

WOMAN BUSINESS

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How to run a franchise with a friend

20

page investment opportunities section

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FROM THE PUBLISHER OF



So, what exactly is franchising?

Sure, the likes of McDonald's and Subway are franchises. But the franchise sector encompasses a lot more than just household-name fast-food brands

- **franchise**
noun
- **formal permission given by a company to somebody who wants to sell its goods or services in a particular area**

Oxford Dictionary

The beauty – and most fundamental benefit – of franchising is that it creates a level playing field. A good franchise system allows budding entrepreneurs to start their own business in any chosen field with the help of a tried-and-trusted business model, reinforced by best-in-class training and support systems, marketing assistance, help with gaining funding and more.

Fancy running a tree surgeon business but your experience with that line of work starts and ends with climbing a tree a few times as a child? Want to change the lives of kids and teach them to sing and dance yet you can't hold a note? Think an online live chat business has longevity but you're a technophobe and can't code? They're all achievable business aspirations with franchising.

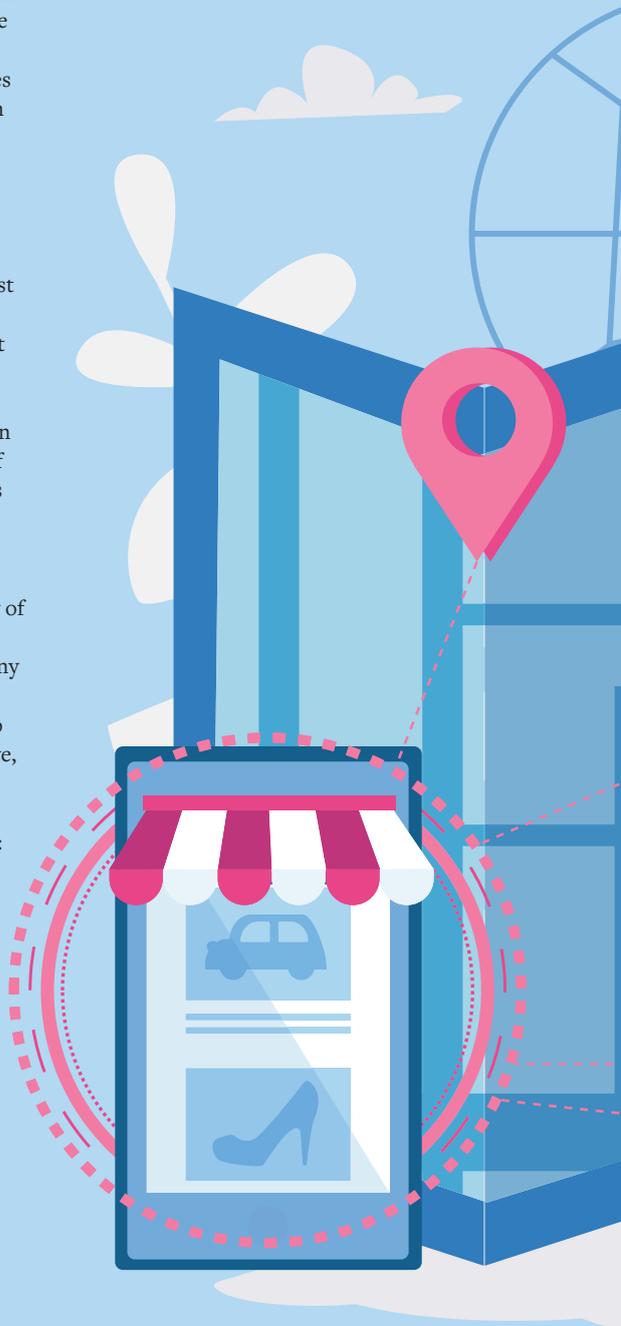
Many franchises can be started with no formal qualification within the field you wish to specialise – the franchisor (which is the main person or company that grants a licence to a third party for the conducting of a business under the franchisor's marks) will provide all of the training necessary, and you'll generally be

the business owner and employing people with the requisite skills to undertake the work for you. Within the pages of this magazine, you'll find dozens of examples of franchisees (those who run their own franchise business) doing just this.

More and more females in franchising

According to the most recent British Franchise Association (bfa) and NatWest franchise report, the proportion of female franchisees in 2018 is the highest the survey has recorded since it began, with 30 per cent of franchisees being female. This also looks likely to rise even further in the future, with 37 per cent of franchisee recruits in the past two years being female, which was up 20 per cent since 2015. This rising figure of female franchisees is above the SME average, which is emblematic of the accessibility of the franchise model.

Although it's not always the case, many women have decided to invest in their own businesses after holding leadership roles in their career, take maternity leave, and find that their erstwhile position is untenable with raising a child. This is another appealing aspect of franchising: it can offer flexibility. As a franchisee, you're accountable for the hours you work – there are even lots of franchises that market themselves as part-time businesses. Again, you'll find a lot of examples of women in this publication that sing the praises of franchising because it offers them a great work-life balance. As Pip Wilkins, CEO of the bfa, explains on page 24: "Like many industries, franchising is continually evolving. This is evident in the 935 franchise systems in the UK, with four out of 10 of them able to operate from a home office."



"52% of all new franchisees aged under 30 are female"

Franchising isn't a concept that people only get involved in once they've made some money and retired, either – it's becoming a viable option for young people who dream of running their own businesses, with 18 per cent of all franchises now under 30. Of all the new franchisees under 30, according to the bfa/NatWest survey, 52 per cent are female.

It is worth bearing in mind that a reputable franchise won't just take anyone's investment money, either – many brands have thorough recruitment policy procedures in place and check to ensure that you've not only got the financial clout, but are compatible on a business owner level, too.

The UK's most popular franchises

MCDONALD'S: 1,300 restaurants, of which 1,100 are franchised

SUBWAY: 2,500 franchise units

GREGG'S: 2,009 stores

KUMON: 600 centres

BURGER KING: 500 restaurants

Profitable and proven business

Franchising is becoming more mainstream, too. Currently, there are an estimated 48,600 franchised units in operation the UK, the highest number ever and nearly two times more than 25 years ago, with the number of franchisees reckoned to be around 20,000. The bfa puts this down to the fact that a third of franchisees own and run multiple units – they're often referred to as 'multi-unit operators' – but this goes to show that the good reputation of franchising is only growing, and the amount of investment continues at a steady pace.

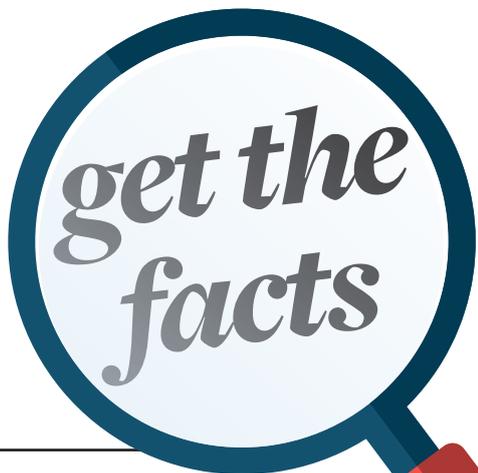
Franchising isn't just a UK phenomenon, either. Hailing from the United States, the concept has since been exported far and wide, with the likes of Dubai, Australia, the Philippines, France and many more countries boasting fervent and flourishing franchise markets. The boardroom of these globe-spanning organisations largely show diverse representation, too, with international, award-winning brands like Stagecoach Performing Arts, FASTSIGNS and BrightStar Care – to name just a few – all helmed by women.

So, with that all in mind, the *Business Woman* team hopes that you find plenty of inspiration within this publication. We've interviewed female business owners at all different stages of their entrepreneurial journeys, featured in-depth articles penned by some of the industry's biggest names, and collated a 20-page investment opportunities section to help get you started on the path to becoming a franchise business owner.

Want more inspiration and business hacks? Head to what-franchise.com/women-in-franchising



FRANCHISING:



The franchise industry is growing like never before – here are the key numbers to prove it

UK FRANCHISING

Franchising's contribution to UK plc is now estimated to be over



710,000

people in the UK are employed by franchise businesses

There are now
935 franchise systems
in operation in the UK



Over a half of franchised businesses now turn over

— *more than* —

£250,000
annually

Franchisee Profile



65%

of people employed in franchise businesses are women

35% of new franchisees are women
This number is *up 20% since 2015*

INDUSTRY OVERVIEW

Subway

A decade ago, Subway had 1,400 units – it now has around 2,200

Costa Coffee

had just over 170 units 10 years ago – it now has 2,300

Anytime Fitness

came to the UK in 2013 with 8 units – it now has 133



Women in Business

Flexibility around family care is the **#1** reason to start a business for women with children

Women were **55%** more likely than men to cite fear of doing it alone as a primary reason for not starting a business

* All stats and data taken from the British Franchise Association/ NatWest 2018 franchise report and the HM Treasury's 2019 Rose Review of Female Entrepreneurship

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Take control of your career

Franchising is a more accessible and promising world than ever before for women in business

WORDS BY JESSICA RAJWAN

You only need to look at large companies' pay statistics to understand why plenty of women feel they aren't getting their due. If you're trying to balance work with life, corporate environments can be stifling. Demanding hours, travel on short notice and a gruelling commute make social and family life tough.

So what do you do? Well, more and more women are choosing the route of starting their own business. You get to set your own work balance, every penny that comes in is your own, and you don't have to deal with corporate bureaucracy. At the same time, working on your own with little experience in how to operate and market a business isn't as appealing a picture. But there is an increasingly viable alternative option: joining a franchise.

Franchising today isn't just the fast food and cleaning services of old, in fact, according to the British Franchise Association (bfa), there are nearly 50,000 franchise businesses in the UK. Joining a franchise is a great way to combine the freedom that comes with running your own business with the support structures that you'd get working as part of a large company. Franchising can provide a wealth of opportunities for women to make their own success free of corporate bias – the benefits are myriad, but to list just a few big ones:

1 FRANCHISES ARE FLEXIBLE (AND THOSE THAT AREN'T SHOULD BE!)

Many industries – accountancy certainly being one – have not yet

"If you need to step away at 3.30 pm every Tuesday to make sure the kids get to practice, you can"

done enough to help women progress in their careers without compromising their family time. It isn't that women don't want to work or are afraid of hard work, but they just can't do the traditional nine-to-five. Unfortunately, in many corporate environments, if you won't prioritise work, you hit that glass ceiling. It's also still too common for women to find themselves "frozen out" of their careers upon returning from maternity leave.

Joining a franchise, however, is definitely not locking yourself into a nine-to-five. If you



need to step away at 3.30 pm every Tuesday to make sure the kids get to practice, you can. If you want to work into the night so you can go the dentist tomorrow, you can. You don't need to worry about the holiday rota, or sacrificing time with the kids for work. A franchise offers all of the flexibility of running your own business, whilst taking away the majority of the risk involved in striking out on your own.

2 YOU CAN FOCUS ON THE BUSINESS, WITHOUT HAVING TO WORRY ABOUT THE ADMIN

Business operators are experts in their particular area – they've got years of experience in their field, and know how to provide a high-quality service or product to clients. What they usually don't know how to do is actually run and promote a business.

Business administration and marketing require very different skillsets to each other, let alone to the overall business you might want to run. Juggling all three of those can sink a business before it really gets the chance to get started. Franchising, however,

means that you've got support, so you can focus on what you do best. Joining a franchise offers women the chance to use their skills to the fullest, whilst shoring up those areas that they might feel less confident in. To use AIMS as an example; an accountant is not a marketer. That's why we've got a website run by professionals designed to get leads for our franchisees, and dedicated marketing and business support staff to help franchisees keep on top of growing their practice, whilst they focus on providing for their clients.

3 INSTANT BRAND RECOGNITION

Building a brand is hard work. It takes blood, sweat, tears and most importantly, time. It takes years, sometimes decades, before many businesses generate a recognisable brand in the public eye.

One of the main benefits of a franchise for just about any franchisee is that you get to buy into an existing brand, and if you are picking the right one it will be a strong one. As soon as you start working, you're immediately associated with a recognised company with a good reputation.

4 IT DOESN'T MATTER WHO YOU ARE; WHAT MATTERS IS YOUR SUCCESS

Women are attracted to franchising for many reasons, and they'll differ from person to person. What we have found they often have in common, though, is a fear that franchising will just present similar challenges to the corporate world in terms of relations. They'll face the same potential discriminations and issues, but this time they're "on their own" when dealing with them.

In reality, though, to most franchisors your gender, race, or any other potential discriminating factor doesn't matter. Your ability does. Making sure that franchisees are running a sound and successful business is the top priority for any franchisor. The better your business does, the more the franchise benefits – it's as simple as that. At AIMS, our franchisees could come from anywhere, and be anyone. As long as they can run a successful business that utilises their skills to the fullest, we're happy – and so are they.

Not every female franchisee's story is about work-life balance, or glass ceilings. Sometimes it's simply the attraction of the brand, or a franchise being simpler to set up and run than their own independent business. But no matter the reasons, the franchise industry as a whole is undoubtedly ahead of the curve with opportunities for women; according to the bfa, 37 per cent of new franchisees last year were female – a 20 per cent increase in the last three years.

For women looking for an equal-opportunity situation where they can enjoy both the freedom of being a business owner and the structured, supportive environment of a company, franchising is more viable than ever. As someone who has myself come out of an inflexible corporate environment, I'll always be proud of the opportunities I'm able to offer people as part of AIMS, and I'd hope the same is true for all franchises who support female members. Let's not stop here.



THE AUTHOR

Jessica Rajwan is franchisee manager at AIMS Accountants for Business



Eight key questions to ask before you invest in a franchise

Come armed with these must-ask questions when entering an agreement

WORDS BY STEVE WITT

Investing in a franchise can be a little daunting. Which one is best for you? How many hours do you need to put in? And what will the fees be like?

Here are the eight key questions you must ask before you invest in a franchise:

1 DOES THE FRANCHISOR HAVE A PROVEN TRACK RECORD?

Firstly, you have to determine if you can trust the franchisor's pitch. Ask yourself: does the company have lots of case studies of successful people? Does it have case studies of franchisees who have been in business for years or are they all new to the network?

How long has the company been trading? What awards has it won? How many franchises does it sell a year? How highly is it regarded by the industry it's in and what do the franchisees say about the business?

A good way of finding out about the company is to speak to as many franchisees as possible, both established and new, about their experiences. If a company is reluctant to let you speak to its franchisees, there might be a reason for it.

2 WHAT TRAINING AND SUPPORT DOES THE FRANCHISOR PROVIDE?

Does support come in the form of mentoring programmes? Does the franchisor help with business development? Does it actively help you grow your business?

When is head office support available for franchisees? There's no point having a helpline in operation from 9 am to 5 pm if you're running your franchise in the evening. We know people book holidays in the evening, so our support team is available every night until 10 pm to assist our travel consultants to complete bookings if necessary. Also, check out whether you'll get to meet the people your franchisor employs as support staff. Does it organise training days, conferences and other events where you can meet up with franchisees and head office teams to discuss the business and its future plans?

3 HOW LONG IS THE CONTRACT YOU'LL BE EXPECTED TO SIGN?

Some people might be surprised when they find out the franchise agreement they'll be asked to sign lasts for three years and want a shorter one. But you should feel reassured by a longer contract.

The reality is, you are going to spend your first and second year building the business. If you only have a one-year contract, it means you can terminate after one year, but it also means your franchise company can terminate the agreement after a year too. Many people are worried about commitment, but if you want to build a business for the future, commitment is good.

4 WILL YOU ENJOY IT?

Are you passionate about the franchise and the industry in which it operates? Do you believe in what you will be selling? If you aren't passionate about it, there's little point in joining the franchisor's network, as you won't be fully committed to making your business a success.

Yes, there might be a market for widgets or gizmos, but if you don't care enough about them, your potential customers will know.

5 WILL YOUR FRANCHISE HELP YOU CREATE A LEGACY?

Can you gift your business to a member of your family or leave it to

somebody in your will? Is it something you are building for the future that will benefit your loved ones after you are gone?

Our franchises are willable, so franchisees know they're working to create something their children and grandchildren could take on, if they wished.

6 DO YOU UNDERSTAND HOW THE FRANCHISOR MAKES MONEY?

Some franchisors make money by selling franchises. So if you see a franchise being sold at a significant discount, it suggests there are thousands of pounds worth of extra profit available to the franchisor to start with in order for it to be able to offer you such a 'bargain'.

We give our franchisees a money-back challenge. So if we're willing to give the cost of the franchise fee back to them, then clearly there's no profit in it for us.

7 WHAT ARE THE RESTRICTIONS ON THE FRANCHISE?

Is your franchise restricted by area or territory? Is the relationship between different franchisees collaborative or adversarial?

Our franchises aren't restricted by territory because everyone has

their own network of people in it and with 700 franchisees and 70 million people in the UK, there's not much of an overlap. Everyone is part of the same team and we encourage franchisees to work together and share their journey to success.



THE AUTHOR

Steve Witt is co-founder of The Travel Franchise and its sister travel arm Not Just Travel

8 WHAT'S THE ETHOS OF THE COMPANY AND WHAT ARE ITS VALUES?

Have a look at the news section of a franchise company's website and see what the team has been up to. Is it all about the franchisor or is their information about franchisees and their successes? Does the business support charities and help its local community?

This year, we've pledged to raise £50,000 for mental health charity Mind, including trekking through Columbia to the Lost City. We also have our Partners in Travel scheme, where franchisees can partner with a good cause and for every booking a donation is made. We want to give back to our communities and make it as easy as possible for our franchisees to support good causes close to their hearts.



"If you want to build a business for the future, commitment is good"

How to pick the right franchise for you

While starting your own business can be exhilarating, don't just come at it hell for leather. This could be the biggest decision of your life – here's how to invest smartly

WORDS BY KATE DILWORTH

Business Woman's contributors have written some great educational articles about how franchising works and the benefits it offers to prospective business owners. But, there are literally hundreds of franchises available in the UK market, and trying to figure out which businesses could offer you the best chance of success can be daunting, if not slightly overwhelming.

After all, it's not uncommon to see many competing brands' advertising and PR using similar messaging, and offer virtually the same promises.

So, I wanted to offer some guidance on how you might sift through the unsuitable and the unviable; then whittle down all remaining possibilities, until you find the sector and brand that offers a perfect fit for you.

After all, it's not just about identifying the strongest model to follow – it's about finding a business that will make you jump out of bed each morning; a business that you will really enjoy running.

The franchise world is your oyster!

I'd always recommend that you start off looking at all of the options, especially those that you've not thought about before.

One of the joys of franchising is that it gives you the option of moving into a completely new sector, once you're confident that you have a proven model to

follow, and the support of a successful franchisor behind you.

So, step one should be to discover the range of industries that offer franchises and create a list of sectors that interest you. View this as your chance to open up new opportunities and pursue your dreams.

Where do your strengths lie?

You will always have a greater chance of success if you enjoy what you do. Talk to family and put your transferable skills, attributes and personality strengths down on paper, then research the sectors that interest you, to get an idea of what each business model involves.

Feature articles in franchise magazines and listing websites are a good place to start – they will often outline a

franchisee's key roles and responsibilities, which you can measure yourself up against.

It's fair to say that in any business you need to be prepared to move out of your comfort zone, but it's equally important to be realistic about where your strengths lie, and to be honest with yourself – you can only expect to replicate the success of the system if you are prepared to follow it to the letter!



THE AUTHOR

Kate Dilworth is franchise recruitment manager at Right at Home UK



Do the numbers stack up?

If you've not already done so, stop and figure out what you can afford, and what could offer the financial returns that you need. You don't want to waste time, or emotional energy, getting excited about businesses that are not financially viable. Although individual brands' fees and projected financial returns will vary, you will be able to get ball-park figures by looking at a couple within each sector. Franchise directory websites will give you an overview of the total investment levels but it's worth making a call to check whether the amount quoted includes working capital (money kept in the business, to support cash flow). You will need to know the initial fee; the working capital requirement; the management service fee (usually a percentage of revenue that is paid to the franchisor in exchange for their ongoing support) and any other ongoing fees and costs, such as a contribution to a centralised marketing fund.

It's also prudent to view any promises of 'guaranteed income' or 'profitability above x%' as purely indicative at this stage – most franchisors will want you to sign a non-disclosure agreement before they give you a proper insight into the performance of their network.

Check out the USPs

Within your sectors of interest, it's important to identify who the key players are, and to take a closer look at their differentiators.

Maybe you only want to look at leading brands, or perhaps you like the idea of working with a relative newcomer into the market, where there's greater potential to help them shape and develop their business model.

This is a great time to attend a franchise exhibition – they offer an opportunity to meet and compare a few brands under one roof. Alternatively, take time to work your way through websites and prospectuses, and book in some phone calls. This is where the information comparison can get a little overwhelming, so I'd recommend compiling a spreadsheet.

Regardless of how long the franchise has been operating, you need to be confident that its model is credible and ethical. Key things to look at may include industry awards, client reviews, and professional memberships, such as industry associations. If the industry is regulated, then make sure you study compliance ratings, and remember that all members of the British Franchise Association (bfa) will have passed a fairly rigorous accreditation process.

Look at the lay of the land

Territory availability is an important discussion point – the most established franchises may not have anything nearby to offer. I'd advise asking this question early on, rather than setting your hopes on an opportunity that isn't available within a reasonable distance.

When looking at territories, you'll need to assess how well suited the area is to the business model. Don't overlook the benefits of working close to home: reduced travel time, more time with family, and having connections and local knowledge that will help build the business.

Complete your due diligence

By the time you've concluded your initial phone calls, you should be building a picture around the financial model, the strength of the brand, and the available territory, which will deliver a short-list of viable opportunities.

From this stage there are key steps to complete your research into the brands that interest you most.

- **Visit the franchisor:** see their set up; gain a feel for how they run their business and the culture within their network
- **Speak to other franchisees:** be wary of any franchisor who is unwilling to let trading owners validate what they have told you
- **Carry out local competitor analysis,** to understand the market in your area. Build a conservative financial forecast, based on the findings of your local research
- **Study the legal agreements** and get them checked by a bfa-affiliated solicitor – it's vital that you fully understand the commitment you'd be making
- **Look at facts and listen to your instinct:** Do you like and trust the integrity of the franchisor? Is there clear evidence of support to other franchisees? Is there long-term potential in the marketplace?

Make an informed choice

There will always be a level of risk that comes with investing your money into someone else's business model. But by carrying out careful and thorough research, you really can minimise those risks and give yourself a much greater chance of success.

And if you find a business model that plays to your strengths, and has been proven to work successfully for others, then you have to ask yourself why should it not work for you?

At that point, success lies within your hands and will be determined by the drive and hard work that you put into your new business. Good luck!

"Don't overlook the benefits of working close to home"

Aspiring franchisee? Avoid these four common mistakes at all costs

New franchisees need to avoid these elements that can hinder the success of their business

WORDS BY NIC REDFERN

If it's right for you, a franchise – a type of business owned and operated by individuals, but is branded and overseen by a much larger organisation – can be a very lucrative opportunity. You can profit from an already established brand, while still running your own company.

However, investing in a franchise is not a decision to be taken lightly; there are numerous considerations which must be taken into account. However, some elements can sometimes be overlooked, which can hinder the success of a business.

With this in mind, it's vital that new franchisees are aware of, and know how to avoid, these four common mistakes:

1 FAILING TO PLAY BY THE RULES

It's important to remember that, because a franchise is part of a well established brand, owners

must stick to company regulations, best practice and models. Indeed, you won't be able to make instant adjustments to your business, even to appeal to your local clientele.

Changes of any size are always implemented from head office. Failure to comply with the franchisor's rules might result in a breach notice, whereby you are ordered to comply with the franchisor's rules or your business might be taken away.

Of course, good franchisors will have clear lines of communication for you to feedback with suggestions, should you have them. Consider speaking with a franchise consultant to make sure you match with a firm that has similar expectations regarding what makes a productive working relationship.

