

What Franchise

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How you can best populate your successful workforce

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FROM THE EDITOR



In the wake of the (hopefully diminishing) pandemic, millions of people are still reconsidering what they want to get out of their professional careers. For some, the traditional grind of the nine-to-five just won't cut it anymore, and they need something more flexible that works around them – rather than the other way around.

Thankfully, franchising can provide exactly that. Whether you're looking to manage a team of successful individuals or muck-in and get your hands dirty, there's a plethora of investment levels and scenarios to suit every kind of owner. This means that you could run the likes of a business management-style franchise alongside other commitments, or go all-in and see deserved returns. Want to find out more? Then make sure to check out the ultimate guide to lifestyle franchises, starting from page 16.

We have plenty of complementary features focused on the idea of building a business around you, too; such as the 'five community franchises' piece on page 56, which is perfect for entrepreneurs who want to bring a sense of holistic positivity to their day-to-day. Before leaping in to any kind of endeavour, however, it's important to do your research and start from a stable position – to make sure



you don't slip up, check out Rick Smith's essential considerations for new business owners over at page 64.

And of course, this issue of *What Franchise* is brimming with other insightful think pieces and guidance from across the world of entrepreneurialism. So whether you're looking to recruit the right kind of people for your business (p.22), or want to know the top tips to ensure that your future customers feel valued enough to build a sense of loyalty (p.86), we've got you covered.

Kieran McLoone

Editor, What Franchise

kieran.mcloone@aceville.co.uk

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FROM THE
PUBLISHER OF



ADVERTISING DIRECTOR
Richard Davies QFP Tel: 01323 471291
Email: richard.davies@aceville.com

SENIOR ACCOUNT MANAGERS
Rachael Wenham. 01323 471291
rachael.wenham@aceville.co.uk

Luke Elliott. 01323 471291
luke.elliott@aceville.co.uk

Matthew Gilley. 01323 471291
matt.gilley@aceville.com

Millie Hall. 01323 471291
millie.hall@aceville.co.uk

CIRCULATION MANAGER
Joseph Gibbons Tel: 01206 505912

SUBSCRIPTIONS
Tel: 01795 414667

PUBLISHER
Matthew Tudor

CREDIT CONTROL
Sue Carr Tel: 01206 505903

DESIGNERS
Adam Barford, Luke Rogers,
Steve Streeting & Lee Francis

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IN THE KNOW

Facts and figures from the world of franchising



NUMBER CRUNCHING

18 – 24 MONTHS

THE AVERAGE TIME IT TAKES THE AVERAGE FRANCHISEE TO START SEEING PROFITS AFTER LAUNCH.

IF YOU'RE BUILDING YOUR LIFESTYLE AROUND A FRANCHISE, IT'S IMPORTANT TO HAVE CAPITAL TO GET YOU GOING – LEARN MORE AS PART OF LINDA WHITNEY'S REPORT FROM PAGE 16.



Photo Credit: Christopher Bissell

QUOTE ME ON THAT

“The support of a good team is the difference between a good entrepreneur and a successful one”

Charlie Mullins speaks with Angela Sara West about selling his £145m business last year, and his journey from rags to riches. Read the full piece from page 50.



TRENDING ONLINE: DELIVERY HAULAGE

In recent months, a relatively unsuspecting industry has emerged as one of our most popular at What Franchise HQ: delivery haulage businesses. This could be for a number of reasons; not least that supply chain issues have become a mainstream concern, and an increasing number of savvy entrepreneurs with their fingers on the pulse are recognising that this is one segment that all other businesses can't do without.

Some of the most popular brands at the moment are heavy hitters, such as the Amazon Delivery Service Partner (DSP) programme, as well as DPD and Pack and Send. I'm sure we've all relied on businesses like Amazon to deliver us goods in recent months – especially during periods of lockdown – so it makes sense that these brands are front of mind when entrepreneurs consider partnering with a leading franchise operation.

Looking to open your own delivery haulage franchise location? Make sure to visit what-franchise.com to check out countless franchise opportunities and insight.

