team are hugely knowledgeable, but many of the best practice initiatives in the business have been proven over many years and come from the experience of hundreds of franchisees.

The franchise fee is £24,995 and franchisees interested in this opportunity will need £25,000-£30,000 in liquid capital in order to secure bank funding for the total investment, including working capital of up to £100,000.

A substantial, premises-based management franchise, the potential exists for a six-figure turnover in year one and a projected million pound-plus turnover by the end of year three.

From nurse to MD, and praise from the CQC

Right at Home celebrates its award-winning franchisees



Some people nurse an ambition to be the best at what they do – and in Jenny Madghachian's case, she's achieved that and more, with an Outstanding rating for the care-at-home service she owns and runs in Borehamwood and Watford as a Right at Home franchisee.

The Care Quality Commission inspector has given her business fulsome praise for the difference it's making to people's lives. For anyone who knows Jenny, that's not surprising. As a former nurse and large care-agency manager, care comes naturally to her and she sees it as her vocation – so when she decided to take her talents into the world of franchising, she was certainly in demand.



"The first brand I met ticked a lot of boxes, but it felt all just a bit too easy," says Jenny. "They knew my background made me a good fit, and that I had the funds to commit, so suddenly I found myself being put under a lot of pressure to say yes and sign a franchise agreement.

"It just didn't feel right, so I backed away, but I still believed franchising was the way forward."

Her next experience was very different: "I called Right at Home, and from the first contact I felt everything just clicked. But far from feeling like anything was being handed to me on a plate, the exact opposite was true!

"It was very clear their franchise territories weren't so much for sale, but rather they were awarded on a very exclusive basis."

PUTTING IN PREPARATION

Undaunted, and spurred on by the thought that if she made it through selection she'd be joining a group of seriously capable and impressive people, Jenny spent a month honing her presentation for the CEO.

At a Glance
RIGHT AT HOME

Established: 2011

Number of franchised outlets: 70

Location of units: Nationwide

Investment range: £120,000

Minimum required capital: £40,000

Contact: Kate Dilworth, kate.dilworth@rightathome.co.uk

rightathomefranchising.co.uk

"It really was the kind of network I wanted to be part of"

"It really was the kind of network I wanted to be part of," says Jenny, "and as I went into the start-up I found the energy and dedication to do whatever it took to make it work, with long hours and a lot of hard work. It was exhausting yes, but it didn't ever feel difficult or daunting because I loved every bit of it – the thrill, at long last, of building something for myself.

"There's no way I would have done this without being part of a franchise. No matter how hard I worked at it, I couldn't have a business that performs like mine, to the standards required, without being part of Right at Home.

"Getting through the first CQC inspection is a perfect example – on my own that would have been beyond stressful, but National Office told me exactly what I needed to do and made approaching it really straightforward."

And the proof? Matthew Jenkins of the CQC said in his report: "People told us the help and support they were getting was invaluable and meant they could enjoy life in their own home safely and worry-free.

"It was impressive to see the extra mile staff went to, to ensure nobody felt lonely during the pandemic.

"One staff member danced with someone and watched their favourite programme with them when they were missing their own family."

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MY LIFE HAS CHANGED IN A GOOD WAY!

Upon discovering the world's number one business coaching franchise, Anu Khanna quickly realised her glass was only half full - she was ready to pour more into her life.

"The main impact ActionCOACH has had on me is who I'm becoming. I thought my glass was full, but being exposed to the precision and detail within the franchise model, I became aware of how much work there was left to do. It's miles away from the stage I was operating at in the corporate world and it's completely turned my life around. In my previous role, I would never be able to wind down. My days were extremely long, meaning I missed out on family time whilst my children were growing up. Now's my chance to make up for it"

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