2 NOT DOING ENOUGH RESEARCH

Franchises are a major investment and many franchisees go on to set up several branches over many years, so it's not a decision to make lightly.

Naturally, franchisors have a vested interest in attracting prospective franchisees into the business and will likely emphasise the positive aspects rather than the negative. So it's important to conduct thorough research yourself.

Fortunately, the internet makes it much easier to carry out your own research. A thorough internet search can enable you to investigate numerous franchise options and determine which is the right one for you.

It would also be beneficial to speak with current franchisees. They will be able to give you some kind of objective take on the franchisor as a business entity, the regulations, investment potential, workload and – perhaps most importantly – whether they enjoy their work.

3 NOT UNDERSTANDING ONESELF

Within the franchising world, there are many options available, so you need to know exactly what you want.

For example, a bricks-and-mortar franchise is likely to have prescribed

"Ensure the model and costings fit exactly with your expectations and financial capability"



opening hours. Does this work for the sort of work-life balance you're seeking? Or might a mobile franchise be more suitable? These are the kinds of questions you must ask yourself before committing.

Further, do you believe in the product enough to make it work in your location? Would you be happy relocated to a different area to start your franchise? Is this something you are doing purely as an investment? Such considerations will help you narrow down your options, so you can make a more informed choice.

4 BEING FINANCIALLY UNREALISTIC

It almost goes without saying, but starting a franchise requires a large initial investment. This can vary from £5,000 to £250,000, depending on the franchise you're buying into, so make sure you've fed this into your financial plan.

Thereafter, you will need to pay various ongoing costs. These may include marketing and service fees, but the most significant cost will likely

be rent. To give a real-life example, McDonald's charges between 12.25 per cent and 21 per cent on net sales in 80 per cent of its UK restaurants – although this number is based on projected profitability.

Ensure the model and costings fit exactly with your expectations and financial capability and you have a comprehensive understanding of the franchise agreement that is being offered.

There are a variety of questions that all prospective franchisees need to work out before starting a new venture. Being thorough, realistic and the right kind of person will stand you in good stead to make the right call about proceeding and thereafter choosing a business.

After all, if buying into a franchise is the right fit for you, it could be a rewarding business opportunity.



THE AUTHOR

Nic Redfern is financial director for Know Your Money, an independent financial comparison website launched in 2004

Buying a franchise with a friend

Nine secrets to transforming your personal friendship into a successful business partnership

WORDS BY KRISTY ROFF



THE AUTHOR

Kristy Roff is a regional director for virtual agency Get Ahead VA and co-owner of the franchise for Berkshire & North Hampshire with Suzanne Cox

Buying a franchise with a friend can be a fantastic experience that strengthens your friendship, as well as enabling you to realise your dream of running your own business. But like any business venture, it isn't without risks.

It means you have someone to share the upfront financial investment, ongoing business responsibilities and successes with. But things can go wrong if one partner isn't contributing as much as the other or expects different things from the business.

GOING INTO BUSINESS WITH A FRIEND HAS MANY BENEFITS:

- **Spreading the risk.** You don't have to fund the initial franchise investment or ongoing business costs by yourself. Costs are shared between you, reducing your personal financial commitment.
- **Having back up.** By sharing a franchise with a friend, you can cover each other when you need back up. Especially as a working parent, if your kids are ill or you're on holiday, work can still go ahead without you.
- **Increasing your impact.** With two or more franchisees, you can have twice the impact at events. Your stronger presence can make you more memorable and allow you to make more quality connections in a shorter space of time.
- **Supporting each other.** Being a franchisee can be lonely, particularly for those running franchises from home or not employing their own staff. Buying a franchise with a friend means you are not alone, but part of your own unique team.

BUT THERE CAN BE DRAWBACKS:

- **Confusion and duplication.** Do you both have the same approach to pricing, communication and deadlines? Do you both know exactly what you do? You may end up confusing customers if they don't have one clear point of contact giving them consistent information.

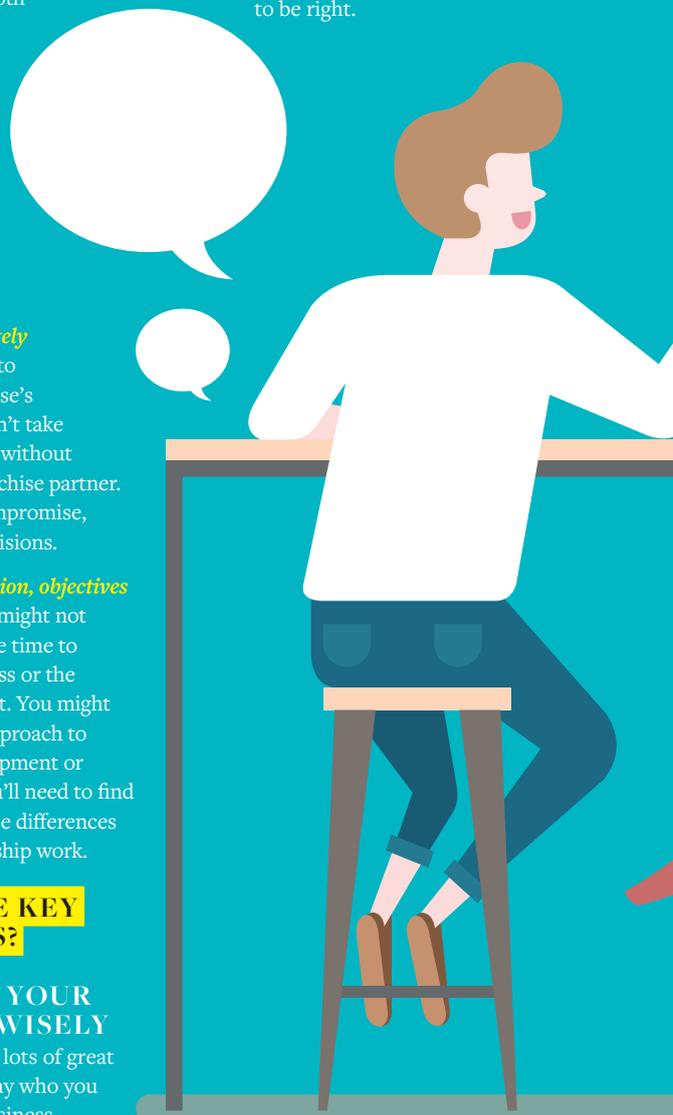
- **You're not completely in charge.** You have to consider someone else's point of view and can't take important decisions without consulting your franchise partner. You may have to compromise, especially on big decisions.

- **Differences of opinion, objectives and ambitions.** You might not always have the same time to devote to the business or the same objectives for it. You might not agree on your approach to new business development or marketing costs. You'll need to find a way to resolve these differences to make the partnership work.

WHAT'S THE KEY TO SUCCESS?

1 CHOOSE YOUR FRIEND WISELY
You may have lots of great friends, but not many who you could share your business

with. Consider whether it's the franchise business that feels right for you or working with a friend that is drawing you towards an opportunity. When buying a franchise with a friend, both the friend and the franchise need to be right.



"The fantastic thing about a franchise partnership is that there's always someone to keep you motivated"

2 ENJOY WORKING TOGETHER

For some people, running their own franchise can be lonely. But with a co-franchisee, you immediately have someone who is in the same boat as you, who understands your challenges and successes and can support you all the way.

If you choose to share a franchise with someone with similar values, you're likely to have the same ambitions, aspirations and approach to success and can enjoy starting and growing your business together.

3 SHARE WORKLOAD AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Defining distinct roles for each of you means that, unlike many franchisees, you don't have to be CEO, sales director, finance manager and HR all rolled into one. Each of you can assume the responsibilities most suited to your background or interests. If you and your friend have complementary skills, you have a solid foundation for running a business.

4 BE ACCOUNTABLE TO SOMEONE ELSE

The fantastic thing about a franchise partnership is that there's always someone to keep you focused and motivated. Consider time blocking tasks you need to work on together, as well as business strategy meetings. Set clear objectives for each day, week, month and year to ensure you know what each other is working on.

5 MAINTAIN YOUR INDEPENDENCE

Buying a franchise with a friend doesn't mean that it's all you ever talk about. To make your partnership a success, you need to enjoy working together, as well as working apart. This helps maintain a friendship as well as a business partnership. It also allows you to embrace your own personal style of working and your personal strengths.

6 SET BOUNDARIES

Do your business during work time and enjoy your social life in personal time. Find ways to accommodate both elements of your lives effectively. For example, an early morning walk on the days when you work together allows the 'social' bit to be done, as well as focusing on a task list for the day. Keep work out of social get togethers, so that you can still be 'just friends' and switch off from work.

7 GIVE FEEDBACK

It's important to give your fellow franchisee feedback. Say thank you when your partner has helped you out or made a difference. Don't just assume that just because they share your franchise, they share your thought processes as well. It's vital to vocalise your appreciation for what they do, as well as ways in which you think you could work better together.

8 BE OPEN AND HONEST

Before you buy a franchise with a friend, talk about the risks and the consequences. What happens if it takes off? What happens if it goes wrong? What if one of you wants out? If you can't be open and honest with each other from the start, you might need to reconsider your business partnership.

9 RESPECT EACH OTHER

To work together effectively, you have to be aligned in your thinking, processes and efforts. You need to be 50/50 all the way and understand there is always give and take, which you should accept without judging. Believe in yourselves and the fact you can achieve more together than you could alone.

"To make your partnership a success, you need to enjoy working together, as well as working apart"



Franchising face-to-face

Five proven ways to make the most of a franchisor discovery day

WORDS BY THOMAS HUGHES



THE AUTHOR

Thomas Hughes is content marketing executive at Homecare by Kare Plus

So you've been in the market for the perfect franchise opportunity for some time, but you're yet to find 'the one'. There are a few that have sparked your interest and one of them has invited you to a discovery day at the company's head office. Talking over the phone and sending emails are great, but this is the perfect chance to see what a franchisor is made of.

It's important for the franchisor to be prepared ahead of a discovery day. Many Homecare by Kare Plus discovery days are planned months in advance, however, you should also make sure you're thoroughly prepared. After all, this is your chance to learn the information you need to make a decision that could shape the next five to 10 years of your life.

With this in mind, here are five tips on how best to prepare for a franchise discovery day. Remember, this is just as much about the franchisor assessing your suitability as it is you assessing the franchisor:

1 PUT IN THE WORK

The most important thing you can do ahead of any discovery day is to prepare and research for the franchise and industry you're interested in. Our franchise sales team at Homecare by Kare Plus encourage applicants to do their due diligence ahead of any potential meetings and will try to provide you with as much information as possible at this point. While researching a franchise opportunity, you may want to ask yourself the following questions:

- What services does this franchise offer?
- How active is its online presence?
- What are individual franchises publishing online?

- Who are the competition? What makes this franchise unique?
- What's the long-term outlook for this industry?
- Are there any testimonials for this franchise?

Finding the right industry to match your personal and professional ambitions is key and the research stage provides the perfect opportunity to do so.

2 LOOK THE PART

Your appearance is an important aspect to consider during the discovery day. As previously mentioned, we as franchisors are assessing your suitability as much as you are us. This is why it's vital to dress suitably on the day; it not only shows how seriously you are taking

the process, but also your suitability as a franchise owner.

Showing up to a discovery day in a pair of shorts and a t-shirt will leave a negative impression with the franchisor and almost certainly make the company doubt your suitability. No franchisor will expect you to arrive on the day in your best designer clothes, but the sensible choice is to dress how you would for any other important meeting.

3 TAKE IN YOUR SURROUNDINGS

Commonly referred to as the bricks and mortar of a business, the physical space in which a franchise operates plays a vital part in its performance. Discovery days provide a glimpse of a franchise business, including the staff working within it, how the different teams interact and the office culture in general.



At Homecare by Kare Plus, we have an open-plan office, meaning visitors can always get a sense of how many staff we have working at any one time and how busy they are. Any good franchisor will want to show you its office, so you should definitely take this into consideration if a discovery session is being held off-site. We also try to ensure visitors have the chance to meet with heads of department, as we believe these individuals best represent our franchise offering.

As Brian Chesky, co-founder of Airbnb, said: "Culture is simply a shared way of doing something with a passion." Assessing office culture during one short visit is not realistic, but you can still take the culture in. Are the staff busy? Are they dressed smartly? Are they on the phone or conversing with each other? These are all things worth watching out for, as they will give you a better understanding of the internal operations of your potential future franchise partner.

4 BE ENGAGED, ASK QUESTIONS, TAKE NOTES

We previously mentioned how important it was to look the part, but you also need to act the part too. At Homecare by Kare Plus, we want to meet discovery day attendees who are engaged, active and showing an interest in what we have to say.

The decision to purchase a franchise is not one that should be taken lightly, which is why we are always on the lookout for those people who are clearly very engaged with our opportunity. Showing up early for the appointment will create an excellent first impression, although you don't want to arrive too early as you may inconvenience the franchisor. Anywhere between 10 to 15 minutes before the meeting is the perfect window and also allows you plenty of time to take in your surroundings.

Take plenty of notes throughout the day, as you will be able to use these later while studying any extra materials the franchisor provides. Don't be afraid to ask questions, as this is your chance to silence any doubts you may have. Try to visualise your questions beforehand and make them concise, relevant and likely to produce informative answers.

5 TAKE TIME TO REFLECT

The day is almost over, you're tired and you've absorbed a wealth of information. It can be tempting to start reviewing your notes and reflect on the day as soon as you arrive home, but it's worth waiting until the next

"Don't be afraid to ask questions, as this is your chance to silence any doubts you may have"

day. Once you've had some rest, make sure you take the time to read your notes and any additional materials you've been given. This is the point at which you will need to decide if the franchise is the right fit for you. It's a decision only you can make, which is why it's essential you take time to reflect on the discovery day. As mentioned above, review your notes and the materials provided by the franchisor. Analyse your feelings about the day to decide if you want to move forward or not.

At Homecare by Kare Plus, our franchise sales team work alongside potential franchisees from the beginning of their journey to the point of signing their franchise agreement. We do this because we want to ensure you're not only the right fit for us, but also that a Homecare by Kare Plus franchise is the right fit for you.



Find flexibility with franchising

Franchising is the perfect option for many women wanting flexible working

WORDS BY PIP WILKINS

Women devote 60 per cent more time than men to family care, according to the *NatWest Rose Review*.

While this is no particular surprise, given that historically women are seen as the primary care givers, it does mean that businesses – and the economy in general – are missing out on key talent, as women are less likely to pursue business ownership due to this responsibility.

Starting a family can be difficult for some people working in a corporate environment, as there is still a long way to go when it comes to providing adequate flexible working options for employees with family commitments. This is changing, but there is still more to do.

If it's daunting for women to return to their careers after having children, it's even more so for women who are considering starting their own businesses. So what options are there for females with an entrepreneurial spirit?

Reducing the risk

Franchising offers people the chance to start a business with an established brand that has refined its model and can be replicated by an ambitious individual in an exclusive territory. The fact this reduces the risk for the franchisee is appealing to many

individuals who want to be their own boss.

Partly because of this, it's no wonder that there are now a record-breaking number of women in the franchise industry, with 37 per cent of new franchisees in the past two years being female, 20 per cent more than in 2015, according to the 2018 British Franchise Association NatWest franchise survey. 30 per cent of all franchisees are now women, a rise of seven per cent.

"Four out of 10 franchises can be operated from a home office"

Perfect fit

Rachana Pancholi is the owner of multiple Subway franchises, operating eight stores in South Yorkshire. She's also one of the brand's business development agents.

Rachana says: "I've been a Subway franchise owner for over 15 years and became a business development agent in 2012 to help others realise their franchise dream. Prior to becoming a franchise owner, I had a blue-chip marketing background

working for companies such as Lloyds TSB, Coopers & Lybrand and Mars.

"I took a five-year career break to have my family and didn't believe I could go back to a European role with three children under three years old. It was time for me to branch out into something else that allowed flexible working.

"Franchising allows you to be your own boss and with a young family it was a perfect fit for me. Franchising is a great option for women wanting to take control of their careers, work-life balance or provide flexible working."

Empowering Women in Business

Like many industries, franchising is continually evolving. This is evident in the 935 franchise systems in the UK, with four out of 10 of them able to operate from a home office. Not only does this give even greater flexibility, but it can also drive down costs.

The British Franchise Association understands the importance of flexibility for business women and hosts a flagship event called Empowering Women in Business.

The theme is 'The changing culture of business', which will highlight the challenges women face in business. For more information visit thebfa.org.



THE AUTHOR

Pip Wilkins is CEO of the British Franchise Association





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*subject to status

Seven secrets behind a successful brand launch

A successful launch strategy is key to driving brand engagement from the get-go. Here's how to ensure your business opens without a hitch

WORDS BY SUZIE MCCAFFERTY



THE AUTHOR

Suzie McCafferty is director of brand on-boarding at Hero Brands, whose portfolio includes fast-casual restaurants German Doner Kebab and Choppaluna

For any ambitious franchisor to maximise their brand potential, the importance of a strong launch can never be understated. Ultimately, a solid launch that captures the imagination of consumers and potential franchisees can be the difference when attempting to stand out and break a sometimes seemingly saturated market. Striking the right chord with customers from the very first instance can therefore build the foundations of brand loyalty that can stand the test of time.

1 ANNOUNCING YOUR ARRIVAL

A brand launch is your opportunity to announce your arrival. This is your first impression – your chance to make your mark.

At German Doner Kebab (GDK), we believe in our successful store launch programme, which has seen over 50 stores across the globe benefit while also providing the basis for a rapid expansion that has confirmed the chain's arrival in several countries. GDK has 41 sites in the UK alone, with plans to open further locations throughout 2020. But all of that wouldn't have been possible without the backing of the brand from day one.

It has always been said that first impressions are vital, not only in business, but in life. The brand launch is you setting your stall out – this is your opportunity to detail what you have to offer and could set you on whatever trajectory that your business is destined for.

It is important to create a buzz about your product from the very

start and to be creative in how you want people to view your franchise business.

2 SELL YOUR VISION

A launch is the best opportunity to sell an idea and vision to customers, brand ambassadors, influencers, and current and potential investors.

For example, from GDK's point of view, it is in its best interests to help its franchisees plan for a strong launch. The franchise model allows the opportunity for rapid expansion, but you can't neglect a franchisee after they buy-in because guidance prior to and on the day of a respective launch date can have a huge bearing on their success.

On the flip side, it is vital that franchisors develop a strong

store and territory launch plan which should be followed by all new franchisees in order to maximise the impact they make in their communities. The higher the brand awareness in each local community, the faster fans and profits are created.



"A launch is the best opportunity to sell an idea and vision to customers, brand ambassadors, influencers, and current and potential investors"

3 HONESTY IS THE BEST POLICY

Clarity and transparency between franchisor and franchisee are also key – especially when it comes to setting out the financial requirements of a launch. Franchisees are liable to pay for the launch, which is the industry norm. Thus, they need to be made aware of how much additional working capital they should set aside for this, crucially over and above the investment required to cover the initial franchise fee and other start-up costs such as fit-out and equipment (if premises-based franchises), vehicles (if van- or delivery-based), stock (if product-based), as well as the additional working capital to cover business overheads for the first 12 months of trading.

If this hasn't been outlined from the very beginning then difficulty in raising the capital required for a successful launch may arise and negatively impact the standard of the launch.

4 THE DEVIL IS IN THE DETAIL

Every launch may differ, but they should all follow a stringent set of guidelines if they are to help the business prosper within its target market. It might sound straightforward and somewhat obvious, but one of the most important factors of any launch is that it is thoroughly prepared and planned in plenty of time.

At GDK, we want our launches to be prepared months in advance, using the time spent in between to start telling people about our business and creating hype within the market and with our consumers.

By the time launch day hits, everything should be geared towards making a splash. The time to be working towards an official launch date shouldn't be just before you open the doors.

Logistically it isn't enough time to have everything in place and ready to go. Launch materials need time to be perfected and created and ideally, this



would be done far in advance to ensure that they are produced to the highest possible standard. It is these little things that can make a world of difference when it comes to presenting the product to the wider public.

5 THE 'WOW' FACTOR

Heading into the launch, all focus should be on attracting the franchise's target market. The first goal is identifying the target market, which should be set out by the franchisor if it is not already evident. It is then all about presenting the opening to the audience in a unique and interesting way in order to give the event the 'wow' factor that will garner attention and put the site on the map.

That 'wow' factor is vital as it is important to create as much hype as possible on the day. It can come in many forms, traditionally in the shape of a celebrity grand opening, such as inviting a TV personality or actor to 'cut the ribbon'. But to create community engagement, GDK always strives to have a local hook for those that we do invite to our launches.

For example, our opening in Swansea saw Swansea City Football Club captain Leon Britton welcomed as the guest of honour on the day. It is this sort of launch programme which results in all our stores hitting the ground running from day one.

But hooks to make launches a success can also come in other forms, such as incentives for getting footfall through the door. Another successful method that GDK has benefited from is free giveaways on the day of opening. For example, as well as having a local celebrity in attendance at our Milton Keynes launch, we also gave away free kebabs between 1pm and 3 pm in a bid to attract customers to the store.

"It is important to create a buzz about your product from the very start"

6 CALL IN THE PROS

A little help along the way never goes amiss and franchisors should consider taking on a professional public relations and events company to aide with the planning, promotion and delivery of such events. Both franchisor and franchisee benefit from having this expertise on hand in a range of ways.

Having a PR team which can help drive your hype and interest prior to, during, and after your launch day will open doors to both local and national publications, industry magazines and newsletters. This all plays a part in helping to build your brand, getting it out there, and keeping it out there.

Events companies, meanwhile, can help with adding that 'wow factor' mentioned earlier, as they may have a wealth of contacts to fall back on, as well as out-of-the-box ideas that have proven successful elsewhere that might not immediately spring to mind.

7 A DUMMY RUN

Once all plans have been put in place, preparations can be perfected with a soft launch for family and friends, designed as a dummy run. This can help identify, and subsequently iron out any creases in a launch plan. Asking for constructive criticism would also open avenues to improving the schedule and layout of the actual launch.

Separate launches aimed specifically at business influencers and bloggers have also proven

successful in the past, as have launch events for local business and consumer communities.

Having a captive audience that you know inside-out can be beneficial when it comes to tailoring your launch to suit their needs and interests, allowing you to provide all the relevant information they may require. A successful tailored launch can create hype within the industry itself.

Such is the importance of a launch; I believe that it is paramount to never cut corners and undervalue the power that a first impression can make.



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Empower future generations

There's a growing demand for franchises that capitalise on the British trend for investment in child development

WORDS BY DAVID GRAHAM



THE AUTHOR
David Graham
is the CEO and
co-founder of
Code Ninjas

More than ever, people are looking to invest in the children's service sector because they recognise the longevity of the industry, the potential for growth and, in many cases, the ability to make a difference in children's lives.

Before launching Code Ninjas in the UK, my team and I spent months observing and researching the UK market. We have since witnessed first-hand the continued demand for opportunities that capitalise on the growing British trend for early years investment.

The market remains robust

It's an exciting sector to be in right now – while economic variables impact almost all other sectors, the children's services market remains robust.

The UK is among the world leaders when it comes to people's desire and ability to invest in extracurricular and enrichment activities for their children. Brands in this sector provide a range of services, from early years sensory, learning and development to premises-based coding centres like Code Ninjas and one-to-one in-home tutoring. With opportunities ranging from owner operator and multi unit to management style, there really is something for everyone.

Why now is a good time to invest

The sector is growing and has done so consistently for the last decade.

According to the 2018 British Franchise Association NatWest franchise survey, the number of personal services franchised units – of which children's services is a part – has more than doubled since 2008.

Increase in consumer spending

At the heart of this growth is two things: firstly, the increase in consumer spending UK-wide on such services. While the economy has been rattled over the last 12 months or more, this isn't an area in which parents are willing to compromise – quite the opposite, in fact. Now, more than ever, people are prepared to spend more on their children's development outside of the classroom.