NEWS IN BRIEF

NEW TOP TALENT JOINS THE SENIOR TEAM AT CAREMARK

Caremark has announced the appointments of Emma Scholes and Kelly Blackmore-Lee as director of marketing and director of operations, respectively.

Kelly brings with her a wealth of experience from time spent growing other leading franchise brands and having served as head of compliance for the British Franchise Association (bfa).

Kelly said: "Having known the Caremark brand for a long time within franchising, I am delighted to join David and Lisa and the team to help support and grow the Caremark network. I was fortunate enough to attend the annual conference prior to joining and met many franchisees who are passionate about the brand and care in the community. I feel this is a fantastic brand working in the social care industry."

Emma knows the care sector well having previously been national marketing manager at Bluebird Care, but that's not all: she has also worked on international marketing campaigns in the product and service industries for large companies. Emma's appointment aligns perfectly with Caremark's desire to achieve greater franchise recognition and deeper market penetration.

David Glover, joint CEO of Caremark, welcomed the new appointees. "I am delighted

to have both Kelly and Emma join us," he said. "They are both high calibre individuals, fantastic additions to the Caremark team and I look forward to working with them. I know that our franchisees are keen to meet them as they get out into the network and meet people."

"I think these appointments show the investment we are making in supporting the network and our determination to drive the business forward."



Emma Scholes
Director of Marketing.

Kelly Blackmore-Lee
Director of Operations

FANTASTIC SERVICES THANKS THE NHS

Having just recorded its best-ever year, Fantastic Services is now looking to give back, offering NHS workers, first responders and veterans, looking to start a franchise, 20 per cent off their initial investment.

With 530 franchisees offering over 100 high-end services in their local areas to over 50,000 customers, any NHS heroes who take up the offer are bound to have plenty of business.

Co-founders Rune Sovndahl and Anton Skarlatov, who launched the franchise back in 2009, say they are determined to give something back to the UK after it has provided such a fantastic platform for their award-winning business.

Rune explains: "We are determined to give something back to the UK after it has treated us so well since the launch of Fantastic Services in 2009. This is why we are launching the reduced cost programme, they have provided us all with such a great service, so it is our turn to help them."

"We want to help them launch their own home services business, so they can enjoy a high-quality life after everything they have done for this country. We have a proven business model which works, have invested over £20m in state-of-the-art technology, including a bespoke CRM system and booking app, and offer 100-plus services, so we are constantly in demand 12 months a year."

"We also have a team of 500 experts at HQ



who constantly generate sales leads for the franchisees so they can focus on delivering great customer service rather than worrying about sales. So we have all the tools in place to almost guarantee success."

Fantastic Services has confirmed that the 20 per cent reduced cost will apply both to its

standard franchise agreement and to the lower-cost working franchise agreement for those who don't want to take on extra staff. Typically franchisees (on either programme) earn their investment back within the first two years of operation.

GREENSLEEVES NETS 5-STAR FRANCHISEE SATISFACTION AWARD FOR SECOND YEAR RUNNING

In March 2022, Greensleeves franchisees took part in an independent survey assessing the franchise brand this year. WorkBuzz, who has been gathering objective feedback

from franchisees across 200-plus brands since 2011 for its Franchisee Satisfaction Benchmark Survey, announced that Greensleeves had received the 5-Star Franchisee Satisfaction Award for a consecutive year.

WorkBuzz invited Greensleeves franchisees to rate their franchisor, its products and services and its infrastructure. The results of this survey produce a benchmark of satisfaction scores, and high-scoring

franchisees are then in the running for awards held later in the year.

Greensleeves achieved a record-breaking network turnover for the second year in a row in 2021, something which the horticultural franchise attributes to its great relationships with its franchisees. As well as receiving 5-star franchisee satisfaction, Greensleeves' good rapport with its network can be demonstrated by every franchisee re-signing for another term as they enter into their renewal period.

- 88 per cent of franchisees said they felt proud to be a part of Greensleeves
- 83 per cent of franchisees said they would recommend Greensleeves to prospective franchisees
- 95 per cent said they planned to renew their franchise agreement when it came up
- 84 per cent expect their profits to increase over the next 12 months.

Just as importantly, if not more so, is that a whopping 94 per cent said they felt Greensleeves understood if franchisees are successful, it will be successful.