I'm a father myself, so it's easy to understand how and why this has become a necessity rather than a nicety. Pressure for good grades and competition for rankings among peers seems to sit uncomfortably with growing class sizes and the inevitable inability to provide any personal, one-to-one teaching in schools as a result. We also understand, whether we're parents or not, that as technology advances at what is sometimes an alarming rate the skills and knowledge needed by future generations reside outside the current curriculum.

In a similar vein, in our digital age soft skills are seen as just as important, if not more so, by some. So parents look for afterschool programmes and clubs that not

only teach tangible skills, but also support their children with confidence building, problem solving and teamwork.

All of this perfectly encapsulates the reasons why we refer to Code Ninjas as an 'edu-tainment' franchise and is shown in our tag line, 'Kids have fun, parents see results'. As far as the kids are concerned, it's about the experience and having fun, but in fact they're learning vital skills for life.

Increase in awareness

The second reason behind such growth is that the sector is benefiting from an increase in the awareness of and the desire to pursue franchising as a route to business ownership, particularly among younger generations.

While attracted by the autonomy and flexibility of business ownership, many prospective franchisees are also highly motivated to make a difference,





whether that's in their own communities or in the lives of future generations. Combined with the sector specific growth and economic robustness, children's services franchises become even more appealing.

Scope for growth?

If you're considering investing in a franchise, you need to ask yourself some basic, yet fundamental, questions around your own skills, knowledge, commitment and financials. But when it comes to a children's service franchise, there are one or two other aspects that prospects ask me about all the time. One of the main ones being: "Is there much scope for growth in the children's services sector?"

There's a risk that people can view what they see as a children's franchise as something a bit flowery or not a serious business opportunity. Don't fall into this trap. Running a successful

children's service franchise is hard work and requires a lot of dedication, but the potential for growth is limited only by your own ambition.

It's important to consider in advance whether you're going to remain as an owner operator or if you intend to run the business as a management style operation once you're established. If you're serious about growth and making an impact in your community, you'll need to be able to identify, recruit and lead people who share your vision and values for the business.

Empathy is key

Another question I get asked is: "Does it matter if I don't have kids?" Not having kids of your own shouldn't influence your decision when it comes to investing in a children's service franchise. However, what you will need to succeed in this industry is a significant level of empathy with

your customers and an understanding of their motivations and buying decisions, something you wouldn't rely on quite so much in a business-to-business franchise, for example.

At the end of the day, your business is going to be directly involved in a very personal, very emotive aspect of people's lives: their kids.

Having a passion for improving lives – whether through learning, confidence building or enrichment – cannot be underestimated and will be something a franchisor looks for in you. It's something all Code Ninjas franchisees share and is so important to us and the success of our business that it forms part of our recruitment process.

The children's services sector is a unique landscape to work in. Empowering future generations can be as personally rewarding as it is professionally. With commitment, skill and the support of a great franchisor, there's no telling what you can achieve.

Step out of your slippers and into your office

Six compelling reasons why you should invest in a home-based franchise

WORDS BY FRANK MILNER



THE AUTHOR

Frank Milner is president of Tutor Doctor

According to the 2018 British Franchise Association NatWest franchise survey, almost four in 10 franchise systems can be run from the comfort of your own home.

Home-based businesses offer a multitude of advantages, ranging from financial efficiencies to simple convenience. And with modern technology making virtual connections available at the touch of a button, feelings of isolation are becoming a thing of the past.

Here are six homeworking benefits that franchisees enjoy:

1 Lower start-up costs and overheads

It stands to reason that working from home is going to be significantly cheaper than renting office space or a retail unit. Your lighting, heating and floor space already form part of your monthly outgoings and there are no hidden costs to pay. This is a huge advantage for many people when considering the various franchise options open to them.

"People regain a staggering two hours every day by not travelling to and from work"

In addition, the entry fee for most home-based franchises is lower and they usually require less working capital to get you up and running.

A couple of small things to consider though are that you will need business insurance for your home office on top of your personal

contents insurance. It's often easy to add this on to your existing policy, but if you want to keep things separate, a quick internet search will point you in the right direction.

Also, you may want to check that your internet capability and Wi-Fi are up to scratch, depending on the nature of your business, and consider upgrading if not.

2 Freedom and flexibility

Being your own boss does not necessarily mean you can, in the first instance, set your own schedule. For retail or premises-based businesses, it's likely you'll have set opening or customer facing times. These will have a direct impact on your flexibility, until you reach a point of employing staff or a manager you can trust to be there at crucial times.

On the other hand, the undeniable flexibility of a home-based franchise offers a major advantage. For maximum productivity, it's still best to set a working day and stick to it. That's exactly how our franchisees operate at Tutor Doctor.

However, as a home-based business owner, you have the freedom to allow yourself time off to run errands and for personal appointments for things such as the doctors or dentist during the daytime. You just have to be certain that you can – and do – commit to doing a few hours in the office that evening to make up for it.

Accepting parcels, being around for plumber/electrician visits and even having the option to look after a sick child are just a few more benefits of working from home. However, as with anything, it's crucial to maintain full-time commitment. The beauty of a home-based franchise is that you

can choose to fulfil this requirement at a time that best suits you – whether it's working around your family or maybe you simply find you're more productive earlier in the mornings or later at night.

3 Family life

Parents can often find that a home-based business fits their family life incredibly well. Having the flexibility to take your children to school and be there at the end of the day to pick them up again is a luxury we can't all enjoy.

Many Tutor Doctor franchisees have children and their work-life balance is all about making the most of family life. Being around for mealtimes and participating in things like afterschool clubs and sports days are just a few of the benefits



homeworkers can enjoy. Then, once the kids are in bed, it's back to the office for a couple of hours to get the most out of the day and keep the business moving forwards.

4 Say goodbye to the commute

It seems like such a little thing when you see it written down. But if you find the mere thought of your daily commute stressful, you're definitely not alone. For many people, the duration and frustrations of the daily commute to the office or a place of work is one of the strongest driving factors – excuse the pun – for making a change.

Working from home eliminates this nightmare from your daily routine. Aside from the occasions on which you need to travel for meetings or events, the only commute you'll be doing is through the house to your home office. Bliss.

Time saved on the daily commute means you have more opportunity to spend quality time with family and friends or doing the things you love. On average, people regain a staggering two hours every day by not travelling to and from work – just think what you could with that extra time.

38%

The number of UK franchise systems that can be run from the comfort of your own home

5 Tax advantages

When you work from home, you can offset certain expenses through your business. Use of your office space and a proportion of utilities, including internet and telephone, can be charged as business expenses, for example.

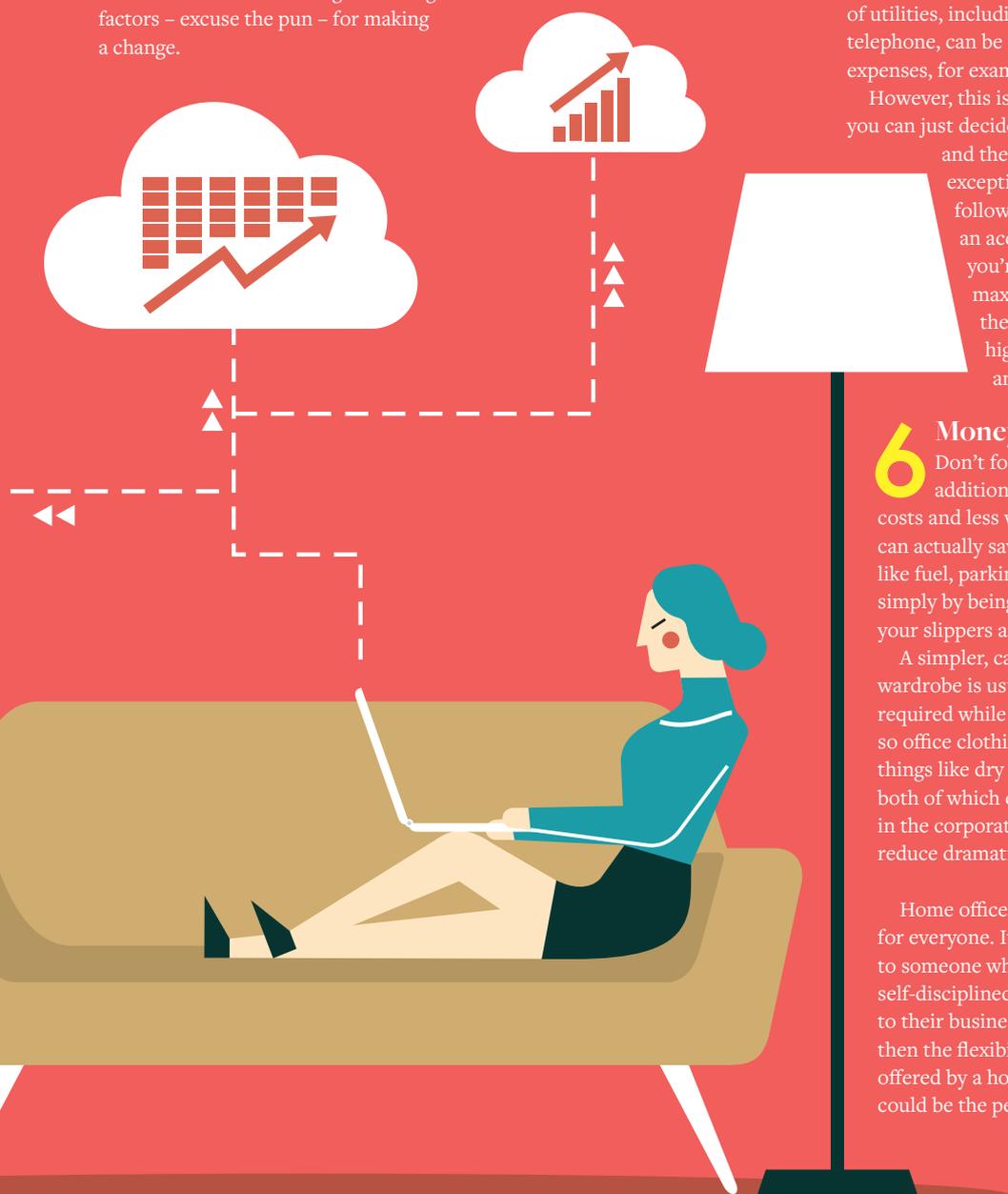
However, this isn't something you can just decide on your own and there are rules and exceptions that must be followed. Working with an accountant to ensure you're getting the maximum benefit out of these opportunities is highly recommended and well worth it.

6 Money saving

Don't forget that in addition to lower start-up costs and less working capital, you can actually save money on things like fuel, parking and rail tickets simply by being able to step out of your slippers and into your office.

A simpler, capsule work wardrobe is usually all that's required while you're at home, so office clothing costs and things like dry cleaning bills, both of which can be significant in the corporate world, can reduce dramatically.

Home office working isn't for everyone. It's best suited to someone who is organised, self-disciplined and committed to their business. If that's you, then the flexibility and freedoms offered by a home-based franchise could be the perfect fit.





**“Being able to offer people
their own business is a
humbling and exciting feeling”**

From winning *The Apprentice* to running a bakery business with franchisees based across the country, *Business Woman* talks to Alana Spencer about her secret recipe for success

INTERVIEW BY JAMES FELL

How did you get to where you are today?

I began my business at the age of 17 – it was originally named Narna's, and we made handmade chocolates in my parent's country kitchen and sold them to teachers and friends at school. A little while later I moved on to luxury traybakes and began travelling the UK selling them at farmers markets and food festivals. Fast-forward 10 years and after winning *The Apprentice* in 2016, the business has now franchised to over 70 brand ambassadors with a growing list of local and national stockists.

"Be passionate about what you do and don't be afraid to adapt when it's needed"

What training and support have you received?

My mum bought me a book on how to make your own chocolates and that's pretty much the only training I had! Everything else was born from trial and error, a lot of practise, and hard work.

I was fortunate enough to have my dad and uncle advise with the business side of things and later on I had the support of Lord Sugar and his amazing team.

What advice do you have for younger generations who'd perhaps never considered a career in franchising?

The key is to know your brand and products. Be passionate about what you do and don't be afraid to adapt when it's needed. Franchising is an amazing way to get your products or services far and wide – being able to offer people their own business who'd have otherwise not known where to start is a humbling and exciting feeling.

How would your colleagues, peers or mentors describe you?

I imagine that the main word they'd use is determined! I have such a love and passion for my products and brand that I don't often take no for an answer!

What's been your biggest professional achievement to date?

I would have to say winning *The Apprentice*. I went on the show believing that I could win it because I believed in my business plan and the business I had built up before going on the show. However, when you're actually there, it's so much more challenging than you'd expect. I am proud that I stayed true to myself and it must have played in my favour.



5 minutes with... CHRISTINA TAYLOR-CHISOLM

Christina, franchisor of Popolo Ceramico, plans to have a network of 50 UK franchises up and running

Q+A

BW: When and why did you set up Popolo Ceramico?

I set up Popolo Ceramico 10 years ago after the birth of my first child. I previously worked over 60 hours a week as an IT project manager, working at various locations around the UK, and I was often required to fly internationally at a moment's notice.

After my daughter Lola was born, I wanted a career change that provided a much better work-life balance. I'm a creative person with a background in art and design and I love ceramics, so I rented space at my local pottery where I learnt my trade, working alongside some of the north east's best potters. It was here Popolo Ceramico was created.

BW: Tell us about the business

Popolo Ceramico is a mobile ceramics business that specialises in capturing baby and children's hand and footprints in paint, clay and plaster. We also capture paw prints, host ceramic parties, host pop-up events and offer a vast array of personalised ceramics that can be purchased online. I wanted to create beautiful personalised ceramics that were not only superb quality, but also extremely stylish too.

BW: Why did you decide to franchise the concept?

Product demand was high and we were receiving more and more requests from customers outside of Newcastle. I knew I had a proven business model, awesome products and as the business grew I needed to grow with it.

I loved the job I'd created, as it fits in perfectly with modern family life. It means you can work flexibly, in a creative environment, taking all the school holidays off if you wanted to, while still earning a good income. I wanted to offer other

creative people around the country the opportunity to do the same.

BW: How much does it cost to become a franchisee and what do franchisees get for their money?

The initial fee for a franchise is £7,995. This includes a top of the range Nabertherm kiln; full training and ongoing support; a starter kit, which includes all the stock and materials required to get up and running; access to our shared drive, which includes training videos, marketing materials, photos and access to our group chats and franchisee support groups.

Franchisees also get their own page on our website and access to our wholesale site, plus, help with setting up all their social media.

BW: Who's your ideal franchisee?

We're looking for hard-working, creative, organised people who desire a better work-life balance.

BW: What's the best thing about being your own boss?

I love the flexibility it gives me. On a sunny day, I could take my kids to the beach and finish work when they went to bed.

It also means I've been able to take my kids to school and pick them up every day, attend all their assemblies and sports days and be there to see them grow up.

BW: What's been your biggest challenge to date?

Ensuring the warehouse, wholesale site and all the infrastructure was in place when we started to scale up our franchise business.

BW: How did it feel to win the NatWest EWIF New Woman Franchisor of the Year Award in 2019?

Absolutely amazing. Being recognised for



"We're looking for hard-working, creative, organised people who desire a better work-life balance"

all the hard work and long hours you put in to building a successful franchise business was the most fantastic feeling in the world.

BW: What advice would you give a younger you?

Don't try and do it all yourself. If you plan on growing your business, ensure you have the right infrastructure and a good team in place to enable you to grow.

BW: Where will your business be in five years' time?

We are concentrating on growing our network within the UK to 50 franchises within the next five years, increasing our product range and streamlining our processes.



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“There have been occasions when a man has asked to speak to my manager – I politely tell them I’m the business owner”

Tricia Craig, a Metro Rod franchisee, discusses owning her own plumbing business

What interested you in investing in a Metro Rod franchise?

I started looking for a business with my husband and we were impressed with the setup of Metro Rod, feeling that it was a recession-proof business, as drains will always need unblocking. We also had two young children and it stuck out to me as a business that I could manage whilst still being there for the kids. Full training was provided by the franchisor, as well as support to set up the business, ensuring I had the opportunity to become a very successful business owner.

Statistically speaking, drainage is a very male-dominated industry. Has this been your impression? And if so, have you had to face any challenges?

I am often asked about how it feels to be a woman working in a man’s world. I deal predominantly with engineers, facilities managers, construction site managers, buyers and many others and the majority of these are men. So how do I make myself heard? In the same way as I would if I was dealing with a woman – by communicating in a professional, respectful and equal manner. Strangely enough, it works every single time! This has also allowed me to establish strong relationships with both the Metro Rod network of franchisees and the franchisor. There have been some occasions



when a man has asked to speak to my manager but I just politely tell them that I am the business owner.

What advice would you have for other females looking to own their own property maintenance, drainage or plumbing business?

I would suggest that a woman should not be frightened to look at anything. I run a business and I run it well. I don’t actually clean drains and don’t need to know how to do that in intricate detail, but I employ people who do. I pay them well and ensure that they feel valued. The most important things to consider are whether you have the skills to run the business, the funds to start and maintain the business, and the skills to manage people.

What have been the most rewarding aspects of running a Metro Rod franchise?

I love what I do and the fact that I offer guaranteed permanent employment to

people enables them to get a mortgage, have a car and go on holiday. I get great satisfaction from sorting out a customer’s problem and I get pleasure from seeing my colleagues grow and their confidence

increase. From a personal point of view, a particularly rewarding moment was being named Female Franchisee of the Year by the British Franchise Association in 2016, which helped to demonstrate that my hard work is recognised. Managing a Metro Rod franchise allowed me to dedicate time to my children whilst successfully running the business. I also have a very full social life: I like to travel and I have recently taken up golf – what’s not to like?

How has the franchise supported you to achieve your targets or goals?

The support that I get from the franchisor is second to none. I have an incredible team backing me up whenever I need support and I know without any doubt that they want the same result as me. Any success I have is of mutual benefit and the relationship works perfectly.

Meet your perfect match

Women in Business Expo North will deliver inspiration, guidance and opportunities for all women at any stage of their professional journey

The North West is set to get its first ever exhibition dedicated to supporting women through their careers.

Women in Business Expo North is a free-to-attend, two-day event that takes place at Manchester Central on June 30-July 1. It's an educational exhibition that's designed for all women at any stage of their professional journey, providing visitors with inspiration, guidance and business services to help them find their best career match or support their business.

Christie Day, Group Event Director of Hub Exhibitions, the organiser of Women in Business Expo North, says: "Manchester is a booming city to do business in. With the largest city region economy outside of London, it was an obvious place for us to host Women in Business Expo in the north."

KEYNOTE SPEAKERS

Women in Business Expo North will feature four seminar theatres, over 60 free seminars and more than 100 exhibitors. Keynote speakers for the inaugural event include Ruby Wax, Karren Brady, Caprice Bourret, Bianca Miller-Cole and Scarlett Allen-Horton, all successful, inspirational speakers who have a wealth of experience to share with attendees.

Event features include a CV/LinkedIn Profile & Interview Clinic, mentoring, roundtables, creche and co-located tech conference in partnership with WeAreTechWomen.

In addition to franchise, technology, finance and business services, Women in Business Expo North will also be focusing on well-being in the workplace and providing insights on how to support mental health at work.

"We want women all over the UK to feel empowered to pursue the career they want, regardless of their stage in life," Christie says. "Whether that's taking on a franchise



"We want women all over the UK to feel empowered to pursue the career they want"

opportunity, finding an employer that encourages female leadership, running their own business, progressing in their current company, returning to work after having children or something completely different.

"We're excited to bring the Women in Business Expo to the north, so that women in the region can benefit from the valuable insights and opportunities our speakers and exhibitors will provide."

BUILDING ON SUCCESS IN THE SOUTH

After the huge success of Women in Business Expo South 2019, the demand for a northern edition was clear. The exhibition provides the perfect opportunity to learn

from and network with experts and industry leaders.

Exhibitor Rebecca Newenham, Founder and Director of Get Ahead VA, welcomed the company's latest franchisee on board, having met at last year's event.

She explains: "Marie, now our new Regional Director for West Surrey, and I first met at the Women in Business Expo 2019 and I knew she would be a real asset to our business. I am delighted to welcome her on board."

For more information and to register for your free ticket to Women in Business Expo North 2020 visit wibexponorth.co.uk



FAST-FOOD FRANCHISING: IT'S A FAMILY AFFAIR

WORDS BY AMANDA PETERS

Being a mother of three allows multi-unit McDonald's franchisee Kate Walker the ability to bring a different perspective to the business



case of a lack of presence at a franchise show was when Kate Walker and her husband, Kenny, knew McDonald's was the business for them.

"McDonald's didn't need to be there as it gets the right kind of people directly applying," says Kate. "It doesn't need your money; it wants your integrity and the skills you bring to the business."

"We liked the fact that it invested so much in training and was focused on getting the right people rather than just accepting everybody that applied."

The couple first started the application process back in 2002. However, as McDonald's only works with one named-franchisee, Kate took on the task. "This involved a nine-month training programme, where you engaged with different parts of the franchise, the different departments of the company and other franchisees," says Kate.

She opened her first restaurant in 2004 in Bellshill, Scotland. Now, 15 years later, Kate has a total of seven under her belt, opening a further unit in Motherwell, Rutherglen, Castlemilk and three in East Kilbride.

A recipe for success

A former marketing executive with Faulds Advertising Agency, Kate brings ample experience of working within a corporation, while her husband is more of a "classic entrepreneur" and has always been self-employed. She explains: "We felt that his entrepreneurial skills coupled with my marketing experience would be suited to starting our own business. We wanted to do something in the consumer field and felt that franchising was a good route to go down rather than starting from scratch."

Going through and finishing such a rigorous training process also meant that both the franchisee and franchisor knew they were a perfect fit.

What also appealed to the couple was the fact that each restaurant entailed a 20-year agreement to be in place, and banks were more willing to lend when there was the backing of a blue-chip business like McDonald's attached to the application. This can be a hefty sum as McDonald's states that to be considered for a franchise, it would need "a minimum of \$500,000 of non-borrowed personal resources". However, in 2018, the 37,855 McDonald's franchise restaurants generated a total of \$86.13bn in sales worldwide, making it a shoo-in for lenders.



"There is a lot of trust involved when you go into a franchise business, but you need to have somebody who is solely looking at it from your point of view, making sure that you're not doing something that you will come to regret," advises Kate. "In terms of the financial side, besides getting your own lawyers and accountants to look at the agreement, banks see McDonald's as one of the best cash-flow businesses."

A family affair

For the Walker family, franchising is a true family business – their daughter, Alex, is also involved in the franchise. "Alex has a law degree and looks after our HR function. We are hoping that in the years to come she will be a next-generation franchisee," adds the proud mother.

In such a high-stakes QSR market, where it is difficult to get a foot in the door, Kate points at this being a way into franchising. "Some women are coming into the business through their family connections and working their way up," she says. "But there's more that can be done and I want to help champion women, not only starting their own businesses, but also through the franchise model."

Bringing a different perspective

According to a report commissioned by the International Franchise Association (IFA), in 2012, 30.6 per cent of franchise businesses were female-owned compared to 20.5 per cent in 2007.

Kate believes that the female outlook is vital, especially in a consumer-focussed food business. She says: "We have a different perspective. We are also mothers and often the ones making the decision about where our families eat out."

"At the end of the day, I'm a mother that likes to take my kids out and as a parent, I not only want good value but also a family-friendly service. We need to remember that we bring a very different perspective and a huge set of skills to the business."