David Truby, managing director of Greensleeves (pictured), said: "What an unbelievable start to 2022! We are delighted to receive the WorkBuzz 5 Star Franchisee Satisfaction Award again – it is a great tribute to all the head office team at Greensleeves and the fantastic work they do.

"We have worked hard during these challenging times to expand the network, maintain our standards, and create a brand people are proud to be part of. I'm thrilled to see our efforts reflected in the report and it's a real credit to all the team here in head office who support our franchise partners."



RIGHT AT HOME WINS BIG AT THE NORTHERN DIGITAL AWARDS

Right at Home is delighted to have won two awards from three nominations at the 2022 Northern Digital Awards. Working with agency partners, CTI Digital, the home care company won both 'Best Digital Marketing Campaign' and 'Best SEO Campaign'. The two companies have been working together since 2019, providing SEO and marketing expertise for the head office and the 70-plus Right at Home franchisees nationwide.

Heather Wehrle, national people and brand development manager, said: "We are thrilled to have won these awards with CTI as a result of our collaborative working. We have worked tirelessly over the last 18 months to really supercharge our digital marketing and brand visibility across the UK, and these awards are testament to our efforts really paying off!"

Right at Home, which does not



collect a marketing levy from its franchisees, has seen its search ranking go from page seven to page one, boosting traffic and increasing conversions on the site by 50 per cent.

James Wilkinson, director of marketing at CTI Digital, said that

success was down to: "A balance between increasing visibility for the national site and supporting local sites by delivering SEO training to all franchisees at the national conference. Encouraging the network to optimise their own websites, we have helped

the full Right at Home family to feel the impact of our winning achievements!"

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Give prospects a reason to come to your brand

Franchise recruitment is a competitive market – are you confident that your brand and opportunity stands out?

WORDS BY SUZIE MCCAFFERTY



THE AUTHOR

Suzie McCafferty
is CEO of franchise
consultancy
Platinum Wave

Some suggest there are over 1,000 franchise brands in the UK alone, but looking at a lot of portal listings and company websites, you could be forgiven for assuming that the majority of brands are all trying to attract the exact same person as a franchisee – which we know isn't the case.

Click after click takes you to the same safe, generic sales messages – in fact, if you took away the company logos, it would be pretty hard to tell which company you're reading about. There are plenty of exceptions, of course – and they will be the brands that are successfully recruiting.

It's all about culture

Most of today's content-hungry franchisee prospects are just as interested in learning about the culture and personality of your brand as they are in the likely returns on their investment. You're asking people to make a long-term commitment to you, so who you are and how you do what you do, are incredibly important to them.

With so many people experiencing a higher degree of work/life balance in the last couple of years thanks to working from home, that 'flexibility' selling point that has served franchise marketing so well in the past is no longer enough on its own to pull people out of employment. Franchise brands must show them what will be uniquely amazing about joining their network if they are to make a sufficiently compelling argument.

Be specific

Also, your franchise can't possibly appeal to 'everyone' so don't waste your time and budget trying to target 'everyone' – be specific and create content that is completely and shamelessly targeted at your franchisee candidate profile.

Yes, the more enquiries you attract the greater the chance of finding a match – but it's so much more than just a numbers game. Recruitment marketing content that allows people to rule themselves out (can't afford it,

"Create recruitment marketing content that also tells an inspiring story"

won't make them enough money, too much like hard work – there can be endless reasons) will almost certainly drop your monthly enquiry numbers to begin with, but it won't drop in quality.

Create recruitment marketing content that also tells an inspiring story and demonstrates successful franchisees, and your numbers will go back up, as will your conversion rates.

It sounds simple of course, and most businesses think that is what they are already doing, but in reality, it takes some very specific and joined up skills. No-one can tell the story of your brand better than you, but a marketing, PR, media or copywriting specialist might be able to help you write or pitch your story better.



Taking back control after redundancy

Redundancy could be an opportunity to start a new chapter of your career with Platinum Property Partners



Redundancy is never easy. As well as the longer-term financial worries that can come with losing a job in this way, there's often the upset of leaving a company and work colleagues behind, too. But redundancy can also lead to new opportunities and one of those is franchising.

"Many of our franchise partners come to us following redundancy," says Emma Hayes, managing director of Platinum Property Partners.

"I think often they're not so worried about the financial implications of redundancy because if they're coming to us, they generally have a good package behind them and they're keen to invest in their future.

"It's the mental side of redundancy that affects people more. When you're working, you know your importance within an organisation, and you have a purpose. I like to think, among all the other benefits our partners see, that we give them back that sense of purpose when they join the franchise."

BOUNCING BACK TOGETHER
'Purpose' with Platinum came quickly for Paul Watson, who joined the franchise in

2014 after taking redundancy from his corporate role.

He explains: "After my redundancy, my wife Carol and I sat down and questioned whether I really wanted to go back into another corporate role. We concluded that we should try to set something up for ourselves with the capital we had available. We looked at investing in care homes and several other ideas, including franchising, but we kept coming back around to property."

Early in 2014, Paul and Carol took the plunge and joined Platinum, starting their co-living rental portfolio by buying two properties at once.

"We always believed what we were doing by joining the franchise was right," reflects Paul, "for me, I needed structure and joining a franchise like Platinum gave me that. If we'd done property alone, it would have been a very lonely existence, not to mention having nobody to confirm whether the decisions we would have made were the right ones. Platinum provided the coaching, mentoring and the clear processes to follow to build your portfolio."

REAPING THE REWARDS

After their franchise term ended, Paul and Carol became Platinum Alumni Partners, meaning they retained access to the franchise's team of property, renovation, and finance experts as well as the holistic benefits of the franchise that help to ensure franchise partners have the health to truly enjoy their wealth.

After seven years with Platinum, five co-living properties and 33 housemates living in them, Paul and Carol are also enjoying the extra time together.

"We certainly get more time together," adds Paul, "with my corporate job, often I would go off to work on a Monday and

"I needed structure and joining a franchise like Platinum gave me that"



wouldn't reappear until Thursday or Friday, so now we have the time to spend together and with our family, too."

At a Glance Platinum Property Partners

Year established: 2007

Number of franchised outlets:
400+ franchise partners

Location of units: 1,500 + properties

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FRANCHISES TO GIVE YOU THE LIFE YOU WANT

Do you work to live or live to work? Freedom to be your own boss is one of the most rewarding perks of owning a franchise, so choose the right one to meet your lifestyle goals

WORDS BY LINDA WHITNEY



What kind of lifestyle do you want? For most employees, this question is irrelevant – their job dictates their lifestyle for them. Think of the accountant who works long hours only to have to tackle a massive briefcase full of work after dinner, the nurse who struggles to fit extended and changing shifts around looking after a family, or the driver who can be called upon at any time to drive anywhere, perhaps having to stay overnight. The same happens to people working as contractors or on zero-hours contracts. In all these cases, and many more, the job is dictating your lifestyle.

But it needn't be like this.

I started out as a journalist working for a publishing start-up. Fast growth meant frequent promotions and pay increases, but the long hours were taking a huge toll on me, while my employer was getting rich.

I left and went freelance. It was a more precarious existence and at the start I made less money – but it was worth it to be able to control my workload. Rather than getting home exhausted at 10pm on weekdays and spending every weekend recovering from the week before, I got my life back.

When your boss dictates your lifestyle, one solution is to become your own boss.

A franchise will make becoming your own boss easier, and when carefully chosen, can deliver the lifestyle you're looking for. Franchises include full-time management opportunities, investor-only models, franchises

that can be run as a side hustle, and flexible franchises that fit around family and caring commitments. There are examples of franchises in most business sectors, so there's likely to be one that appeals to you.

But before plunging into franchise research, let's take a step back and decide what lifestyle actually suits you.

What sort of life do you want?

I WANT MONEY ABOVE ALL ELSE

If you're energetic and willing to work hard on your business in and out of office hours, look for a full-time franchise that prioritises increasing income. However, don't take at face value the claims franchisors make about how much money can be made. Speak to their franchisees and ask them what they actually make and how much effort it takes to achieve this.