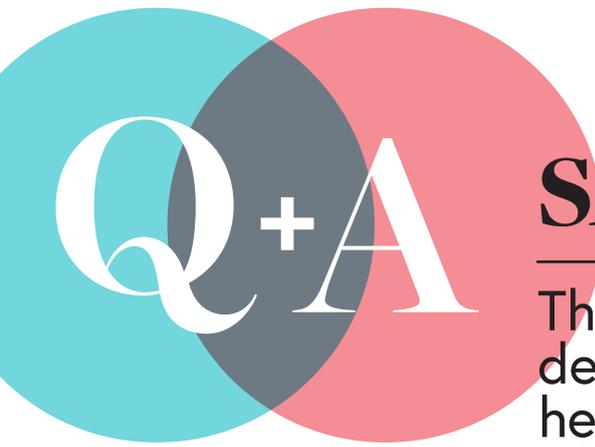
Apart from being a successful franchise business owner that employs nearly 700 people between her seven McDonald's restaurants, Kate has brought her marketing skills to the fast-food franchise. She plays a key role in the marketing and promotions team in the UK, as president of the marketing cooperative.

Onwards and upwards

Kate says that McDonald's has a "healthy expansion programme" and if the opportunity arises, she would look at opening her eighth restaurant in Scotland.

"Our restaurants are also 'growing' themselves," she says. "We are extending some of our stores to include drive-thrus. We've moved into the delivery market, too, so a lot of our restaurants are now working to accommodate delivery drivers, while trying to give our in-store customers the experience they deserve."

"There are lots of ways we are evolving as a business."



SARAH CRESSALL

The founder of The Creation Station describes how she franchised her business and the benefits of becoming a franchisee

BW: Tell us about your business

The Creation Station inspires imaginations through fun, creative activities.

With the squeeze on creativity in education, the rise in the 'experience market' and the increase in the need for more well-being activities, demand for our creative activities continues to increase.

Over 1.5 million children and adults have already been inspired by our award-winning programmes. The fun and educational activities involve creating journeys of exploration, discovery and development.

They include Tiny Treasure events for parents and newborns to create footprint and handprint keepsakes, Baby Discover and Little Explorer classes, Family Fun holiday workshops, school workshops and after-school Create Clubs, Arty Birthday parties, Event Entertainment, Creative Crafter events for adults and Care and Creativity sessions for senior citizens.

We also provide intergenerational fun by bringing our Little Explorers into our Care and Creativity sessions.

The work we do has been recognised by the franchise, educational, entertainment and business sectors. Over 6,400 customers have rated The Creation Station '5 Star' on Trustpilot and in an independent franchise satisfaction survey we gained '5 Star' satisfaction in 2016, 2017 and 2018.

BW: Why did you decide to franchise The Creation Station?

Often, our life experiences lead us on different paths. Before having kids, I'd worked as a contract manager in London and sold some of my own artworks. I also travelled a lot.

While doing Operation Raleigh – now called Raleigh International – in Zimbabwe, I was asked to help women set up their own rural creative businesses. This was a

watershed period for me, as I thought if I want to pursue a creative career it was up to me to act and make choices.

I recognised I needed to develop my own business and creative skills before I helped anyone else. I returned to London, studied arts management, became a designer-maker and ran creative workshops.

When I became a mum to my three boys, I spotted a gap in the market for creative activities for pre-school children. There was lots of gym and music, but nothing that sparked each child's curiosity to ignite their own journey of exploration, discovery and development. It was all a bit one size fits all.

My three boys are 21 months apart in age and I could see the huge difference in personalities and interests when they were little. I feel strongly that life isn't a sausage machine and wanted to help nurture the wonder within.

BW: How did you go about it?

I knew The Creation Station was a business model that would work for other like-minded people who also wanted flexibility and to do something that generated a good income and, at the same time, made a difference to others.

As demand grew and we developed the range of activities, it was obvious we had uncovered a business with great potential. People kept asking me if they could run their own Creation Station.

I worked with the British Franchise Association – I'm now a member of its board – and developed the systems and blueprint for the business over five years. I awarded the first Creation Station franchise in September 2007.

We now have an extensive creative hub team, are proactive in responding to market changes and opportunities and continue to innovate to support our 100-plus franchise

family and make a difference to individual children and people.

BW: What were the biggest challenges you faced?

The concepts behind The Creation Station were different to other franchise businesses at the time. It was very much about having a purpose and although profit was key, I wanted to ensure we kept to the core values my husband, Duncan, and myself had spent time developing.

Sometimes believing in yourself is the hardest bit. My mum said to me you can do whatever you put your mind to and I'm sure this is what helped me carry on.

Over the years lots of things have happened. In the early days, we relocated three times and had to set up The Creation Station three times. This helped us to understand and record the processes of setting up a new franchise.

BW: Why should someone invest in a franchise instead of starting up on their own?

When starting a business from scratch, you don't know what you don't know. There are always more costs, regulations and hurdles than you think there will be and there's a shortage of time to get everything done.

Some of the benefits our franchise owners have enjoyed include the ability to start earning from day one, exceptional training, ongoing support when they need it and the instant credibility the brand provides.

BW: What do you look for in a franchisee?

We look for someone who shares our core values and wants to make a difference in their community.



“As demand grew and we developed the range of activities, it was obvious we had uncovered a business with great potential”

We award the franchise to people who like being with children and adults, are proactive and want to run a successful business. The franchise is designed to be flexible around each franchise owner's life, so they can grow their business at a rate that suits them.

BW: Can you describe The Creation Station franchise award process?

If someone is looking for a rewarding and flexible creative business, we recommend they visit our website and download the information pack.

Once they've read it, most people get quite excited and there are lots of questions. We invite people to book a 'discover chat' with Maggie Seager, our head of awards and operations manager.

After the chat, we'll both agree whether it could be the right opportunity for you. If so, we'll invite you to a discovery event. Here you will observe an award-winning class and chat with local franchise

owners. We'll also go through the financials and ensure you have all your questions answered.

After the discovery event, we ask you to carefully consider if the franchise is right for you and we'll let you know within 72 hours whether we would consider awarding you the franchise. If it's a yes from both of us, we will discuss the next steps and options and create the area and opportunity that works for you.

We award our franchise to two per cent of people who enquire. It's important to us that we award our franchise to people who are the right cultural fit and who we believe can make a success of and enjoy running their business.

BW: What plans do you have for the business in the next 12 months?

We always have a range of great plans and developments. Ideas come from a wide range of sources, including our

customers, franchise owners, head office team and specialist experts.

Some of the developments are top secret. However, we can say that we're developing our school programmes, which is a growing area for our franchise owners.

As a result of my book, *Creative Sparks - Mishaps, Hurdles and Ideas to Inspire You and Yours*, going to number one on Amazon, I've been asked to talk at lots of events on creativity. I spoke at IBM alongside Lego Education and I'm speaking to the government on how to incorporate more creativity within our education systems.

We are also looking for master franchise owners overseas to begin our journey of global inspiration.

In addition, we're launching an official Guinness World Records attempt where we will be creating the largest collection of online collaged portraits. We are inviting groups, schools and workplaces to get involved. The future is inspiring!

Release your inner entrepreneur

Franchising is a supportive route into business ownership that enables you to choose a new direction

For some women, there's a yearning to be more in control of their working environment. But the challenge of knowing how to achieve this and the fear of the unknown often holds them back - especially if the desire for change involves a complete change of direction or comes after a career break. Which means there's a huge reserve of female leadership waiting to be released.

REALISE YOUR POTENTIAL

Franchising has long proven to deliver positive results for women ready to start their own business. So what are the benefits of franchising, if you're considering a career change and want to be your own boss?

1 WOMEN EXCEL WHEN THEY FEEL CONFIDENT IN WHAT THEY'RE DOING

Self-doubt is a big element behind why women don't step out into something new. When they feel unsure of their skills, they lack confidence and so hold back.

Franchising offers you a proven business model, supported by the expert training and support of your franchisor, as well as the network. So although you're growing your own business, you're not trying to do it alone. The training programmes franchisors have devised give you confidence about your new business. Confidence breeds success; franchising helps you achieve this.

2 WOMEN OFTEN WORK BETTER WHEN SURROUNDED BY OTHER WOMEN

Having at least one other female in a network empowers women to be higher achievers. In 2019, Sirena Bergman wrote in the *Independent*: 'More than 75 per cent of women in high ranking positions have a female dominated inner circle or strong ties to a few women within their network.'



"Within the franchise industry, you will discover women who will encourage you to achieve the success to which you aspire"

Within the franchise industry, you will discover women who will encourage you to achieve the success to which you aspire. Within a franchise network - especially in male-dominated sectors - female franchisees naturally gravitate together. There are also women-focused industry events, where you can network with women in other sectors.

3 WOMEN ACHIEVE MORE WHEN THERE'S A FEMALE ROLE MODEL TO ASPIRE TO

Within many sectors, the lack of female role

models in leadership has had a negative impact. However, in franchising there are a considerable number of female franchisors and franchisees building big businesses and inspiring change - many of whom enjoy inspiring and mentoring others.

Ready to release your inner entrepreneur? There are many franchise opportunities available and you don't need to have had experience in the sector to be a success.

Visit the **Encouraging Women into Franchising** (ewif.org) and **British Franchise Association** (thebfa.org) websites to discover the franchise for you.

Meet F45 TRAINING'S determined female entrepreneurs

The fitness franchise's studios encourage an environment where everyone feels welcome



Yemi Penn

F45 BRIXTON

Yemi is living a modern-day story of a woman fighting the male-dominated world of gym owners

Gaining a degree in mechanical engineering from Brunel University, Yemi, who was 24 years old at the time, was no stranger to hard work and it did not come easy for the budding entrepreneur.

Just months into an engineering graduate scheme, Yemi fell pregnant. After telling her parents, she was asked to leave her family home, forced to spend nights on the streets of London, sheltering in run-down hostels, while continuing to work to complete her graduate scheme.

Four weeks before she gave birth to her daughter, Yemi finally found somewhere to live. However, she was not content with merely surviving, she wanted to thrive. Having met a man in the US Air Force, Yemi moved to Japan and became a US military wife, where her entrepreneurial spirit truly kicked in. She taught herself to cut hair and started selling hair products to other wives, making a profit where she could.

Yemi had always been a fitness fanatic and had worked hard to develop a strong, positive relationship with her body during her years at university.

While in Australia, she came across F45 Training and decided to give it a try. She loved that the franchise offered so much more than conventional gyms, as it combined high-intensity interval training workouts and a supportive team infrastructure with workouts that were accessible to people of all fitness abilities.

Hooked on F45 from the start, Yemi couldn't fathom leaving F45 behind when she moved back to London, so she brought it with her. Setting up her own franchise in Brixton, Yemi is living a modern-day story of a woman fighting the male-dominated world of gym owners and aspires to make her F45 studio accessible to everyone from all walks of life.



Hanri and Rene

F45 HOLLOWAY

F45 was the perfect fit for the fitness enthusiasts

Having been friends since university and living together in South Africa, Hanri and Rene had always been on the same wavelength, both striving for a similar goal – to live somewhere they felt safe and free.

In 2009, Rene moved to the UK and Hanri followed shortly after, where they quickly realised that it boasted exciting opportunities – this was something they could only dream of back in South Africa.

Despite careers in accounting, Hanri and Rene were constantly looking for something else to help them feel fulfilled, which is how they found F45 Holloway.

Their original idea was to have it as a side investment, but after attending the F45 induction in Los Angeles they realised this was not possible.

Subsequently, Hanri, who was at the time incredibly unhappy in her job, gave up her career to give everything she could to F45

Holloway. F45 was the perfect fit for the fitness enthusiasts who had long been training together for various races and half marathons.

They first tried the concept at one of the nearby London studios, and from then on they were hooked. Combining their passion for fitness with a sensible investment, opening their own studio was a no brainer.

They both had their separate roles which made it a perfect partnership – Rene was the financial gatekeeper, whilst Hanri was in charge of the day-to-day running of the studio.

Despite little experience in the fitness industry, Hanri and Rene were committed to making their studio a place where everyone feels welcome – and with their positive, friendly attitudes, success has quickly followed.

Eight podcasts by boss ladies for women entrepreneurs

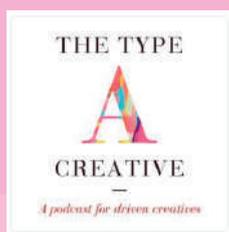
If you need advice, motivation or feel stuck in your career, these female powerhouses can provide that pick-me-up on your commute to work

WORDS BY AMANDA PETERS



1 *The Type A Creative* with Jenni Brown

It is a fine line between creativity and commerce. How can creatives also keep on top of running a successful business? Host Jenni Brown is a writer and designer but also has a “business brain and some monster-sized ambition to match”. In her podcast, she helps creatives find that balance between being a driven entrepreneur and their inner artist. Jenni interviews leading artists who have used the power of the internet to build profitable businesses from their creative passions.



Must-listen episodes:

- 1 ARSENA SCHROEDER- Saying Yes to Your Calling
- 2 HEATHER BORN ELKINS - Bringing A Big Dream To Market

2 *Promote Yourself to CEO* with Racheal Cook

The path to being your own boss can be a lonely road but host Racheal Cook provides some company along the way. Each week her candid conversations deal with all that comes with stepping into the role of CEO of a business, the hard lessons learned along the way and practical, profitable strategies to grow a sustainable business while beating the burnout.



Must-listen episodes:

- 1 5 Reasons Your Business May Be Burning You Out
- 2 How to Go Pitch Yourself with Angie Trueblood

3 *Skimm'd From the Couch*, with Carly Zakin and Danielle Weisberg

The co-founders and co-CEOs take it full circle, from starting their company, theSkimm, from a couch, the boss ladies bring it back to one for their podcast. The series is an insider's take on the road to success, looking at the ups and downs of starting a business, minus the sugarcoating. The podcast is specifically geared towards giving women career advice based on their own experiences and that of their guests, including Bumble's founder and CEO Whitney Wolfe Herd, Sara Blakely, founder and CEO of Spanx and the list goes on.



Must-listen episodes:

- 1 Whitney Wolfe Herd: Founder and CEO of Bumble
- 2 Christie Hefner: Former CEO and Chairman of Playboy Enterprises



4 *Swipe Up with Katherine McDermott*

Every week Katherine McDermott, a public relations and influencer marketing expert, gives us an “influencer’s sneak peek” into the world of PR. If you’re an influencer or founder, this podcast can benefit you when it comes to mastering the shift in the billion-dollar marketing industry. Katherine promises insider interviews with top bloggers, Instagramers and YouTubers.



Must-listen episodes:

- 1 The Good, The Bad, + the Bankrupt with Diana Pearl
- 2 An Entrepreneur Who Pitched Herself to Oprah

5 *On Purpose with Alex Beadon*

If you are feeling lost, off-balance on your entrepreneurial journey or just a little stuck, then you need a dose of the *On Purpose* podcast. It is easy to veer off course on your journey to greatness but host Alex Beado can help you stay focused on what matters most: purpose. With a mix of helpful strategies from her own launches and interviews, *On Purpose* is the ideal pick-me-up podcast if you’re feeling uninspired.



Must-listen episodes:

- 1 How to Kill Doubt During a Launch
- 2 How to Listen to Your Intuition with Lindsay Marino

6 *Girlboss Radio with Sophia Amoruso*

This podcast is hosted by Sophia Amoruso, CEO and founder of Girlboss and NastyGal and Neha Gandhi, editor in chief and COO of Girlboss. Sophia interviews female powerhouses – women that have made their mark by pushing boundaries – and extracts solid advice from the lessons they’ve learned along the way.



Must-listen episodes:

- 1 Is ‘niche’ the future of— everything? With Gina Bianchini of Mighty Networks
- 2 Tamara Mellon, Founder Of Jimmy Choo and Tamara Mellon

7 *Don't Keep Your Day Job with Cathy Heller*

Following your passion even during difficult times is easier said than done. However, Cathy Heller has proof. Through her podcast, she interviews entrepreneurs about turning their passion into profitable, full-time careers. Cathy brings on successful creative business people who share hands-on, practical steps to make a living doing what they love while also building a life they can’t wait to wake up to every single day.



Must-listen episodes:

- 1 How Vulnerability Went Viral - Morgan Harper Nichols
- 2 Why Gritty People Win - Angela Duckworth

8 *The Inner Boss with Jen Casey*

Social media and sales strategist and neuro-linguistic programming (NLP) practitioner, Jen Casey, found that the number one reason people don’t achieve results was because of their mindset. On her podcast, Jen hosts interviews with leading female entrepreneurs as well as solo episodes with practical advice to help women grow.



Must-listen episodes:

- 1 How To Get A Resistant Spouse On Board With Your Big Business Vision
- 2 Break Through Unconscious Beliefs



RAISING THE BARRE

Niki Rein, founder of fitness company Barrecore, tells us about the business and her plans for expansion through franchising

INTERVIEW BY JEFF JAMES

What did you do before you set up Barrecore?

My career in wellness began in the spa industry, then moved to yoga and personal training.

After moving to London from the US in 2009, I was doing one-to-one personal training with a dance-based focus and started Barrecore classes out of a little mews house in the Chelsea neighbourhood. It was clear that I had been fortunate to hit the wave of dance-based fitness at the right time.

Tell us about the business

Barrecore is a group exercise collective offering low impact barre fitness classes and personal training in a boutique environment.

Classes feel like a group-style personal training session, where clients feel simultaneously challenged and cared for. Our results-focused and tough sessions are still safe to do numerous times per week and across many age ranges.

I'm still amazed by the results our clients experience, even nearing 10 years of their barre practice. We have 13 studios in the UK and are growing internationally. We also have an online workouts platform and have just launched our international franchise programme, which we are extremely excited about.

Can you give us an insight into the fitness regime?

Classes are all low impact and we predominantly use body weight as resistance, but also use small props such as hand weights and a yoga/pilates ball. We focus the entire workout on two main muscle contractions – isometric and

eccentric – to create muscle burnout that results in fast and lasting change.

Our classes start with a brief warm-up, followed by strong core and arm exercises. We then move to the ballet barre for lower body work and finish with more core and abdominal exercises.

Class intervals move quickly, but each section is followed by a recovery stretch to aid the body's flexibility and recovery. Not only do our clients feel a sense of elation from the endorphin release post class, but the muscle burnout created during the 55 minutes goes on to keep clients in a fat burning state for a few days following class.

Why did you decide to franchise the business?

We are predominately a community-focused business and thrive in the local areas where our studios are based. We feel that the workout and the environment are all about personal relationships, as well as creating results in studios. We see the power of having a local owner who is very present in the local area and studios.

To consider expanding to neighbouring towns, cities and countries without having a pulse in the local market just doesn't feel like an authentic course of action for growth and for maintaining Barrecore's quality and ethos. So finding the right franchise partners in areas we know Barrecore will be well received is the most sensible and important decision for us.

We've had a fantastic franchise partner in the Manchester area since 2014 who has subsequently opened a second location – it's the perfect model for all around success. Plus, I'm thrilled to help other people open a positive, uplifting and healthy business.



"I'm thrilled to help other people open a positive, uplifting and healthy business"

How much does a franchise cost and what does a franchisee get for their investment?

The initial investment for use of brand, marketing assets, 200 teacher training hours, operational training and assistance in finding a great location is £47,000.

Each franchisee will have dedicated support from our head office and ongoing training and support. There is a monthly management fee of 7.5 per cent for the ongoing support and teacher training.

What type of franchisee are you looking for?

Someone committed to taking part in the method and community. We are requesting all partners go through the teacher training and commit to teaching at least one class on the weekly schedule.

Although we're happy to have investor-only partners, we do request that whoever is managing the day-to-day operations has part-ownership of the business as well to ensure quality and customer service continues to be unparalleled.

We also know, first-hand, the power of having someone regularly in the studio who is passionate and knowledgeable



about the method and brand, which is what makes a studio successful.

Once their initial franchise is established, can a franchisee purchase more territories?

Yes they can, but this will be assessed on a case-by-case basis.

What plans do you have for Barrecore?

We plan on more owned growth in London and internationally.

What advice would you give someone considering franchising their business?

We proudly know our method works and what we're aiming to achieve within our studio communities. But only now, after eight years, have we decided to fully launch the international franchising of our studios.

Therefore, I would say to others considering franchising to make sure their messaging is clear and easy to deliver, but with the flexibility to adapt to different markets. Franchises have the stigma of being 'cookie cutter', but that only goes so far. All businesses need to adapt to their local market and customer feedback in order to survive and thrive.





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Setting the stage for success with Stagecoach Performing Arts

Sarah Kelly reflects on her career and the life lessons she brings to her role as the CEO of children's franchise Stagecoach Performing Arts

WORDS BY AMANDA PETERS

Sarah Kelly's resume reads like a star-studded cast of world-renowned brands – from being CEO of weight-management company LighterLife for three years and clocking up time with Warner Bros. Entertainment and LOVEFiLM, to her decade in the fast-food franchise space where she helped businesses like Burger King and Wendy's International conquer the globe. Since 2013, she has been CEO of Stagecoach Performing Arts, where she is modernising the business for the future. Stagecoach is on a mission to become the go-to name in child enrichment franchising in the world.

Sarah owes her highly accomplished career to her work ethic, instilled in her by her parents. She recalls working at her father's butcher shop from as young as eight. "I remember being in the shop on Saturdays – from very early on I knew the value of hard work and money thanks to my dad," she says.

It was not only her father that taught her the value of a disciplined work ethic, as her mother was also "cut from the same cloth". "She absolutely gave us the ethic that education can give you choices in life. We were never allowed off sick and always had to go to school," continues Sarah.

A tiny but significant detail

Although she grew up with her father owning a chain of shops, Sarah went down the education route, opting to go to the University of Portsmouth to embark on a business studies degree in hotel and catering.

However, things could have turned out very differently had it not been for one tiny but significant detail. "I loved biology and the understanding of the sense of being a human. I would have loved to have been a surgeon or a doctor but I cannot stand the sight of blood, so that dream had to end quickly. On the flip side, I was very good at catering and I like dealing with people. It seemed like the right industry to get into," she explains.

In her third year at university, Sarah had a monumental experience that put her on the road to success. She explains: "I worked at the largest hotel in London



"Generally, as a woman in business, you use the same skills that you do in franchising: persuasion, facilitating using evidence to help franchisees grow their businesses, and staying professional at all times"

called the Regent Palace Hotel in Piccadilly Circus. It was a 1,500-bed hotel and I worked in every department, including reception and security."

It was there where she was also introduced to the marketing and sales team. "I really enjoyed the whole process and loved the creative energy in marketing and how it shapes a business' direction," she adds. "I have always been interested in the human psyche and marketing is all about consumer psychology."

Answering the call

After finding her calling, she went back to university and majored in marketing in her final year. Sarah was soon snapped up by the Forte Group to work at its head office as a marketing graduate.

Although now defunct, the hotel chain was massive in those days. "It was an 800-hotel strong global organisation when I joined," says Sarah. "I was lucky enough to get a placement in the company's management programme. More than 3,500 people applied for two spots in sales and marketing, and I got the marketing position."

After a couple of years at Forte Group and another two at a marketing agency, Sarah began her "decade in fast food" and franchising. She joined Burger King in January 1990 as its marketing director for Europe and the Middle East. Burger King had launched in the UK at the time and wanted to take on McDonald's, which was already an established player in the market.

An 'interesting' decade in fast food

"It was fast-growing, high pay, sales-focused but also retail-orientated, and being in marketing, there were a lot of media-driven campaigns," says Sarah. "It was a great experience to not only get into franchising and understand it but also to get a highly paid marketing position. There was great development and growth for me in this period which is why I stayed so long in the organisation."

At Burger King and later at Wendy's International, Sarah served as the marketing director for franchising across 25 countries in Europe and the Middle East. "I was working with master franchisees in those countries to develop their marketing for the business and to make sure it was in line with the global voice," she says.

Sarah candidly describes this period of her career as "interesting", especially when going into countries like Poland and Hungary, when the Berlin Wall had just come down, or the Middle East, where the culture was vastly different.