Things to bear in mind: In a typical franchise you're unlikely to start seeing profits before about 18 – 24 months after launch, so ensure you have the capital to cover that.

I WANT TO WORK AROUND A FAMILY

If you have young children or other caring responsibilities, consider a family-friendly franchise. There are children's services franchises that involve providing activities such as dance, arts and crafts, theatre school sessions, tutoring, fitness classes, or music from local venues, often after school hours or at weekends. In some cases, sessions are limited to school

term time, so you won't have the problem of doing sessions during the holidays. And, with some franchises, you can even take your children into sessions with you, so you can save money on childcare.

Things to bear in mind: You'll still be running a business, which involves more than just conducting activity sessions. You'll also have to manage the admin and business development, both in term time and during school holidays, so you need to factor in time for that.

I WANT TO CONTROL MY HOURS

Long hours are a common reason for job dissatisfaction and burnout. Many people these days work over 40 hours a week and are often expected to take work home – all without getting paid overtime or having a stake in the company profits.

If this applies to you, consider a management franchise. As a manager, you'll build a team of staff to deliver your services, either from the start or as the business grows, so once your team is in place, you can set your own hours.

You'll also reap the financial rewards of your efforts, rather than seeing them go to an employer.

There are management franchises in a wide range of sectors. Franchisees with No Letting Go manage teams providing inventory management and property services to estate and lettings agents and property management companies. It's a franchise that can enable you to take charge of your own working life.



THE AUTHOR

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

“Lifestyle concerns are said to be one of the factors behind The Great Resignation. A LinkedIn poll of over 25,000 people for global recruiter Hays found that 74 per cent said that the pandemic has made them consider their job or career choices”

Head of operations Justine Tomlinson says: "Franchisees start out delivering the service themselves, meeting landlords and tenants and conducting inventories, so they know what the service involves, but as the business grows, they start to take on staff. Within about 18 months most have moved into management, focussing on developing the business.

"Once you have an established team, you can decide what level of day-to-day involvement is required on your part," says Justine.



Gary Riches

DRIVERHIRE

Gary Riches, a former HGV driver and transport manager, was doing 70 hour weeks and it was killing him. Gary says: "I was working 11 hour days, extra at weekends, and was a retained firefighter too. I was making good money, but something had to give.

"I'd take my kids to the cinema and sleep through the film. I was grouchy and snappy. Eventually the stress made me feel like I was having a breakdown. My GP sent me to a counsellor and when she heard about my lifestyle, she just said: 'You're not getting enough sleep. It's killing you.'"

Keen to work for himself, in 2012 Gary bought the Colchester Driver Hire recruitment franchise, a resale with three staff. "I had the transport experience, and the franchise provided the recruitment training," he says. Turnover is now approaching £2m a year.

"Now I work 8:30am to 5pm, and I'm in charge of my own workload. It's hard work, but I love it. Family life is better, my wife is happier and I can go to midweek Norwich City games."

He now employs five staff and says: "Having enough staff means they and I can go on holidays and have a family life, and we can keep operating if someone is off sick. You don't have to be a lean business to make a profit.

"If more workplaces adopted this attitude there would be fewer mental health problems."

At recruitment franchise, DriverHire, franchise sales director Graham Duckworth says: "All our franchisees employ staff so it's a management franchise, and that gives them some flexibility as regards their own hours. However, we expect them to have daily involvement with the business, talking to customers and driving the business forward.

"We've had franchisees who have come from senior management roles that typically involve 12-hour days, international calls at all hours, and international travel. DriverHire is about management, but certainly not as pressurised as that."

Things to bear in mind:

Management franchises usually work better if you have previous management experience, especially in managing people.

I WANT AN EXTRA INCOME

There are franchises that allow you to run your franchise alongside a job or another business, which is good way to get started in a new industry and to increase your income.

However, almost all franchisors want you to expand, and often they'll want you to gradually move the focus of your time to the franchise. This enables you to change your career over a period of time – handy if you can't afford to make the jump to self-employment all at once, or want to change your career with a safety net in place.

Things to bear in mind:

Running a franchise alongside a job or another business means you'll undoubtedly be busier, so think carefully before doing this or you

"I escaped the long-hours culture"



risk delivering a worse service in both positions. You could also risk personal burnout.