"The concepts of customer service, marketing and this shiny American brand coming to a market where only about five per cent of the population could afford to buy the product was a very interesting positioning piece," says Sarah.

Another eye-opener was navigating being a woman in a senior position when entering a market that was primarily male-driven. "A lot of the time I had to keep my mouth zipped up, from a female perspective," says Sarah.

And how did she manage to still lead and be heard in a patriarchal society? "Generally, as a woman in business, you use the same skills that you do in franchising: persuasion, facilitating using evidence to help franchisees grow their business, and staying professional at all times."

In search of the golden nugget

Other important lessons were recognising the importance of cultural sensitivity and listening to the master franchisee of a market. "As they often come from that country, they have a really good understanding of the

cultural needs of the market," she says, but that is not to say that she doesn't do her own research too. "Always do your own piece of research so you have evidence against what franchisees or the master franchisees are telling you.

"Look for the key deliverables; the golden nuggets that transcend cultures. What you need to sometimes change is the tonality of how you deliver the message."

An example of this is Stagecoach's current brand positioning, which is 'Creative Courage for Life'. The brand aims to develop children's life skills through the performing arts and give them the creative courage to go forward and accomplish on the stage of life.

"This grows their confidence, self-esteem, empathy and self-expression through the creative medium of performing arts and that has global value," explains Sarah. "In today's world where you're not sure what the jobs of the future are going to be, one thing that's always going to be needed is creativity to further innovation."

In the UK, parents are singularly driven when it comes to their

children. It's about evidence of attainment. Thus, the educational framework incorporates exams or some form of certification to evidence a child's progress.

However, in Germany, parents don't want their children stressed, especially outside their school environment. To adapt to this need, Stagecoach focuses its classes on using collective play through performing arts to understand life skills. "So where we have 'Creative Courage for Life' as our positioning, in Germany, it is tweaked to 'Auf der Bühne des Lebens spielen', which means 'playing on the stage of life'," says Sarah.

Perfection is overrated

As the 90s drew to an end, so did Sarah's time in fast food as she wanted to be closer to home and her family. Using her marketing network, she landed a job as the director of marketing and sales for Warner Bros.

Entertainment, where she worked on the "little known" Harry Potter franchise.

More importantly, this was where Sarah





learned a valuable leadership lesson. She says: "Along the way you meet different people but it was at Warner Bros. where I learned strength-based management, which means surrounding yourself with the right people in the right positions.

"You can't do everything on your own, especially if you are a CEO, so you need to craft a team like in an orchestra, playing the right instruments to be able to create a symphony at the end, which is what I have done at Stagecoach."

After her time at Warner Bros. Entertainment, Sarah took up more flexible consultancy roles at LOVEFiLM and then at Coffee Nation, to spend more time with her daughter. She also went back to school, getting a diploma in counseling and psychotherapy at the University of Hertfordshire. "Becoming a psychotherapist allowed me to understand my own strengths and weaknesses. I learned that perfection is overrated and good enough is okay," she says.

During this phase of her life Sarah came across weight-management franchise, LighterLife, where she was hoping to join as a franchisee but instead was offered the job as head of franchising development. Not long after joining did Sarah become CEO of the brand.

From specialist to generalist

Although she had been in leadership roles before, this was new territory for her as she went from a specialist in marketing and franchising to a

generalist. It was here where Sarah saw the lessons she learned at Warner Bros. Entertainment come into play.

After leaving LighterLife in April 2013, Sarah took some time to think about her future and by September she was appointed as the CEO of Stagecoach. At the time the 20-plus-year franchise was undergoing a massive change. The founders were stepping away from the business and it was Sarah's mission to take the brand to the next level. She says: "I'm an optimist and I can always see an opportunity to build. The lack of funding in the arts in mainstream education has resulted in serious danger of a whole generation of children growing up without art – I see Stagecoach filling that gap by helping children develop life skills through the performing arts."

Sarah also chose the franchise for its ability to offer self-employment, especially for women. "67 per cent of women have returned to self-employment in the last 10 years due to the need for flexible working and over 80 per cent of our franchisees are now female," she says. While on a personal note, she took on the mammoth task because she wanted to understand the industry better and support her daughter on her performing arts journey.

'Evolution not revolution'

So what is next for Sarah and the brand? "At Stagecoach, we named it 'evolution not revolution'," she says. "This business has a passionate heart but it was not articulated." She

knew that once she uncovered the DNA of the business, she could unlock its true potential and this lay in connecting with the franchisees.

"As it is about unlocking potential by developing life skills through the performing arts, we named it 'Creative Courage for Life'. In fact, we trademarked it. Our whole campaign has been built around this single unifying idea and this was a positioning that everyone could get behind. We were finally putting words to the idea," she adds.

Stagecoach is on a mission to double the size of the business and this has instilled a growth mindset in its franchisees, some of whom have quadrupled their businesses. "We have more than doubled our profit margin and are on our way to doubling the amount of students, too.

"After spending the last six years making sure we have a proven model that has been branded correctly, we are going full throttle to take the brand worldwide. Stagecoach is in eight countries already and we are looking to solidify our presence in Australia, Canada and Germany, which are our core markets outside the UK. We also have a presence in Thailand and are having conversations in China, the US, India and the Gulf," says Sarah.

Stagecoach Performing Arts by numbers

- 2,000 schools
- 3,000 teachers
- 48,000 pupils
- 8 countries
- 5 continents
- 350 franchisees

Leading the way

Five reasons why women make great business leaders

WORDS BY KIMBERLEE PERRY

1 WE'RE OPEN TO COMMUNICATION

Communication is an invaluable skill in the workplace and beyond, and women I work with have the much-needed ability to talk things through. It creates more transparency in the ideals, ambitions and working methods of the business.

As my team mostly works from home, the ability to communicate remotely is vital. I also love it when we're all physically together, talking a 100 miles an hour and offering our opinions on how to improve the business.

2 OUR NURTURING APPROACH

Women are naturally nurturing, which in the best scenario translates into helping others succeed. It's something we encourage at ((BOUNCE)): empowerment and building confidence are core values of the business.

We're also passionate about caring for others and being totally accessible. We pioneered the "child-friendly" movement in the fitness industry, as gyms and exercise classes tend to preclude parents – and I attribute this focus on inclusivity to our rapid growth.

3 WE ARE EMOTIONALLY INTELLIGENT

Women possess an innate ability to recognise and react to emotions in the workplace. It's essential to consider the emotions of others when you're a leader and far too many people leave empathy out of their decision-making processes.

Listening to others and picking up on emotional cues means you not only develop a great team spirit but you're able to get the best out of everyone.

4 OUR LEVEL OF ORGANISATION

I work with many female leaders who constantly strike the delicate balance between the complexities of their job and personal life. The ability to multi-task and be agile is critical in leadership – and many women I know do this all day, every day, as they wear their many professional and personal hats.

5 WE VALUE WORK-LIFE BALANCE

The narrative has moved beyond wanting to "have it all": women want to have what works for them – and personal life can't be left out of the equation. We are now unwilling to sacrifice our ambitions and are determined to find a balance and level of satisfaction in and out of work that is quite frankly refreshing in today's job market.

I always value honesty and directness when discussing career goals – and many women come to us because the franchising model is convenient and conducive to a better work-life balance.



THE AUTHOR

Kimberlee Perry is CEO and founder of ((BOUNCE)), an indoor trampoline fitness concept that she started with £200 and is now turning over £3m a year

"I'VE LEARNT THAT BABY BRAIN DOES EXIST!"

Amber Manning, general manager of global hairdressing franchise Just Cuts, discusses navigating being a business leader while being pregnant

What does your role as general manager and UK CEO involve?

My role is to ensure the sustainability and growth of the Just Cuts and Justice Professional business worldwide. This includes supporting my team across Australia, New Zealand and the UK, in all areas of our growth, for both our Justice Professional haircare range – that we manufacture – and Just Cuts franchising.

This year the role will involve cementing our roots in the UK and across Europe. Recently, we have strengthened the Just Cuts business through our new digital platforms, which includes online check-in and a new client app. We've also integrated an app for our franchise owners, allowing them to manage their businesses in real time, by knowing who has clocked in and

out and achieved their KPIs. We also have an app incentive programme for our stylists. All of our projects since 2018 have been to establish easy systems for our clients, stylists and franchise owners. As CEO, my mission is to continue to make our systems and processes as simple as possible.

How do you find balancing home and work life?

I'm currently expecting my first child. I live with my partner, Fletcher, in the Eastern suburbs of Sydney. However, in my role, I travel constantly between different states and countries. I'm super lucky to have such a supportive partner who supports my career. I love yoga, the beach and meditation. I grew up in a small town by the beach, so a regular beach swim or walk



"Surround yourself with a great support network"

always helps me to relax or feel at home, wherever I am in the world.

I'm also very lucky that I work in a family business – Denis McFadden is the founder of Just Cuts and also my stepfather. This will allow me to return to work earlier than other new mums, as my mother and Denis love babies, so I'm sure they will be a great support if I have to go into a quick meeting! I keep telling them that if New Zealand prime minister Jacinda Arden can do it, so can I.

What does a typical day look like for you?

A work day can start at 6 am, with NZ waking before us, then continues until 11 pm at night, when the UK wakes up. My day ranges from working with our marketing team, legals and leasing, warehousing, franchisees and our CFO. I really see my role in Australia, NZ and UK bringing everyone together in a collaborative environment to ensure the success of our franchise owners. I always say that the only way we are successful is if our franchise owners are successful.

You've overseen some huge projects, including Just Cuts launching in the UK, while pregnant. Have you got any tips?

My answer is always meditation. I have been extremely lucky with my pregnancy, and I only get tired in the afternoons – I know

↓ Denis McFadden and Amber Manning



other expectant mums aren't that fortunate. I still meditate every day. This keeps me sane and also gives me the energy I need to keep going. They say that Vedic meditation, which is the type I practice, is equivalent to four hours rest. In a family business you never really switch off, so I am forever grateful to Fletcher for allowing me to work nights and weekends, as he sees my passion for the business.

In terms of our UK expansion, we have been lucky in that our head of operations in Australia, David Mathie, moved with his partner to the UK, taking up a two-year opportunity to expand our Just Cuts salons and Justice Professional product offering. I speak to David morning and night to keep things on track and ensure the Australia team are providing him with the support he needs to drive the UK business.

How much support have you been given by the team at Just Cuts?

I must say being pregnant does make people much nicer to you! I have an amazing team, but I've invested significant time in ensuring the right people are in the right roles to support our franchise owners and move the business forward, in preparation for my maternity leave. I'm apparently not allowed to carry boxes or heavy paperwork – or so the team tells me – but I still try.

How long do you intend to take off for maternity leave?

I will take the three months leave and then work remotely for three months. I know some people might say I'm crazy, but Just



↑ Amber and Fletcher



→ JUSTICE Professional warehouse opening

"I'm a huge advocate for professional development and mentors"

Cuts is part of the family – it's in my blood. I'm lucky that I have a great support network around me to allow me to do this and also ensure my newborn son doesn't miss out.

How will you manage returning to work? Will you come back part-time initially?

Yes, thank goodness for the powers of modern technology, conference calls and online meetings, you can do business from anywhere these days. Most of my team are based all over Australia, New Zealand and the UK, and are used to working remotely, so this should not be a problem. I believe the workplace is not a nine-to-five gig any more. This is not only for the benefit of our team members but also our clients and franchise owners. I will absolutely be back to celebrate our 30 years in franchising later this year.

How do you plan on managing your career whilst caring for your baby?

I'm a huge advocate for professional development and mentors. I believe in attending workshops and working with a mentor as much as possible. I'm a member of the Franchise Council of Australia's Chief Executive Syndicate Group, a peer support network for CEOs, MDs and GMs of Australian franchisor companies. We meet on a monthly basis and I've already scheduled in time for the baby to be cared for his grandparents that day, so that I can still attend.

I think these days a career is about your passion for a business or brand. Our franchise owners, team members and stylists are so passionate about the Just Cuts brand that it's infectious. I don't see Just Cuts as a career but a passion.

What advice can you give to other expectant parents as to how they can manage their career/business whilst being pregnant?

Number one would be to learn Vedic meditation. Secondly, surround yourself with a great support network. For women that are not part of a family business, prove yourself invaluable to your employer and show your capabilities of working remotely before going on maternity leave, so it makes it easier for you to negotiate a return-to-work plan. If leaders can see you were capable of this before you had a baby, you're more likely to be offered a flexible return-to-work plan.

What's been your biggest challenge as an expectant parent in the workplace?

I've learnt that baby brain does exist! I used to be the one judging my friends when they would say that but, specifically in the early stage of my pregnancy, I found it to be true. I have had to learn to write everything down and use my calendar more diligently. I'm used to working in a very fast-paced environment and I have learnt that this is not always possible when pregnant. Especially as you get closer to your due date – even walking up the stairs can be a struggle.

Meet the dynamic duo shaping the franchise marketing industry

In just four years, Lucy Archer and Sally Anne Butters have grown their PR firm, RevPR, to become an award-winning, internationally-renowned marketing brand. The secret to their success? Strong team culture

It's been just over four years since business partners Lucy Archer and Sally Anne Butters launched RevPR, a specialist franchise PR agency. Supported by Fishman PR in Chicago, they were able to take their combined experience of the franchise industry and PR expertise to the UK market and win their first clients very quickly.

Not their first foray into business ownership, the ladies were determined to grow Rev PR by ensuring they create a strong team culture with a focus on the collective rather than any one individual.

"At Rev PR, we help our clients move their businesses forward. We do that by getting brands into the press and by creating valuable content that feeds their online and offline presence," explained Sally. "Our partnership with Fishman PR showed us how successfully they gained coverage for their clients, supporting them using a team approach. As we recruited one publicist and then another, it was clear that by creating a strong team culture, the client results followed smoothly. And so, 'TeamRev' was born. It's a principle that can – and we think should – be applied in any business. If you focus on the wellbeing of your team first, client work is delivered more effectively as a result."

The importance of a five-year plan

The need to recruit into the team had been identified early in year one, as Lucy and Sally worked with a business coach

from the franchise ActionCOACH. Their detailed five-year plan linked client income and workload with staff recruitment.

"We knew we had to develop a robust recruitment strategy as most publicists dream of working in London, not in the Oxfordshire countryside," said Lucy. "But even that was overshadowed by our desire to find staff who would stay longer than the usual 18-month turnaround we often see in marketing and PR roles. TeamRev was born of a strategy combining initial training, ongoing professional development and fun at work, that would reduce the possibility of career burnout.

"The key to developing our TeamRev culture is, first and foremost, leading by example and empowering our people to take up their roles with passion. Instead of one person being the face of the business, we openly operate as a team and encourage our clients, prospects and affiliates to understand the work everyone in the business does. Our publicists report their own PR coverage and actively engage with clients on a daily basis, helping them to feel valued and appreciated. Our mantra is that none of us is as strong as all of us."

Professional development

Neither of the ladies can say that they have come up against difficulties from being a woman in business. However, they are not afraid to ask the experts for advice in areas where they have skills or knowledge gaps.



"If you focus on the wellbeing of your team first, client work is delivered more effectively as a result"



“Professional development is just as important to Lucy and me as it is for our publicists,” explains Sally. “But I’ll never be a qualified accountant or IT specialist, so we partner with suppliers who have been recommended. We choose those who will spend time explaining things to us in layman’s terms so we can understand what is happening and trust the experts with the day-to-day activity. Incidentally, recommendations are important to us: our first few years of growth at Rev PR was organic and entirely down to franchisors and colleagues in the franchise industry recommending us.

“Having an equitable working relationship with my business partner is another reason for Rev’s success. Starting any business is stressful and having Lucy in the driving seat with me has been invaluable. Sometimes we finish each other’s sentence with an idea we’ve both had simultaneously for an improvement in the business. Other times we’ll bring a balancing view on an issue to help make an informed final decision.”

International pedigree

Lucy and Sally are both members of the Chartered Institute of Public Relations and the whole team are members of the Public Relations and Communications Authority.

"Sometimes we finish each other's sentence with an idea we've both had simultaneously for an improvement in the business"

Both ladies have extensive experience in franchising, with Lucy holding Qualified Franchise Professional status with the British Franchise Association. Since launching Rev PR, they have also learned a lot about franchising in international markets.

“Our sister agency, Fishman PR in Chicago, was started by Sherri Fishman over 20 years ago. Our partnership with Sherri and her husband Brad meant we were thrust into the world of franchising in North America,” explained Lucy. “We spent a couple of weeks in Chicago and Philadelphia in 2015, meeting their team and attending what is considered a ‘small franchise conference’ in their market, which had around 600 delegates!

“It wasn’t long before we made connections with franchise brands we wouldn’t normally have a chance to meet through UK-based events. More recently, we’ve ventured into the Australian market, too. Our PR and content creation services are delivered in the UK but over 80 per cent of our clients are global franchises with half of those headquartered in the US or Canada.”

Award-winning services

2019 was a strong year for the firm and Rev PR was widely recognised for its growth and client results. In three consecutive months, TeamRev won awards spanning every sector the company represents.

“In September, we were given the Silver Award for Outstanding Small PR Consultancy by the PR industry’s Chartered Institute of Public Relations. In October, we won the award for Best Marketing & PR Business at the huge Best Business Women Awards. In November, it was Best Service Provider at The Best Franchise Awards. To round off an extremely busy year with 100 per cent satisfaction rating from our clients in the franchise industry means so much to us,” said Lucy.

“We’re a creative bunch at Rev PR but Lucy and I are also focused on strategic developments for the business,” says Sally. “We’re excited about the growth this new decade will bring. One thing is for sure, Rev’s team culture will be what keeps us enjoying our time as business owners.”

Finding opportunities through franchising

Investing in a franchise is becoming an increasingly popular option for many business-minded women

WORDS BY ANNA NEVILLE



THE AUTHOR
Anna Neville is the CEO and founder of Kidslingo

In the past, the franchise industry may have been considered a male-dominated domain.

However, not only are more women getting into franchising, but they are thriving, with many franchises geared to their strengths, abilities and experience.

Franchising makes a lot of sense to professional women who want flexibility without compromising on their career progression or lifestyle. Here are a few reasons why women are succeeding in franchising and the opportunities that are available to them.

Flexibility and fulfilment

Women who've had a successful career and then go on to have a family will certainly enjoy the flexibility that running their own business offers. Trying to find a job at a senior level that offers the level of flexibility you need with a young family can often be challenging in the modern workplace.

Flexibility of working hours is a critical factor for many women when determining their career path. For example, at Kidslingo we have franchisees who have children with additional needs – they need to factor in time to go to numerous health appointments, which can be difficult in traditional employment. Equally, this applies to people who want to focus on a healthy lifestyle away from the nine-to-five or those who have other responsibilities, such as having to care for an elderly relative or pets at home.

Our franchisees are committed to languages, but many want to step out of the traditional roles of teacher or translator. A Kidslingo franchise gives them the opportunity to inspire children to love languages outside of often rigid systems and bring their passion to life. A huge sense of fulfilment comes with the success of creating a business that you're truly passionate about.

They possess the necessary skills and experience

When you run your own small business, even if it's a franchise, you need the ability to multitask.

Traditionally, women are recognised as having the ability to spin many plates at a time and this ability to juggle is imperative when running a franchise. Kidslingo franchisees not only deliver the classes, but have a number of other roles – from sales and marketing to admin and financial management – so it's important to be willing to turn your hand to anything.

Many women are good at adapting to new situations and embracing new challenges – being brave and stepping outside your comfort zone are hugely important factors in driving business success.

Women are often aware of their own weaknesses, which makes them ideal franchisees, as they can identify exactly where they need training and additional help. This allows a franchisor to offer bespoke support to the individual to create a structure that works best for each franchisee.

Empowering franchisees and giving them the confidence they need to be a success is a major part of a franchisor's role. Ultimately, running your own franchise will require great communication skills and an understanding of your customers. Many women thrive in this area and have the experience to deal with numerous different situations.

Things to consider

Transitioning from employment to self-employment can be challenging. Swapping the day-to-day camaraderie of having a natter during a coffee break in a busy office with having to motivate yourself while working at home can feel quite alien in the beginning.

We recognise that self-employment can be lonely at times, so we promote local mentors, informal franchisee get-togethers and networking groups so people don't feel isolated.

It's also important to remember that although someone is investing in a franchise, they still need to be the one driving the business and acquiring customers. With many plates to spin on a professional and personal level, it's vital that women remember to have boundaries and give themselves enough time to dedicate to growing their business.

Women succeeding

For the women in our network, success, fulfilment and happiness can look different for each person.

We have some franchisees who have come from corporate roles who still want the same level of financial

"Many women are good at adapting to new situations and embracing new challenges"



reward they enjoyed as an employee. For others, the measure of success is in finding a career they are passionate about and that fits with their home life. One of the unique benefits of becoming a franchisee is that the same franchise can give people the different things they personally need to be happy.

Very few Kidslingo franchisees have run a business before, but we have created a network and business structure where they can succeed if they put in the time, effort and follow the process. We are always open and honest, not only about the benefits of running a franchise, but also the challenges you might face, as we believe everyone needs to go into franchising with their eyes wide open.

One of the ways to facilitate this is

to introduce prospective franchisees to existing franchisees, so they can talk about their own journeys and the challenges they have faced.

We also do everything we can to make the onboarding process as easy as possible to enable women to join us – from online training they can do in their own time to providing a ready-made to-do list.

We find some franchisees require significant handholding, while others are happy to be more autonomous – we are there throughout the entire process to offer the support that's appropriate for each individual franchisee. We tailor the support to their needs throughout their franchising journey, so they can continue to grow as business leaders and inspire more women to find their own success.

Female friendly

30%

Of all franchisees are women

37%

Of new franchisees are women, a figure that's risen 20% since 2015

65%

Of people employed in franchise businesses are women

Source: British Franchise Association
NatWest franchise survey 2018



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- Raquel Harvey, Caterpillar Music Blackpool

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Music

How to raise your brand's profile through the roof

Former *BBC* business journalist and broadcaster, Penny Haslam, explains how to promote your brand and power up your profile

WORDS BY PENNY HASLAM

If you run a business or have ambition for your career, you'll be familiar with the feeling of 'ISGOTM', which means: I should get out there more! This isn't actually a term, by the way, but it should be.

Whenever I talk to people about 'getting out there' in order to raise their profile or build up their brand, they roll their eyes and shake their heads. "Yes" they agree guiltily: "I really need to be doing more of that".

They understand the concept that being known is good for business and that being a best-kept secret is no route to success.

But being Kardashian-famous is not everyone's cup of tea – it looks like a lot of posing about, doesn't it? But faceless marketing and PR campaigns, no matter how good they are, cannot replace the ability to engage and gain trust in the same way a real human person can. After all, as the old adage goes: people buy people.

I work with senior leaders and business owners, helping them make themselves and their organisations a little bit famous. We start by putting a strategy together that supports their objectives, which might be attracting customers, staff, franchisees, investors and suppliers, or building the brand profile in general.

I then train them to get their message across concisely and confidently. That might include how to ace a TV or radio interview, shine in a panel discussion, deliver a killer keynote speech or create video content for social media.

What I uncover time and again, regardless of age or experience, is the basic human instinct to run far, far away from this sort of stuff. And driving that is the dread that we will look like an idiot and become a social outcast. We get 'FOGOT': fear of getting out there (again, I'm being creative with the acronyms). Layer on top, for women especially,

Three ways to copper bottom your confidence and power up your profile:

1. Sort out your self-talk

The 19th century novelist George Eliot said: "Our thoughts are often worse than we are". She knew that the voice, or voices, in our head was quite capable of running us down.

You are not alone if your 'self talk' is critical of what you look like, what you say, your actions or decisions. It can talk to you in a way that you wouldn't

dream of speaking to a friend or relative. If that's the case and it's holding you back, then you have a negative self-talk gremlin that needs extinguishing.

So, when you hear that voice being negative, talk back to it! When it's critical, tell it to shut up! Replace well-worn old phrases with new factual evidence about just how marvelous you really are. Otherwise, it will hinder your

success and hamper the enjoyment of making yourself a little bit famous.

2. Be a yeti

If you have a knee-jerk habit of saying you can't do something, you are shutting down any notion of developing and learning the skills you need. And, of course, we do this when we're out of our comfort zones.

For example, "I can't stand on a stage and speak to an audience", is a closed statement that will take you nowhere. It's a cul-de-sac and equally unexciting.

"Faceless marketing and PR campaigns cannot replace the ability to engage and gain trust in the same way a real human person can"



the simple fact that we have not enjoyed decades of seeing and hearing ourselves 'up there'. Until a recent and ongoing push by the broadcasters, women were sorely under-represented on TV and radio, as expert contributors. At conferences or networking events, the speaker line-ups can often be one white bloke after another. And panel discussions are notorious for lacking gender diversity – so much so, they're regularly called out on Twitter and referred to as #manels, which means all-male panels.

And on top of all of that is 'FOPO': fear of other people's opinions. And that is a real term, coined by the psychologist Michael Gervais. This involves a deep concern that you'll offend someone, that people won't think well of you, or won't rate you or your knowledge and experience.

And that heady mix of thoughts and feelings can easily stop us from getting started. No wonder we tend to lean on the excuse that we're too busy to bother, with a million tasks to complete before lunchtime.



THE AUTHOR

Penny Haslam is a motivational business speaker, specialising in brand profile and confidence. She's a former BBC business journalist and presenter on BBC Breakfast. Her book *Make Yourself a Little Bit Famous: How to Power Up Your Profile and Get Known for What You Do* is out now pennyhaslam.co.uk

Instead, become a yeti. Simply add the word 'yeti' to your fixed, closed idea and you instantly invite change and encourage potential, as in: "I can't stand on a stage and speak to an audience, yeti..."

And then add whatever action you need to take.

"I can't stand on a stage and speak to an audience, yeti but I'm going to learn by reading a book on the subject" – or watching some YouTube videos, or practising more, or working with a coach to learn the skills you need.

You don't have to apply it to everything you say you can't do. For example, I can't bake, but I'm not bothered. But when it comes to extending yourself and getting greater visibility, being a yeti is a game changer.

3. Stop colouring-in

If there's something on your to-do list that is just not getting done, then the chances are you're colouring-in. It'll be something like a blog you ought to write, video content you should record or maybe an email you could send to

your local radio station, putting yourself forward as an expert interviewee.

It will be a daunting task that would propel business forward and sure, we tinker with it, endlessly perfect it, getting it ready to launch on the world – but somehow it just never gets done.

You've got out your nice felt tip pens, all lined up in the rainbow colours and you're making sure you are staying safely within the edges. But that's not going to help you get out there, is it? It's time to stop colouring in, and start sketching your future.

A LIFE IN COLOUR

Helen Venables, managing director of House of Colour, embarked on a successful new career after overcoming post-natal depression

WORDS BY JEFF JAMES

A pivotal moment in her life is how Helen Venables described discovering what colours and styles suited her best. Not only did it kick-start a successful new career, it also helped her overcome the crippling effects of post-natal depression, which affects around one in 10 women in the UK, according to the NHS.

Married at 19, Helen moved to Watford with her husband – “the only place we could afford to buy a house” – and started a family at 22, while taking an active role in a number of women’s groups and founding a charity to help teaching in schools.

Unable to get out of bed

It was after the birth of her third child that she experienced post-natal depression, which left her unable to get out of bed in the morning. To aid her recovery, a close friend suggested “getting her colours done” at House of Colour, a company that’s been providing colour analysis and personal styling advice since 1985.

After taking her friend’s advice, Helen discovered she suited a spring palette of warm, bright colours. As a result, she replaced her fuchsia pink, black and dark navy wardrobe with mainly turquoise, geranium and Oxford blue pieces she found

while scouring charity shops near where she lived.

“This ‘wow’ moment acted like a switch for me,” Helen says. “I had been quite ill with post-natal depression and couldn’t relate to myself in any way. My consultation helped my recovery because I could see the person I knew I had once been and felt exactly what House of Colour clients experience now.

“Colours are far more powerful to our mood and how we see ourselves than we fully understand and wearing the right colours can be confidence building.

“I then went on to do a style session and learnt style is not only about dressing your body shape by understanding proportion, balance and architecture, but also our personality.

"Colours are far more powerful to our mood and how we see ourselves than we fully understand"





Helen Venables' top three styling tips

- 1** Focus on the foundations. Buy the best underwear you can afford. The right bra and knickers can make or break any outfit.
- 2** Once you know your best colours, it's really easy to create impact. Choose any three colours from the colour palette that suits you to make a statement and show intent. And make sure you're wearing the right colour jewellery – warm colours for autumn and spring, including golds, and cool colours for winter and summer, including silvers.
- 3** Go shopping in your wardrobe. Try items on together you didn't buy together. If your clothes are in your right colours and styles, you can create a spectrum of outfits you didn't know you had.

“We can reflect that through pattern, texture, cut, accessories and detail and together this results in who you are being expressed visually. We often see that light-bulb moment in our clients and sometimes the results produce some very happy tears.”

From stylist to managing director

Two years after her initial consultation, Helen became a House of Colour stylist. Within four years she was an integral part of the company's training team, became a regional manager and two years later franchise director with a brief to recruit new image consultants, who worked for the company on a franchise basis.

In 2012, Helen was appointed managing director of House of Colour. The company is thriving under her management and she's soon to celebrate 20 years with the business.

In the last 12 months the company has recruited 18 new UK franchisees and 13 in the USA. In addition, new make-up products were launched in 2019, adding to House of Colours' 250 existing lines, while a new strategic alliance with Park Lane Jewellery has recently been secured. In 2019, UK franchisee revenues were up 12 per cent on the previous year.

The franchise opportunity

House of Colour is aiming to double the number of franchisees it has in the

UK to 200 by 2025. Franchises cost £12,000 (including VAT) plus a monthly service fee of £150. For the initial investment, franchisees get a 19-day training programme, a comprehensive training manual, a licence to use the House of Colour logo and name, all the equipment needed to operate the business and an exclusive trading territory with a population of at least 100,000 people.

The monthly service fee pays for a franchisee's public liability insurance, the House of Colour email and support package, conference fee and accommodation, plus regular fashion updates and books.

Franchisees can run their businesses from home, a small shop or base themselves in a beauty salon, health club or large department store. Full-time franchisees can earn up to £50,000 per annum – more if they build a team of subcontractors. The business can be run on a part-time basis also.

Helen explains: “Industry experience is not necessary to become a House of Colour franchisee. We're looking for energetic, inspirational people who love working with people, fashion and make-up. Our most successful franchisees are great communicators and passionate about making a difference to people's lives.

“We build confidence in our clients and successful candidates find this as rewarding as the flexibility the business model provides.”

Looking to the future

When asked about the future of the fashion industry, Helen says: “It's going to be interesting. Digital has completely disrupted the fashion industry. The consumer has so much power – we can rate, deliver the next day, review and choose whatever we want at the click of a button. Powerful ecommerce platforms are the only way to go.”

And the future of House of Colour? “I want us to be known for changing lives, building confidence and revolutionising people's approach to creating an eco-friendlier capsule wardrobe.

“We want to use our voice to talk against fast fashion and for protecting the environment. We advise our clients to buy less and to buy as good quality items as they can afford, so that they last and feel wonderful and can be worn time and time again.

“For me personally, every day is different and it's a huge privilege to help our clients go through powerful transformations. I also have the opportunity to recruit and coach new consultants to make this incredible company even better in the future.”



“I am at the top of my game right now”

Caprice Bourret of By Caprice discusses her global homeware empire, the importance of having a plan B when you're on top of your game, and harnessing the power of silence in business

INTERVIEW BY AMANDA PETERS

Get to know... Caprice Bourret

1 What is your idea of perfect happiness?

That would be my family, their health and happiness – that's the core of who I am.

2 What is your current state of mind?

It is very good, but I have had to work at it. It has been a rollercoaster, but right now I am on a high. I'm never fully happy with the current state of the business as I always want more. I want to scale up and expand. I guess that is who I am – I'm ambitious.

3 What do you do to relax?

Meditate.

4 What is your mantra for business?

My power is silence, try it.

5 If you could change one thing about yourself, what would it be?

I am practising restriction, which means not reacting emotionally. When we [women] have to make crucial decisions and are in a man's world, emotion is our worst enemy. For women, I say do not make any harsh decisions with emotions, it's actually a weakness. Silence is power.



"I feel empowered and I'm supported by other women in my circles"

From gracing the covers of *Vogue* in the 1990s, supermodel-turned-businesswoman, Caprice Bourret, knew she had to have a plan B in place before she got “too old” for the modelling business. She capitalised on her name recognition during the height of her modelling success, signing a licensing deal with Debenhams back in 2000.

By 2006, she wasn't satisfied though, and wanted more. Caprice then signed a new deal with Debenhams and went on to sell her By Caprice Lingerie range to independents, distributing to over 70 stores in the UK, as well as worldwide. In 2016, she launched By Caprice Home, spotting a gap in the home furnishings market for glamorous bedding.

When did you know you needed a plan B after modelling?

When I was turning 30, I thought as popular or as successful as I was, I needed to think of a plan B when I was on top. You are not going to make any business deals happen if everything plunges, as you then don't have any power. So, I knew I needed to think of a plan B when I was on top of my game – that's when I thought of retail.

Did you always want to set up your own business?

No, but I knew I had this power: I had free marketing. I thought why not use this publicity to create awareness and then sales? It's a great formula, and it worked for my initial licensing deal with Debenhams back in 2000.

I then started questioning why I was limiting myself, collecting a certain percentage of sales when I could own a 100 per cent and have multiple stockists all over the world. I then ended the licensing deal with them and started distributing By Caprice to them in 2006. (She also started selling By Caprice Lingerie to ASOS, Littlewoods, Figleaves, Next and more. By Caprice now distributes to over 70 stores and all over the world, including South Africa, United States, Scandinavia).

Why did you decide to rebrand and relaunch By Caprice Home in 2019?

I just wanted to scale up. I had the lingerie, but it was a pain in the backside. There's also a much higher return rate. In home furnishings, I saw there was a gap in the market for glamorous bedding and when people look at me, they think of glam; that

is how people perceive me. There was not a lot of glamorous bedding when I launched it four years ago, so I thought: 'I'm going to clean up here'.

What are your hopes and goals for the future?

We've expanded now to America with Bed Bath & Beyond and Macy's and then to a company called Dwell in the Middle East. I am looking to expand more in the Middle East because there is a serious gap there for glamorous bedding at the right price point. It's a very exciting market. I love things that are glamorous but it needs to be at the right price point.

How would you describe your leadership style?

I'm more of a team player. I'm not everyone's boss; they're my team. So, I will do everything that my whole team is doing. In fact, I train them myself – there's no need to get an outside recruiter involved, as I know the positions inside and out.

How would they describe yourself as a leader?

I'm very ambitious but fair and with integrity.

Do you think that women with successful careers feel an added pressure to have it all?

It is hard, but I am not going to go out on this crusade saying that it is difficult. It is how it is, this is why women have to support each other. It is empowering to know you're the rock and the core of the family but you have to put a lot of effort into it.

Remember that you are the core of your family. Your husband and children literally can't function without you – that's quite empowering to know.

For me, I am at the top of my game right now. Yes, it is a lot of work. Yes, I am tired a lot of the time. Yes, I want to curse and scream at everyone, but at the same time, I feel empowered. I am very supported by other women in my circles.

We are seeing more women in leadership roles, they are the number ones in companies and this is amazing to see. It is growing more and more every single year. But at the same time, I keep saying that we cannot victimise ourselves. Yes, it's hard and we have to do everything but this is how it is, so let's go get 'em.

If not now, then when?

Don't let procrastination stall your dreams of becoming a franchisee

WORDS BY CATHRYN HAYES



THE AUTHOR
Cathryn Hayes is franchise director at Revive! Auto Innovations

2 019 was a year of uncertainty, with political upheaval and a challenging economic outlook – all broadcast via our 24-hour media channels. It probably isn't surprising, therefore, that many people postponed their dreams of owning their own franchise.

But when is it likely to be the best time to launch a new venture? And are these concerns about the current business climate valid ones? In many ways, only you can answer these questions, but here are some thoughts to consider.

What's holding you back?

If you've spent a long time nurturing your dream of being a business owner, particularly if you've been looking at franchising as a route to achieve this, you might need to think carefully about what's holding you back.

Are you lacking confidence in your own skills and experience? Have a clear idea of what your key skills are and think carefully about what you would like to be doing on a day-to-day basis while you secure your financial independence. If you're currently commuting to work in an office, but really want to work with children, for instance, how are you going to make that a reality?

Franchising can be a much better route into self-employment than going it alone, especially if you've never run your own business. There are franchises operating in a wide range of sectors, so whatever you would like to do, there could be a franchise to help you.

Your own lack of experience or training doesn't need to be a barrier, as good franchisors will train and support you. However, you do need to be able to give your full commitment and energy if you're to be a success. Can you do that?



Economic uncertainty

Another thing holding you back could be the uncertainty surrounding the economy and what could happen in the years ahead.

Economic cycles vary and there are always going to be challenges. However, you have no control over them, so instead of letting economic issues stop you in your tracks, look at the other factors that can affect the success of a franchise.

Are you looking at a seasonal business or new service without a strong existing customer base? How much experience does the franchisor have? Is it an established company with existing franchisees you can talk to?

Research and planning are key

Before you sign a legal contract and pay the upfront fee, you'll need to be sure about what you're committing

"Economic cycles vary and there are always going to be challenges"

to, so research and planning are key. There's plenty of advice available to help you and the British Franchise Association's free online training programme is a great place to start. There are a number of steps you can take to build your confidence and ensure you have enough information before you buy a franchise. The risk of giving up paid employment to become a franchisee can be a major stumbling block, but if not now, when?

Will you make your dreams a reality in 2020? Only you can decide that and take the steps to move forward.



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Partner with an award winning franchise.

At Laser Clinics United Kingdom, our vision is to provide affordable, effective and safe non-invasive cosmetic treatments to everyone.

We are the largest non-invasive aesthetic operator in the world with over 165 clinics across Australia, New Zealand and the United Kingdom. To continue our growth and success we rely on partnering with highly motivated franchisees to help drive amazing results. We are currently seeking new motivated franchise partners to drive our growth across the UK and share in our success.

Why franchise with us?

- 165 clinics globally and growing
- Award-winning growth
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www.laserclinics.co.uk
franchising@laserclinics.co.uk

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LASER
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1/3 of Children leave primary school unable to swim 25m.

ASA 2016, STA 2017

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on our journey,
to fight statistics
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Discover more: swimtime.org
Contact us: franchise@swimtime.org

**SWIM
TIME**



W● BUSINESS Woman

Your ultimate guide to
investing in a franchise

- Top business opportunities
- Profitable returns
- Trending sectors



Choose fun for a living

Check out the range of tried-and-tested opportunities from Fun Fest for Children

Following the success of her own Solihull-based childcare businesses, Sarah Beattie could see the potential for replicating these services across the UK.

As many business founders have discovered, franchising is an effective way to achieve network growth because franchisees are invested in and accountable for the quality, reputation and success of each operation.

EXPANDING BRAND

The Fun Fest Holiday Club franchise was launched in 2017 and since then has achieved the growth Sarah had envisaged.

More recently, the franchise has expanded to include Fun Fest Before & After School Clubs and Fun Fest Children's Parties, enabling franchisees to scale up and provide year-round services for their customers. The business will take another big step forwards this year, with the launch of the Fun Fest Day Nursery franchise.



Sarah's vision is for Fun Fest to become a household name across the country that is synonymous with high quality, child-led childcare and exciting activities that offer children a range of new experiences.

BENEFITS OF FRANCHISING

If you're looking to start your own business, it's also worth considering the benefits of franchising. As a franchisee, you gain an existing brand with a proven record of success and established operating systems, which vastly reduces the risk and stress of setting up your own business from scratch.

Sarah advises: "I would encourage everyone to step outside of their personal comfort zone. It is only by doing this that you can experience the excitement of running your own business, making your own decisions and truly being accountable. "You will make mistakes; the key is to learn from them and move forward and don't make the same mistakes again."

LESSONS LEARNT

In starting and growing her business, Sarah has also learnt the importance of:

- **Authenticity:** always be yourself, do what you believe is right and deliver on your promises.
- **Belief:** you will have to work hard to make your business succeed, so it must be something you believe to be worthwhile and valuable to the communities it will serve.
- **Resilience:** expect that for every two steps forwards, you will take one step back. Don't be disheartened by mistakes and setbacks, but view



At a Glance FUN FEST FOR CHILDREN

Established:
2017

Number of franchised outlets:
20

Location of units:
Midlands: Harborne, Moseley, Solihull, Coleshill, Sutton Coldfield, Lichfield, Redditch.
North: Cheadle, Wilmslow, Altrincham, Chorley, Hartford. South: Orpington, Uxbridge, Eton, Watford, Stanmore, Luton, Ruislip.

Investment range:
£2,999-£45,000 (plus VAT)

Minimum required capital:
£5,000

Contact:
0121 726 2595

fun-fest.co.uk

"Sarah's vision is for Fun Fest to become a household name across the country that is synonymous with high quality, child-led childcare and exciting activities that offer children new experiences"

them as part of the journey and as opportunities to learn.

- **Bravery:** you will never be 100 per cent ready and prepared, you just have to be ready enough to take the first step and cope with whatever challenges this may bring.

If you're ready to accept the challenge to step out of your comfort zone and are looking to run your own child-centred business, then Sarah would love to talk to you about the range of opportunities available at Fun Fest for Children.

Growing a business by giving back

Tracey Harris has transformed her Wiltshire Farm Foods franchise since she took it over in 2015



With over 25 years' franchising experience, Wiltshire Farm Foods has over 80 franchise partners generating more than £100 million in retail sales.

Operating using a simple model with no ongoing royalty fees, Wiltshire Farm Foods has never had a franchise fail. The company not only operates a great commercial model, but makes a real difference to some of the most vulnerable in society through supporting the elderly to live independently in their own homes.

By 2039, one in five of the UK population is expected to be over the age of 75, making it the country's fastest growing demographic. This, combined with the decline in social care, creates a huge growth opportunity for the brand and franchise partners alike.

FRANCHISE OF THE YEAR

A Wiltshire Farm Foods franchise partner who has demonstrated

how to capitalise on this growth potential is Tracey Harris, who owns the Newbury franchise.

Tracey acquired the perennial fourth quartile performing franchise in 2015. In the last five years she has transformed the franchise, enjoying growth of £500,000, taking the franchise into the top quartile for franchise performance and recently winning the Wiltshire Farm Foods Franchise of the Year award for 2019.

Tracey, who is also number one in the network for conversion, explains her approach to achieving this success: "You have to be driven and buy into the brand values to achieve these numbers. If you have the passion and ambition to succeed, then it's possible."

"To achieve these high levels of growth and conversion, you need to adopt a great service ethic, which reflects the good old-fashioned service the Wiltshire Farm Foods brand prides itself on. I come in day after day because I love what



At a Glance WILTSHIRE FARM FOODS

Established:
1991

Number of franchised outlets:
84

Location of units:
UK

Investment range:
for an average sized franchise, you would typically need £150,000 in personal funds, plus a business loan to purchase the business and all necessary assets

Contact:
0808 164 1898

wff.link/womeninbusiness

"I come in day after day because I love what we do"

we do. I love the ethos of Wiltshire Farm Foods and what we provide to customers, helping them stay independent for longer."

RELATIONSHIP BUILDING

Tracey adds: "Building that relationship with your customers and your local community hugely contribute to the success of your franchise. We get a huge amount of support from Wiltshire Farm Foods to drive growth, from multi-million pound marketing investments to training and dedicated business partners. However, as a franchisee it's also key to focus on your work in the local community to drive rapid business growth."

"Reinforcing our strong values, we've won three Queen's Awards for Enterprise, the most recent for sustainable development. The award reflects our breadth of work across environmental improvements, staff welfare, community programmes and much more."

"This is further demonstrated by our Social Enterprise award win at the British Franchise Association awards 2019."

Q&A

Anoop Sekhon, franchise owner at Bluebird Care, on making a positive difference to people's lives



What first got you interested in franchising?

My interest was sparked by a few friends who were in the same position as me and were bored at work; we were tired of the nine-to-five. I was also in the position of not being able to change an organisation that was in desperate need of changing. I fell into franchising, as I didn't really have any idea what it was about or what support would be offered at the initial stage.

How did you get started?

Getting started was an interesting step as it was almost like your hand was being held. The franchisor invited me along for an interview to see if I could uphold the values of the brand and after that, the support was ongoing. I received support to raise capital, speaking to banks, constructing a business plan, registering with our regulator and even when interviewing people for the team.

What is your working life like now?

Since beginning on my journey with Bluebird Care, I wouldn't refer to it as a 'working life', but a life that I actually

live. I have a good social, active, working and family balance that I have created with the support of my Bluebird Care team. I have a great team which I trust to uphold the values of the business and I am on hand to ensure any guidance can be provided as and when the team needs it. The only thing I struggle to do is stay away from my work phone for long periods of time, but thankfully my team is so great that it hardly rings!

What's your next move?

I want to continue to grow and expand with the Bluebird Care network in order to build on businesses that I already have and hopefully continue to expand out to other territories. I am looking forward to more staff joining my team, making a positive difference in their lives, so they can make a positive difference to the lives of the people we look after.

QUICKFIRE QUESTIONS

Favourite part of the job?

I love working with a team which is inspired and loves being at work.

Biggest challenge?

Ensuring my team members are equipped with the correct tools to do their jobs efficiently and happily, no matter what happens, the buck will always stop with me.



At a Glance BLUEBIRD CARE

Established:
2004

Number of franchised outlets:
209

Location of units:
UK

Investment range:
£100,000 - £115,000

Minimum capital required
£30,000

Contact:
Victoria Brown, franchise development manager. Tel: 07912 771149

bluebirdcarefranchise.co.uk

"The Bluebird Care model is set so you're not working in your business but on your business, which is key for your franchise to thrive and prosper"

MY WORKING WEEK

My week typically consists of speaking with the operations manager on a Monday morning, usually on my way to the gym. We discuss her objectives for the week and what we would like to achieve from the offices and teams for the week.

After this, I will be sending and receiving emails if there is a need to, even during the middle of my spin class sometimes! After any pressing issues are resolved, which usually consists of just speaking with staff and making sure that they are okay, I ensure I have an hour to meditate, followed by lunch, and then if there is a big piece of work, I do that. I have a few other businesses, and the Bluebird Care model has enabled me to have the time to deal with them, too.

I use the rest of the days of the week to pop into the office for a few hours – I have no set days – and quite often lunch will be purchased by me on those days,

so I am sure the teams look forward to seeing me coming in! Once a week I meet the operations manager face-to-face to ensure she is fully supported to assist the teams we have in place. For me, it is very important this meeting takes place and even if I am abroad, I still push for this to happen.

I would say that the Bluebird Care model is set so you're not working in your business but on your business, which is key for your franchise to thrive and prosper.

The reason why the Bluebird Care franchise model works for me is because I don't always need to know all the answers. That's because the network is so close that we often go out of our way to brainstorm, run ideas by each other and work closely with our quality manager, marketing support manager and business development manager, who assist us from the franchise support centre. With a model like that how can your business not work?

Moving in the right direction

diddi dance offers a flexible business opportunity if you're looking for that perfect work-life balance

diddi dance enhances children's endless energy through funky, full of fun dance sessions that increase confidence, coordination and creativity in children under five years old.

The company is the only preschool dance provider that covers 16 different dance styles with lesson plans that enhance and complement the EYFS framework. As an award winning service provider and franchise company, diddi dance is passionate about its mission - to get children moving.

GAP IN THE MARKET

The company started in 2003 when founder Anne-Marie Martin noticed a lack of preschool dance classes for children aged 16 months upwards that allowed them to freely explore movement in a fun yet structured environment. In 2006, after diddi dance's initial success, Anne-Marie saw

a flexible business opportunity for individuals looking for that perfect work-life balance.

Whether you're a parent, an ex-dancer or an ex-employee, the company's franchise package suits anyone who wants to run their own business. The success of the themes and lesson plans offer so much reward and the financial returns are high for low set-up costs. diddi dance's franchise package provides branding, training, ongoing support and much more.

With a proven franchise system that has been established for over 16 years, more than 40 franchises running across the UK, accreditations and endorsements from both the Children's Activities Association (CAA) and Exercise Move Dance UK (EMDUK) and more than 10 franchise industry awards to date, the company says its franchise opportunity works perfectly for individuals who want to be in business for themselves, not by themselves.



At a Glance diddi dance

Established:
2003

Number of franchised outlets:
44

Location of units:
throughout the UK

Investment range:
£4,995 (plus VAT)

Minimum required capital:
£4,995 (plus VAT)

Contact:
Donna: franchise@diddidance.com
diddidance.com/franchise

"The financial returns are high for low set-up costs"

ON A MISSION

This year, Anne Marie has launched her #themovingmission.

She says: "Setting healthy and happy habits in children before the age of five is so important to how movement is viewed throughout life.

"Physical activity releases endorphins, creating positive emotions and feelings that promote emotional and mental health, as well as the obvious health and fitness benefits. It can help relieve stress and enforce body positivity. Activities in the early years are key and encouraging both genders in non-competitive activities can help with their confidence and social skills.

"Being physically active should be fun, something to enjoy and look forward to, rather than too disciplined and intimidating. Positively encouraging children to be active will impact their views and behaviours into school and even adult life.

"My passion lies in dancing, although we want to encourage all forms of physical activity with #themovingmission. diddi dance sessions are all-inclusive, which we believe promotes acceptance of diversity and all abilities."

Will you join diddi dance in the #themovingmission and encourage a love of moving that will last a lifetime?

5 Star Service



T B G

The Bardon Group



Techclean

From Footsie 100 companies to SME's and including blue chip names such as Porsche and Disney our customers span the full breadth of size and shape.

Techclean offer generous and exclusive territories with at least 10,000 businesses and with low overheads designed into the business franchisees can expect to achieve a net profit margin of over 55% within the first year of trading.

www.techclean.co.uk



Recognition Express

With over 38 years supplying corporate and branded merchandise to companies, franchisees benefit from our renowned expertise in centralised marketing programmes, strong brand, wide product range and multiple income streams.

Recognition Express is a true business to business franchise opportunity for those people who are looking for a proven and successful management franchise.

www.recognition-express.com



ComputerXplorers

A home-based franchise, ComputerXplorers offers weekly classes in computing, coding and programming to children aged 3-13 years in nursery schools, playgroups, school clubs, summer camps, primary schools and other venues.

With 11 million + children and over 58,000 schools, the market is huge and, with low operating costs, profit margins are very healthy.

www.computerexplorers.co.uk



Kall Kwik

In business since 1979, Kall Kwik is proud to be the UK market leader in the provision of print, design and other business services to the local community.

An iconic brand in a substantial and robust market the Kall Kwik business services concept offers a lower entry cost to the marketplace and by outsourcing high end product ensures lower ongoing operating costs.

www.kallkwik.co.uk



All our franchisees have access to on-going business support and a range of services that include a combination of business planning, sales support, marketing collateral and programmes, procurement and finance; plus access to comprehensive marketing systems, tools and collateral including PR, website and purpose designed literature.

Contact: Emma Downes at The Bardon Group on 01530 513300 or email franchise@thebardongroup.co.uk

Future looks bright

Olivia Palios says becoming a TaxAssist Accountants franchisee has changed her life



In January 2015, aged 22, Olivia Palios became the youngest female franchisee to join the TaxAssist Accountants network.

This has proved to be no barrier for Olivia who, nearly five years since she established her own practice, has built a team of seven staff, operates from three shops in Burslem, Crewe and Stoke-on-Trent and looks after the needs of over 950 clients with a fee bank of £337,000.

Olivia was introduced to the concept of franchising while working for a TaxAssist Accountants' office in 2014 and immediately saw the effectiveness of the business model.

NO BRAINER

"The leads came in thick and fast," Olivia recalls. "We had clients walk in requesting assistance, a steady stream of inbound leads and referrals from existing clients. To me, it seemed like a no brainer.

"I chose to join a franchise to benefit from all the support available

and learn what works well and what doesn't from fellow franchisees and the franchisor, which helps to fast track your success."

FINDING FUNDING

To raise the finance required to join the franchise, Olivia used a mix of savings, a loan from her mum and a bank loan payable over 10 years.

"I'm delighted to say I paid off all my loans by June 2019 - six years ahead of my plan," adds Olivia, who's clearly enjoying her new-found life as a self-employed businesswoman.

"Becoming a TaxAssist franchisee has totally changed my life. I'm a very ambitious person and becoming a franchisee has given me the opportunity to build a well run and profitable business, knowing that all the hard work you're putting into the business is increasing its value.

"When I think back to when I was employed, I was always looking for ways to make more money or get promotion. But being your own boss



At a Glance TAXASSIST ACCOUNTANT

Established:
1995

Number of franchised outlets:
223 franchise areas and 365 shops and offices

Location of units:
UK

Investment range:
£100,000-£150,000

Minimum required capital:
£40,000

Contact:
franchiseenquiries@taxassist.co.uk
taxassistfranchise.co.uk

"Being your own boss means your career is in your hands"

means your career is in your hands and you do have the possibility to earn more money, increase profits and build a great asset.

"Since opening my first shop in March 2015, I've changed my car from a Fiat 500 to a Range Rover Evoque and have bought my own home and paid off my loans - all by the age of 25, which I wouldn't have been able to do at this stage in my life without the franchise.

"I really enjoy the work-life balance that comes with being a franchisee - being able to choose my own hours and work from home if I wish. I'm looking forward to the future and continuing to build my business and reach the 1,000-client mark, which will be a fantastic achievement from starting in 2015 with no clients."

NATIONWIDE NETWORK

TaxAssist Accountants has been operating successfully for 25 years.

After consistently winning awards in both the franchising and accountancy sectors, the company has grown to become the largest network of small business specialist accountants in the UK, servicing more than 75,000 clients from over 360 shops and offices nationwide.

Creativity at the heart of business

Sarah Godwin, founder and creative director of multi-award-winning interactive music development class franchise Hartbeeps, tells *Business Woman* about her journey and harnessing the the power of creativity

Creativity continues to sit fairly low within formal learning settings, while children still sit at desks in classrooms to learn, a practice that hasn't changed since the 1800s.

My school journey left me feeling a failure, with the word 'fail' popping up on a regular basis, setting me up for, quite frankly, 'failure'.

Creativity is at the heart of business and you won't find many entrepreneurs that are not driven by the desire to think outside the box, to come up with new and ingenious ways of solving problems. For me, traditional academia is supported by technology, but there is no app that I have found yet that can help my creativity flow better than a good night's sleep, a clear head, a walk in nature and a pen and paper.

Whenever you meet a Hartbeeps business owner or a member of their

team – whom we refer to as 'Imaginators' – you will feel that spark of magic. You will feel heard and nurtured as we put you and your little ones at the heart of everything we do. This is true of our company ethos, as every day we hope to learn something new and value our team as individuals by putting them at the heart of their businesses.

Hartbeeps has grown incredibly fast, it's been organic and until recently I ran the company on my own. However, no woman is an island – although we are damn good at multitasking; this is a proven scientific fact! – and I needed help to continue to grow a business that was becoming grown-up, so my husband stepped in alongside me, leaving his career in financial services to embrace the world of franchising.

While the children's activities field is one of the fastest-growing sectors in franchising, franchising itself is a complex area of business and, surprisingly, one that even your business banking advisors have not always got a clear handle on. I think we have a way to go in the world of franchising, both legislatively, ethically and morally. We have come a long way with the support of associations and consultancies, but I feel more can be done to better manage a blossoming sector which is set to grow.

I am a woman in business: successful, happy and thriving. What I have learned in the 16 years of running Hartbeeps is that



At a Glance HARTBEEPS

Established:
2004

Number of franchised outlets:
140

Location of units:
Countrywide

Investment range:
£12,000

Contact:
hq@hartbeeps.com
hartbeeps.com

"Our little Hartbeeps can go on to become the next bio-chemists, engineers, poets and musicians"

you never stop in business, but you never stop as a creative, either. In business it's ongoing: from start-up to growth and sometimes back to the drawing board. A business sometimes needs steering and navigation, with constant innovation to prove your brand again and again, but it is real, it is living a dream for many of us and it can be a wonderful nest egg to pass on, and in my case, the knowledge that I have made a difference during my time on planet earth.

Even though I read that only a fifth of entrepreneurs are female, I don't see this in my world. This is the world of children's educators, practitioners, inspirers: my world is full of female entrepreneurs, so perhaps we can get together as guardians of the next generation and create change.

At Hartbeeps, pink is the colour of the heart, and baby dolls are loved and hugged by boys and girls as it teaches empathy. By creative problem-solving undertaken every day in Hartbeeps classes by thousands of children, our little Hartbeeps can go on to become the next bio-chemists, engineers, poets and musicians.



I really do have the dream career

Achieve the flexibility, fulfilment and financial reward you want

We often experience watershed moments in our lives, such as relocating, becoming a parent, or becoming tired of missing important family dates due to work commitments.

Life's full of change and it's how you respond to these changes that can make all the difference. Are you able to turn the challenge into an opportunity or will it grind you down? If you think you can or think you can't, you're right.

TAKING CONTROL

Many of Creation Station's 120 franchise owners hadn't heard of franchising before, but they knew they wanted to take control

of their working career, benefit from their own hard work and make a positive impact within their community.

Rina Fatania runs The Creation Station franchise in Hillingdon. She says: "I was ready for a change after 20 years of working as a personal assistant. I wanted flexibility around bringing up my kids, but also wanted to use my skills.

"Since investing in my Creation Station franchise, I really do have the dream career. I choose when I work, I have tremendous support and my business has grown far beyond my business plan



projections. It's the best personal and financial decision I've made for me and my family."

Download your free information pack at thecreationstation.co.uk/businesswomen, email maggie@thecreationstation.co.uk or call 01395 239700.



Laser Clinics is the largest non-invasive aesthetic operator in the world, with over 165 clinics across Australia, New Zealand and the UK.

With a 19 per cent increase in spending on personal care between 2009 and 2016, the company operates within a category that's becoming increasingly important to consumers. It's democratized the non-invasive aesthetics category by increasing the

accessibility and affordability of treatments.

INDUSTRY LEADER

Laser Clinics United Kingdom is committed to being the industry leader across its service offerings and investing in its people, systems, products and technologies.

To continue its growth, the company relies on partnering with highly

Award winning franchise

Laser Clinics has 165 clinics globally and is now expanding in the UK

motivated franchisees. Laser Clinics United Kingdom's franchise model is a 50/50 partnership, which means equal partners, shared interest and shared success in each location.

Laser Clinics United Kingdom is your partner of choice if you're looking for a solid investment in a high growth industry with an award winning business.

For more information email franchising@laserclinics.co.uk or visit laserclinics.co.uk

Creating positive change

Julie Taylor, CEO of Franchise Resales, has seen the franchising community evolve to become a truly inclusive space during her 20 years of working in the industry



For years, the franchise industry has been dominated by men; although it remains that there is still a higher percentage of male franchisees within the sector, the number of females is gradually increasing.

According to the 2018 NatWest/British Franchise Association (bfa) survey, 37 per cent of new franchisees are female. This number is still relatively low but it's above average when compared to the number of women who own SMEs in the UK, and it's a step in the right direction when you consider that in 2005 over 80 per cent of new franchisees were male.

In recent years, there have been many initiatives to help get women involved, not only in franchising, but in the UK business population. The bfa and Encouraging Women Into Franchising (EWIF) are just two of the organisations that are helping to promote franchising to a wider female audience.

EMPOWERING WOMEN IN THE INDUSTRY

Here at Franchise Resales, we love to get behind these events and help to empower women in the franchise industry. Our own team has grown from a predominantly male team of account managers to now having an equal split.

Our CEO, Julie Taylor, began life in the franchise industry 20 years ago. Julie has watched the industry change over the years and is proud to have been a part of the change.

Julie began her career in franchising working with RE/MAX and has since held various positions within retail and property franchising. But she really came into her own when she left her job and started her own business; Franchise Resales was one of her first customers. Working with the founder, Derick Simpson, Julie started in sales support, dealing with enquiries and liaising with and supporting the account managers. When her son, Michael, joined her in 2012 he took Julie's role and she went on to become an account manager. In 2015, Julie and Michael headed up a management buy in; became the directors, and Julie is now the CEO of Franchise Resales.



At a Glance FRANCHISE RESALES

Established:
2007

Contact:
info@franchiseresales.co.uk, 01522 246811
franchiseresales.co.uk

"It gives us such pleasure to see that the industry is changing"

SIGN OF THE TIMES

Julie loves her job and enjoys creating relationships and partnerships with others. The Franchise Resales ethos is all about creating a win-win scenario for all involved. Julie heads up a mixed team of employed staff, self-employed account managers and sub-contractors, and is looking to expand the team further as we move into the second phase of a 10-year plan.

Throughout her career in franchising, Julie has delivered training to business owners looking to franchise their business, helped established franchisors to increase their network and supported new franchisees to grow their franchises successfully. Julie is an accomplished public speaker and has travelled across the world to help others begin their franchise journeys.

As a team, we have seen an increase in both female franchisees and prospective buyers. It provides such pleasure to see that the industry is evolving, and not only is the franchise resales aspect of the industry expanding, it's becoming an equal playing field for men and women. We are excited to see what the future holds for women in franchising and look forward to speaking with many more prospective female buyers and sellers.

Highly profitable

With Pink Spaghetti, you can work from home and grow a successful business

Driven by a passion to support other women who want the opportunity to own their own flexible business, co-founders Caroline Gowing and Vicky Matthews started Pink Spaghetti PA Services 10 years ago.

Fast forward to 2020 and they now have an award winning network of nearly 50 highly skilled and dynamic virtual assistant franchisees across the UK.

PROVEN MODEL

Vicky explains: "At Pink Spaghetti, we allow you to create a PA services business based on a proven model. You'll be running your own highly profitable, virtual PA business, while being able to tap into all the support you need from our

head office and franchisee network.

"You'll enjoy a new sense of confidence, achievement and fulfilment and we'll help you to develop a successful business from your home. Each franchisee has their own exclusive, large territory. This means there's no competition between franchisees and you can all support each other."

Support and collaboration make Pink Spaghetti special. You're independent, but never alone and you'll be joining like-minded individuals who share a passion for delivering an excellent service.

"Our franchisees love working with us because our model allows them to take control of their careers and their work-life balance," Vicky says.

Pink Spaghetti has gained 5-star



franchisee satisfaction for four consecutive years.

Call 0333 355 0986, email franchise@pink-spaghetti.co.uk or visit pink-spaghetti.co.uk/franchise-opportunities

Looking for a new challenge, tired of working for someone else, why not be your own boss?

Would you like to:

- Work from home with hours to suit your family needs
- Own your own business with the support of the Raring2go! HQ
- Become a key part of your local community by being the go-to guide for parents and children aged 0-11 years

If so we could be for you...

Raring2go! is a family friendly franchise business that offers all of the above along with full training & support from the Head Office team.

Are you:

- A good relationship builder
- Self motivated but also able to work in a team
- Passionate about your local community

No hidden charges: start your own business with £15,995 + VAT



Sales experience can be an advantage, but isn't necessary, so if you feel you want to hear much more about our business opportunity, call us now on 01273 447101, or email franchise@raring2go.co.uk.

Heading in a different direction?

There are various reasons women take a career-break or decide to change their job entirely.

Franchising offers a supportive route for anyone looking to do this, as these Right at Home UK franchisees share

If you're looking for a new career direction in 2020, particularly after a career break, Right at Home offers you an opportunity like no other.

The 2019 *Alison Rose Review of Female Entrepreneurship* highlighted a desire for women to be self-employed, with 23 per cent choosing this as a way back into work, especially after a career break. Similarly, the *British Franchise Association/NatWest Franchise Landscape Report (2018)*, found 37 per cent of new franchisees are women, which demonstrates how women have the desire to gain control of their career.

A CHANGE OF DIRECTION IN YOUR CAREER?

With Right at Home (RaH), you can build your own homecare

business, right in the heart of your community, even with little-to-no care experience. RaH is the perfect route into business ownership for those who have a desire to make a difference in people's lives. And, its award-winning model means you benefit from the strength of their experience.

Before opening Right at Home North Cheshire, Julie Houston was a regional bank manager. She connected with RaH's ethos while looking for homecare for a family member. "I felt frustrated with the standard of care on offer and knew I could offer something better," she explains. "RaH seemed to reflect this same desire to deliver outstanding homecare."

Julie embarked on RaH's two-week comprehensive training programme, which, combined with the ongoing support and her people management skills, has led to her building her own award-winning business. "Winning two awards within my first year gave my team and I a real confidence boost that we were in the right job," she says. "The awards gave my business credibility and visibility, locally, meaning we can reach more people with our outstanding homecare services. Our clients seem to agree, as we currently have a 10/10 rating on independent review site homecare.co.uk"

GOING BACK TO WORK

Andree Kerr, owner of Right at Home Wimbledon, Putney & Kingston, took a break from her career to look after her mother, when she became seriously ill.

As a result of experiencing homecare through her mum's care support provider, Andree knew



At a Glance RIGHT AT HOME UK

Established:
2010

Number of franchised outlets:
64

Location of units:
England and Wales

Investment range:
Up to £130,000 including working capital

Minimum required capital:
£40,000

Contact:
Kate Dilworth, franchise
recruitment manager
0151 305 0755,
07825047344
kate.dilworth@rightathomeuk.com
rightathomefranchising.co.uk

she wanted to offer others, like her mum, outstanding care they could rely on. "I didn't know much about franchising, but saw it was a practical response to my 'what am I going to do' question," she explains.

"When I met RaH, they shared the same values as me, in wanting to provide outstanding quality homecare," Andree says. "By combing the RaH training and support of the network, with my people management skills, I have built an influential business. As we have the network - we are all rated as either 'Good' or 'Outstanding' by the Care Quality Commission. Because people trust me, and my business, I am regularly invited to speak at local events, about how we can all help to care for vulnerable people around us."

What the franchisees say

"After working in chartered accountancy and HR, I wanted a complete change. I wanted to work for myself and do something for other people. RaH's excellent franchise model gave me that, and more. My office is half a mile away from home, I'm at the heart of my community, and know my business is making a real difference to people, every day."

Julie Foote, owner of Right at Home East Lancashire





ENCOURAGING WOMEN
INTO FRANCHISING



HAVE YOU CONSIDERED FRANCHISING?

Franchising has consistently proven to be the most secure and supported route for anyone considering starting their own business.

The top three reasons being:

1

You can invest in a brand which has already been established and built a rapport with customers.

2

You are investing in a brand which is as committed to your success as you are. They provide you with training, resources and business support.

3

You are not alone in your business venture – even though your business is fully yours.

If you'd like to know more about franchising, get in touch with us. EWiF is a not-for-profit voluntary organisation providing free and impartial advice and guidance to women who are looking to know more about starting a business through franchising.

e: info@ewif.org | www.ewif.org

Live the dream

Your business ambitions can be achieved by taking a methodical approach to planning, Hitachi Capital Franchise Finance says



How can you turn your business ambitions and goals into reality? Hitachi Capital Franchise Finance suggests your process should be methodical and thoroughly planned, while honestly reviewing your financial viability.

FAILING TO PLAN IS PLANNING TO FAIL

Some people set up and run businesses without a proper business plan. However, many of these fail within the first few years. Don't allow your failure to plan get in the way of your business ambitions. So what should you do?

SET SMART OBJECTIVES

First of all, you need to set SMART business objectives that are:

- Specific: ensuring your objectives are focused on what you intend to achieve.
- Measurable: see how well you're doing and make decisions that will get you back on course if necessary.

- Achievable and realistic: by all means, show ambition. However, explore all angles and make sure it will actually be possible to achieve your goals.

- Time-based: so that you and your team have a time limit to work towards.

UNDERSTANDING YOUR MARKET AND COMPETITION

Next, you need to understand your market - both local and national - and competition.

Depending on your product or service, you may have identified a few key customers already, but you should know who your competitors are:

- Who else is offering the same or similar solutions to your prospective customers?
- How are they achieving this and what are your competitive advantages over those businesses?

While it's tempting to believe you have a unique solution to a problem, it's unlikely. A competitor matrix, highlighting your USPs and how your proposition differentiates itself, is a great way to review your business model.

OPERATING STRATEGY AND MARKETING PLAN

Your operating strategy is how your business works; the logistics behind your product or service, ultimately determining where you position yourself in the desired market.

This is to be considered alongside your marketing plan. The best possible marketing strategies are those that test and learn as a target market responds and the proposition evolves. You should have a clear idea of your market and pricing strategies, but you need to constantly monitor and adapt them as you gain market feedback.

ASSESSING YOUR RESOURCES

You will need to assess the physical and human resources required. This may include any property, equipment, machinery and the team you will need to achieve your goals. Are your current team qualified to do the job, will they need extra training or will you need to hire additional team members?

FINANCIAL PROJECTIONS AND CASH FLOW FORECASTS

All the above needs to be costed into the financial part of your plan.

A monthly profit and loss projection will track your progress and ensure it's worth pursuing the dream, while the monthly cash flow forecast will help you identify whether you can actually afford to do it.

Your projected balance sheet will show you what the business is going to look like in monetary terms in the future, how strong it could be and the degree of solvency, which will hopefully give you a safety net if things take a little longer than expected.

For more information call
01844 355575, email fundingteam@franchisefinance.co.uk or
visit hitachicapital.co.uk/franchise-finance

GLITTER POP PARTIES®

We Love to Party!

Glitter Pop Parties - is an innovative and vibrant children's party company. Specialising in pamper parties and slime parties, we offer a unique take on this area of the industry to create one-of-a-kind experiences.

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We are searching nationwide for enthusiastic, fun-loving women who enjoy working with children and whowould love to be their own fabulous boss. Let us help you achieve your work-life goals in a fun and fabulous way!

Let us help you achieve your work-life goals in a fun and fabulous way!

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jointheteam@monkeymusic.co.uk
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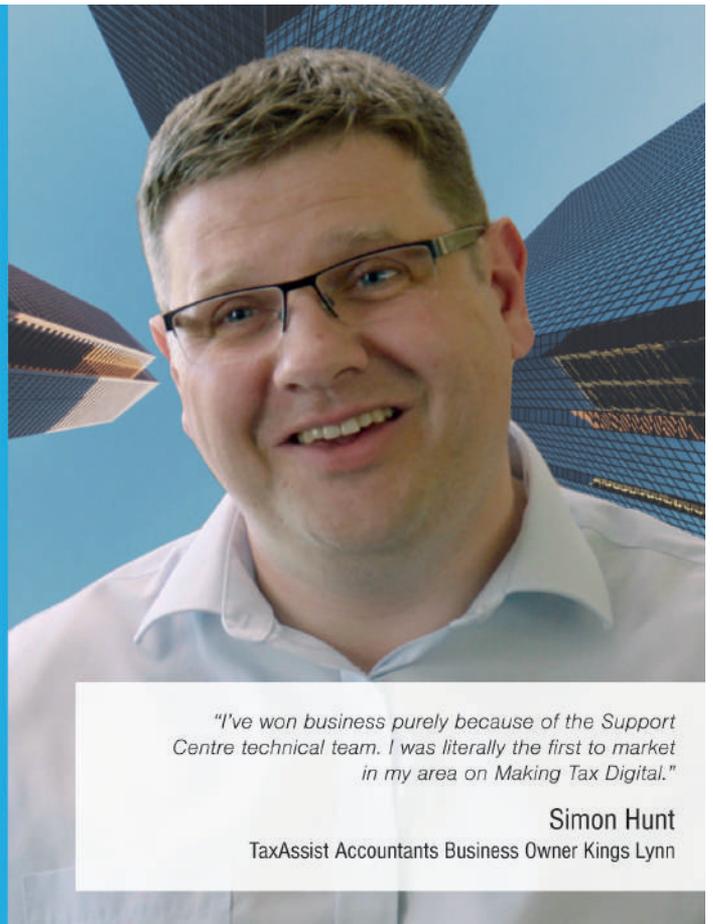
UNIQUE OWNERSHIP

Franchisees own 35% of the franchisor

Call Nikki in our recruitment team on 0800 0188 297

franchiseenquiries@taxassist.co.uk

www.taxassistfranchise.co.uk



"I've won business purely because of the Support Centre technical team. I was literally the first to market in my area on Making Tax Digital."

Simon Hunt

TaxAssist Accountants Business Owner Kings Lynn

Together everyone achieves more

Everybody benefits in a successful franchisor-franchisee relationship, Rachel Brooks, director of operations at Swimtime UK, says



Cash flow issues, break ups, break downs, health issues - a franchisor should offer support and guidance as required because if the franchisee's business suffers, so does the franchisor's. If not the franchisor themselves, then ideally within the franchise support team a person with commercial knowledge and experience of the model who can show compassion, empathy, understanding and be prepared to work with and support the franchisee no matter what - all within the confines and terms of the franchise agreement, of course.

HOW IT WORKS

The franchisor provides the franchise system and the franchisee purchases the franchise because they want to own their own business and would rather pay a franchise fee to be allowed to operate a business system. The franchisor defines the business system in such a way that it can be replicated, protected and developed to the benefit of both parties.

Franchisors often have a strong drive, are motivated by success and understand the value of investing in new processes and technology to further benefit the network.

It's important that franchisors engage with franchisees to take them on the journey, which means franchisors must expect to be challenged, held accountable, act in a responsible manner and effectively communicate a clear vision for the business, one that a franchisee can engage with and feel they can contribute to.

McDonald's is a great example: a franchisee came up with the concept of the Big Mac, which was then adopted by the franchisor and

You've made the jump from business owner to business owner and franchisor, congratulations! What can you expect in terms of relationships with your franchisees?

As with any relationship, it takes effort from both parties. A good starting point is to recognise what the relationship is not. It's not an employer-employee relationship. It's a mutually beneficial partnership where, when you get it right, both franchisor and franchisee benefit.

MUTUAL TRUST

To build a successful franchisor-franchisee relationship, there needs to be mutual trust, respect and open, two-way conversations.

Ideally, both parties are dedicated to the brand and focused on success. As with any business, there are highs and lows and as franchisor you have to be able to focus not just on the business as a whole, but be prepared to respond and support the individual franchisee, no matter what they face in their business or personal life.



At a Glance SWIMTIME UK

Established:
1998

Number of franchised outlets:
28

Location of units:
UK

Investment range:
£20,000-plus

Minimum required capital:
50 per cent

Contact:
rachel.brooks@swimtime.org
swimtime.org

"The franchisor defines the business system in such a way that it can be replicated, protected and developed"

added to the McDonald's menu. No matter the size of the franchise network, engaging with franchisees and encouraging creativity can lead to improvements in the business model to the benefit of all.

QUESTIONS TO ASK

When does this relationship start? From the initial contact, be it at a discovery day, at an exhibition or a conversation over the phone, both franchisor and potential franchisee should be asking themselves: do we connect, do we share a similar vision for the brand and for the business and do I connect with the people I've met? Can I imagine maintaining this relationship for the term of the franchise agreement?

Asking these types of questions early in the process can determine if you're on the same path or different paths that will never meet. Enjoy the journey.

Attractive option

There are numerous reasons to invest in a franchise, Jane Masih, head of franchising at Owen White Solicitors, says

In 2020, franchising is firmly established in the business landscape of the UK.

The 2018 British Franchise Association NatWest survey confirmed that the industry is growing and expanding into new sectors. According to that year's survey, 30 per cent of all franchisees are women and there's increasing interest from brands seeking to recruit female franchisees.

In a perfect world, there would be no need to differentiate between the gender of franchisees. However, the reality is that currently fewer women are franchisees than men. There's little research to explain the disparity between the number of men versus women running franchise businesses.

CAUTIOUS APPROACH

In my experience, women tend to be more cautious in their approach to risk and are often reluctant to approach banks or other lenders to borrow money to acquire a franchise.

There's also a degree of stereotyping in how franchise business opportunities are marketed. Websites and brochures displaying pictures of men in vans or stood outside business premises with their female staff in the background possibly doesn't generate an image inclusive sector.

Many franchisors now recognise that women are a largely untapped market of prospective franchisees. For women who have worked in corporate life and are now looking for a new challenge, franchising is an attractive proposition.

Owning a franchise offers the ability to balance work and other responsibilities in a way that paid employment cannot always accommodate. That's not to say that acquiring a franchise is an easy or flexible option.

"Many franchisors now recognise that women are a largely untapped market of prospective franchisees"

Hard work and focus is required to make a success of any business venture. Indeed, those considering franchising as a part-time or second income activity, which can be taken up and dropped at will, are going to be disappointed, as there are very few profitable opportunities that will be sustainable if not approached as a serious commitment.

WORKING COLLABORATIVELY

Franchising, by its very nature, involves working collaboratively and being part of a network. The concept of working within a proven system with help and support on hand is appealing to anyone wishing to run their own business, but who is lacking the know-how or

experience of business operations.

While some women may be risk averse to investing in a business, the idea of working as part of a team, within a positive support structure, is a feature that should be emphasised to encourage the conversation that the risk can be minimised if a franchise, with a proven track record operating on ethical principles, is selected.

FOCUSED AND COMMITTED

I've been advising franchise clients for 30 years and it's true that until relatively recently the vast majority of clients, whether franchisors or franchisees, were men. That is changing and to be honest our female clients are often more focused and committed than their male counterparts.

What holds women back? Often lack of confidence, worries about 'getting into debt' and concern about having time for other family commitments.

Those who take the leap of faith that any decision to start a new business requires are rewarded with a lifestyle and sense of personal achievement that makes the effort well worthwhile.



No more glass ceiling

Hannah James has gone from being a single mum working three part-time jobs to a successful full-time businesswoman, thanks to Stagecoach Performing Arts



Once a Stagecoach Performing Arts student herself, Hannah James has since gone on to buy the Wolverhampton franchise to fulfil her passion for performing arts. But her journey was not without its setbacks. Hannah was barely making ends meet as a part-time teacher before investing in her Stagecoach Performing Arts franchise. Five years on, she runs three separate territories, teaching over 350 children every week.

She says one of the best things about being a franchisee is the earnings potential - especially having left the notoriously low paid, generally female dominated mainstream education industry.

BUILDING A BETTER LIFE

Hannah explains: "In 2015, my husband left me when my son was only 18 months old. It was hard - I became a single parent overnight.

"I invested in a Stagecoach franchise because I wanted to build a better life for myself and my little boy. I took on Stagecoach Wolverhampton in August 2017. In September 2019, I purchased a second territory - Stagecoach Dudley. This has also flourished and I'm now in the process of buying my third

"I invested in a Stagecoach franchise because I wanted to build a better life for myself and my little boy"

territory - Stagecoach Tamworth.

"Through running my own business, I'm able to have a nice car, fun holidays and I've just set up a pension. I have a lifestyle now, instead of a life. In comparison to working as a freelance teacher, suddenly I've got a very comfortable income.

SUPPORTIVE ENVIRONMENT

For over 30 years, the Stagecoach model has been proven and refined to become one of the UK's leading performing arts opportunities.

Franchisees build a team of equally passionate and enthusiastic teachers, qualified to bring out the best in their students. Stagecoach schools provide a thriving, nurturing and supportive environment for creative learning. That's just one of the reasons that every week 50,000 children flock to classes worldwide.



At a Glance STAGECOACH PERFORMING ARTS

Established:
1988

Number of franchised outlets:
450

Location of units:
across the UK

Investment range:
total investment of £27,000 for a new franchise. Resales between £30,000-£450,000

Minimum required capital:
£9,000

Contact:
email franchiserecruitment@stagecoachfranchise.com or call +44 (0)1483 247 400
stagecoachfranchise.com

INNER CONFIDENCE

"Taking over operations of Stagecoach Wolverhampton had been my dream for 15 years and, initially, the goal was simply to take it over and keep it going," Hannah says.

"But I quickly realised I could do more than that. As well as investing in the two additional territories, my goal is to grow each business to offer more Creative Courage for Life for my students.

"Stagecoach has given me an inner confidence and made me hungry for success. From being a single mum with a toddler and working three part-time jobs, to a full-time businesswoman with a new partner and a lovely son, I'm proud I can make an impact on so many people - my students, teachers and my family."

The tides are changing one franchisee at a time

From being almost exclusively a male-dominated sector, Revive! UK proves that there's enough room for women in the world of car repairs

The world of cars and mobile-based car repairs has traditionally been almost exclusively male, with only a few women making it their career of choice. But with three of our four directors being female as well as some of our high achieving franchisees, Revive! is turning the tide.

IRMINA KOWALSKA, REVIVE! BASINGSTOKE

Franchisee Irmina Kowalska of Revive! Basingstoke is not phased at all by being one of a handful of women operating in the sector. In 2013, she and her partner Michal decided to postpone buying a house and instead, put their savings into starting their own Revive! franchise. The automotive repair sector was a new world for Irmina, but she threw herself into it, taking up training opportunities that Revive! had on offer.

She deals with a wide range of customers, from local and national car dealerships to the general public and has been instrumental in driving

sales growth for Revive! Basingstoke, gaining the 'Developer Gold' award at this year's annual conference.

Last year, their dream of owning their own home was realised and now the focus is firmly on growing the business with ambitious growth plans over the next few years.

Irmina said: "Like many people starting a business, we wanted to be in more control of our future. Being part of a network really helps as we have other franchisees around us who will help if we need it, as well as the support from the head office.

"One of the best moments was winning an award for business growth at the last Revive! conference, something I am very proud of."

TERRY MULLEN, JOINT MANAGING DIRECTOR OF REVIVE! UK

In 2019, Terry Mullen was announced as one of the '40 Women of Influence' for her impact on the body repair industry.

The Auto Body Professionals Club (ABP Club) is the leading industry resource for the UK body repair industry with over 2,500 members from all sectors of the industry. The ABP Club launched the 'Women of Influence' event to celebrate inclusion and advancement and to encourage more women into the car repair industry by highlighting the diverse range of roles that women hold.

Terry was originally a bank manager and lent the founder of the business, Mark Llewellyn, the money to buy his first van before joining the business in its early days.



At a Glance REVIVE! AUTO INNOVATIONS (UK) LTD

Established:
2004

Number of franchised outlets:
60

Location of units:
Across the UK

Investment range:
£32,000

Minimum required capital:
£15,000

Contact:
0800 046 8128
franchising@revive-uk.com

revivefranchise.com

"We still don't have enough women in the industry yet the business model is perfect for them"

She later bought into the business as part of an MBO and last year became joint managing director. She is widely recognised as a highly successful businesswoman in a male-dominated sector and a trailblazer in franchising who has spent the past 16 years helping Revive! evolve into the successful franchise that it is today.

She says: "I have never painted a car, so I have had to build up a reasonable understanding of the technical aspects of our work as well as building trust with our franchise owners who look to me for advice on how to successfully grow their business.

"Franchising offers a bright future for both men and women. We still don't have enough women in the industry yet the business model is perfect for them. As we tend to be able to multi-task and have good communication skills, we can turn our hand to almost anything! I can see more women becoming their own bosses at all stages of life and going down the franchising route."

↓ Irmina Kowalska, Revive! Basingstoke (left)
Terry Mullen, joint managing director of Revive! UK (right)



Freedom and flexibility

You can be your own boss with the help of Get Ahead VA



Having grown up with a successfully self-employed mother, Rebecca Newenham always knew that one day she wanted to run her own business.

“When my youngest daughter started school in 2010, the time was right and I decided to launch my own virtual agency,” she says.

“I could see how the economic landscape was changing and that outsourcing was set for major growth. Though I loved my corporate career in buying, I knew it wouldn’t offer me the work-life balance I was looking for.”

SUPPORT SERVICES

A decade later, Rebecca’s award winning Get Ahead VA team of over 40 virtual assistants and seven regional directors delivers marketing and business support services to small and medium-sized enterprises across the UK.

“From bookkeeping to blogging, database management to design and telephone answering to Twitter, we enable businesses to get ahead,” she says.

“In 2017 I launched our franchise model to help other people to work flexibly and achieve their dreams of running their own business, just like I did.”

Fiona Ibbetson says: “Being a Regional Director for Get Ahead VA is a hugely rewarding job. I love the flexibility and variety of every day. I also love the ability to scale the business by adding new regional team members as I need them.”

For more information visit franchise.getaheadva.com

Time to sparkle

Glitter Pop Parties is looking for motivated women who enjoy working with children and love partying



Mum of two, Hannah Mansour-Phillips, founded Glitter Pop Parties in 2016 in order to create a flexible career for herself in a field she loves.

She set out to develop a vibrant, people focused children’s party company specialising in fun, fabulous and unique pampering-based experiences.

CONSTANTLY INNOVATING

As the creator of the UK’s first range of Sassy Slime Pamper Parties, Glitter Pop

Parties is constantly innovating to create one-of-a-kind experiential products that combine its origins in pampering with popular children’s interests. Innovation is a cornerstone of Glitter Pop Parties’ philosophy and it ensures its franchisees stay relevant and at the top of their game.

Glitter Pop Parties is looking for motivated women who enjoy working with children and love partying.

A Glitter Pop Parties franchise presents an exciting opening for driven women who want a fun career as the boss of their

own business, where they can work on their own terms and fit it around their family life.

Hannah says: “The swift success of Glitter Pop Parties has brought such an immense positive change to my life and I’m overjoyed to be offering other women the opportunity to own a Glitter Pop Parties franchise in order to achieve that invaluable work-life balance, just as I did.”

For more information visit glitterpoppartiesfranchise.co.uk

Conversation starters wanted

Raring2go! needs franchisees who can build relationships with local businesses

Raring2go! is a magazine and website franchise known as the 'Go To Guide for You and Your Child'. Its audience is families with primary school age children.

Franchisees are conversation starters and champions of local businesses looking to appeal to the family market. They produce a colourful and vibrant quarterly A5 glossy magazine, with content split

between paid for advertising and highly relevant local editorial.

Revenue is generated by selling advertising in each edition to local businesses that want to position themselves in front of a family audience. Advertising content is merged with local editorial (what's on listings, events, days out), so the magazines are much more than just an advertising directory. They have coffee table resilience and are known, loved and trusted by parents.

Raring2go! franchisees also manage their own local website, which offers additional revenue streams from advertising banners, MPUs, feature pages and newsletters.

RETURN ON INVESTMENT

A Raring2go! franchise costs £15,995 (plus VAT) and comes with an all inclusive start-up package, so there are no hidden costs. The franchisor has over 12 years' experience operating Raring2go! successfully and currently has around 50 franchisees. It knows how tough starting out in business is and how stressful the first year of operation can be.

That's why Raring2go! has made the commitment to invest over £10,500 straight back into new franchisees' businesses. It does this by waiving all licence fees for the first 12 months and covering the print costs of the first four editions of a new franchisee's Raring2go! magazine.

This means that for the first 12 months of trading new franchisees can focus 100 per cent on building their business, raising awareness locally, developing relationships with



At a Glance RARING2GO!

Established:
2007

Number of franchised outlets:
50

Location of units:
UK wide

Investment range:
£15,995 (plus VAT)

Minimum required capital:
£4,000

Contact:
Freddie St George
getraring2go.co.uk

"Raring2go! has made the commitment to invest over £10,500 straight back into new franchisees' businesses"

new accounts and making money - without the burden or direction of invoices from head office.

IDEAL FRANCHISEE

Raring2go! is looking for people with a sales background, though it does provide a rock solid sales training programme as part of your start-up package. The company needs people who are confident and comfortable in building relationships with local businesses and selling advertising. If this is you, then Raring2go! is a fantastic business to own.

There are no guarantees in life. But with Raring2go!'s start-up package and unrivalled commitment to reinvest over £10,000 of the £16,000 purchase price straight back into your first year of trading, this is as close as it gets.

Raring2go! has a limited number of territories available across the UK. The company welcomes the chance to discuss the opportunity in detail with you.



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2020

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"I think EWIB is important because it helps to empower women in business, especially in franchising where it's been previously so male-dominated"

- Emily Heathcote, Fastsigns

"I think EWIB shows how hugely important it is for us to get away from the office environment. It makes you think about the bigger picture"

- Kat Foster Jenkins, Monkey Music

visit www.thebfa.org for more information



Challenging the status quo of women in business

The beauty industry is proving to be a profitable market to be in and with the support of the Guinot brand, this franchise opportunity could be the key to success

According to the latest figures from The British Franchise Association (bfa), 37 per cent of new franchisees are women and an impressive 65 per cent of people employed in franchise businesses are women. Pip Wilkins, the first female CEO of the bfa, says: "A franchise is a great way for women to get into running their own business because franchising offers flexible working hours, proven business models and the potential for substantial annual turnovers."

The rise in female entrepreneurs is present and poignant, especially within the Guinot franchise network, our host of franchisees are driving the network forward and challenging

the status quo of women in business. With dynamic training, advanced business support and a proven model, the Guinot franchise opportunity effectively integrates the Guinot brand with an entrepreneur's own business techniques and creativity.

It offers an existing beauty business the tools it needs to advance to the next level by improving profitability while also offering a new Guinot franchise owner the opportunity to merge into the market confidently and seamlessly. The Guinot franchise opportunity provides progressive support and advanced methods that have proudly developed a network of outstanding businesswomen.

According to a recent report by Oxford Economics, the growth of



At a Glance GUINOT

Established:
2012

Number of franchised outlets:
8

Location of units:
Bramhall, Bromley, Celbridge, Cricklewood, Darlington, Earlsfield, Gerrards Cross, Windsor

Investment range:
£90,000 - £130,000 (turnkey)

Minimum required capital:
From £35,000

Contact:
Ellie Tidy QFP, franchise manager
01344 873123, 07885964500
ellie.tidy@guinot.com

uk.guinot.com/franchising

"I had aspirations to achieve a growth of 20% to ensure profitability"

the beauty sector is defined within 15 key groups under the sub-sectors of beauty services, personal care, personal maintenance and personal enhancements. These 15 key groups are the main contributors to the success of the growth within the industry and they outline where the profitability in beauty is positioned. Guinot provides products and services in 10 of these key groups, highlighting the strength of the brand and the franchise model within the sector. A Guinot franchisee will leverage from the brand's positioning and contribution to the sector and feel a sense of security and stability when joining the network. This strong brand positioning will help benchmark their Guinot franchise against their competitors on a local scale.

"I wanted to modernise and expand the current business. I had aspirations to achieve a growth of 20 per cent to ensure profitability and I believed that the Guinot franchise opportunity would support that vision. I wanted to create a financially and emotionally rewarding business that could either be sold or utilised to support future





↑ Karen Hargreaves, The Guinot Salon Bramhall

"I wanted to create a financially and emotionally rewarding business that could either be sold or utilised to support future life plans"

and industry professionals who put the personal approach back into beauty, thus, feeding that innate desire to discover what makes them beautiful as individuals. A personal approach runs through the DNA of a Guinot salon and the franchise opportunity echoes the importance of creating a business that is profitable but remains personal.

A Guinot franchisee will receive dynamic marketing tools, structured campaigns and forward-thinking promotions to help them cut through the competition and acquire new business as well as in-depth business support, training and resources that will equip them to run a successful business.

The health and beauty industry is now recognised by the government as a major contributor to the UK economy as spending on cosmetics and personal care continues to rise so now is the time to act!

life plans," says Karen Hargreaves, The Guinot Salon Bramhall.

Franchising with Guinot allows anyone with a passion for the health and beauty business to be part of this thriving industry, with the guidance and support of a well-established brand. The franchise opportunity brings with it efficient organisation, creative marketing strategies and a clear business structure to help franchisees succeed. Guinot has a recognised and established brand image which vastly increases the chances of making a local beauty salon business a success in such a competitive market.

Guinot's iconic interior design is instantly recognisable to help with brand promotion and as an associate member of the British Franchise Association (bfa), a Guinot franchisee can be assured of ethical business practices and fair franchising.

The Oxford Economics report also highlighted that the beauty sector contributed £28.4 billion to the UK's GDP in 2018 which is 1.3 per cent of the country's total. This rapid industry growth has shaped a step-

change in how consumers now invest in beauty due to their confusion about what to buy.

With the market saturated with millions of products on social media, ecommerce and in department stores, the understandable consumer confusion has led them to seek professional advice from beauty therapists in salons, dermatologists



Following her passion

Undreamed opportunities have come from founding Little Voices, company CEO Jane Maudsley says



As young girls, we all dream of being in jobs we love. Then as women we dream of being in jobs that we not only love, but that support our talents and lifestyles in equal measure. And it feels just that: a dream.

Life throws us so many challenges that even realising what our dream jobs could be as adults isn't easy.

BEST STARTING BLOCK EVER

I was extremely lucky to choose to read music at university and then study at the Music Conservatoire for my masters. Looking back, my training and degree choice were the cornerstone of my future - they led me to the development and success of Little Voices. Beginning with a passion like drama and music meant I had the best starting block ever.

It's a bold decision to go with your heart and not your head, even as early as deciding your degree course, but it's not any easier as a back-to-work mum. Let's face it, to be able to earn a living from doing what you love, in this present climate, is a privilege.

Starting my own business was an uncharted road, but like all new experiences undreamed opportunities have come from it. I never imagined

I would be able to enthuse other women to follow their heart and passion. My greatest achievement as CEO of Little Voices is that I am now enabling women to not only follow their childhood dreams, but to help them simultaneously be successful business owners as franchisees.

Little Voices started out from a love of drama and music and a love of exposing and teaching these disciplines to children. However, the most important aspect of our company is helping children gain confidence and security in life that will enable them to flourish, no matter what path they take. For me, it has always been about being the best I can be, while helping others to be the best they can be.

FRANCHISEE RECRUITMENT

Today, my role as founder and CEO of Little Voices is to ensure we recruit new franchisees who have the same beliefs. Any business that involves children has an added responsibility - it's not just about profit, it's about

"To be able to earn a living from doing what you love is a privilege"



At a Glance LITTLE VOICES

Established:
2007

Number of franchised outlets:
60

Location of units:
across the UK

Investment range:
£15,000-£18,000

Minimum required capital:
£5,000

Contact:
Jane@littlevoices.org.uk

littlevoices.org.uk

welfare. So choosing who we work with at Little Voices is the most important and consequential aspect of our job.

We are a national franchise, but we choose special individuals to work with us. We look for people who not only share our passion for the arts and understand the delicacy of teaching children, but who ultimately have the ambition and entrepreneurial spirit to drive their own business in the knowledge they are fully supported by a national company who started off exactly where they are.

UNLOCKING YOUR POTENTIAL

London franchisee Jemma Bird says: "Being part of a successful national company and having your own franchise within that company can help you realise things about yourself, your skills and your personality that you never dreamt you'd be lucky enough to tap into to.

"I now realise I'm obsessed with both my life and the progression of my business. The energy I have as a Little Voices franchisee is

unstoppable, due to having something I live and care for daily."

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