Gemma Beeston, manager at TheSkyCam, whose franchisees offer aerial photography and videography services using drones, says: "You need no previous experience as we provide training, so you can gain your commercial drone pilot's licence." There are close to 100 SkyCam franchisees around the country.

I WANT AN INVESTMENT BUSINESS

These franchises, concentrated mostly in the fast food and fitness sectors, welcome interest from investors seeking to broaden their portfolios.

Commonly the investors already run quite substantial

businesses and see the franchise as a way to diversify. They appoint managers to run their franchise and recruit staff, while they use their business skills to steer the franchise alongside their existing businesses. These franchises can sometimes be run as partnerships with other investors (such as family members or groups of friends).

Things to bear in mind:

These opportunities tend to require investments of hundreds of thousands of pounds and are easiest for investors who already have funding sources in place, as well as the capacity to easily recruit senior management to run the franchise for them. However, there are a few that are less expensive, so shop around.

Mitch Shah

THESKYCAM

Mitch Shah and his business partner Nirav are co-franchisees of aerial drone imagery franchise TheSkyCam, which they run around their existing businesses.

Mitch says: "I'm a freelance sales agent in electrical wholesaling and Nirav is an electrical engineering consultant. We're both self-employed, so when a friend told us how he'd become a drone pilot with TheSkyCam franchise, we were intrigued and followed it up. I was always interested in photography, and you get full training to become a qualified drone pilot."

They launched the business in June 2021.

"Head office markets our service through a website they created for us, and provides most of our leads. We've had some interesting and varied jobs: filming from high above a roundabout for a student doing a traffic survey and carrying out a drone survey of a site for a fire engineer and a contractor (which would have been impossible any other way).

"Our latest project involved working with Amazon to film the launch of their brand new warehouse and offices in East London, which required aerial filming and photography of both the internal and external parts of the building."

"Franchises include full-time management opportunities, investor-only models, franchises that can be run as a side hustle, and flexible franchises that fit around family and caring commitments"



"I'm flying high with an extra income"

"Running a franchise alongside a job or another business means you'll undoubtedly be busier, so think carefully before doing this or you risk delivering a worse service in both positions. You could also risk personal burnout"



“I’m taking charge of my own life with a franchise”

Mitchell Walters

NO LETTING GO

“One thing I have learnt as an entrepreneur is that you must run the business instead of letting the business run you,” says Mitchell Walters, who owns No Letting Go franchises in Barnet and Enfield, north London.

Mitch learned this the hard way. “I used to have a mini-cab company, but it was a nightmare. I had about 20 drivers, but all too often I’d get a call saying that a cab had not turned up, and I’d have to jump up from a family dinner to go and take a client

to the airport. As well as disrupting family time, it happened while I was out having fun with friends and even contributed to the breakdown of my marriage. It became a sort of joke.” Eventually, he closed the business.

His divorce left Mitch as a single dad, keen to find a better way to provide for his two daughters. He discovered No Letting Go, offering property inventory services, at a franchise show. “I spoke to all of the franchisees – there were 21 at the time – and they all said good things, so I invested the last of my savings in it and started the Barnet franchise in 2010,” says Mitch.

He invested in the neighbouring

area franchise in 2018 and now has five staff, including his daughter Gabriella. They meet tenants and landlords and carry out inventories and property checks, while Mitch manages the business.

“I now mix about 15 hours of management work a week with playing golf at the nearby course. I’m nearly 70 so feel I’ve earned it,” says Mitch.

“I have time to see my children and grandchildren and go on holiday when I choose – but I still go out and meet clients when I want, and I love working on my business.”



An integral part of the property process

X-Press Legal Services has built a culture of peer support and collaboration



X-Press Legal Services is the leading independent property search provider, with 27 franchise offices across England and Wales. Franchisees run their own businesses, providing essential property search reports to the conveyancing sector.

X-Press is a perfect business opportunity for those who thrive on building relationships and analysing data, whilst benefitting from increased flexibility and a better level of work-life balance than in the corporate world.

You don't need experience in law or property as all training is provided, and your clients will be the legal experts. You'll join a close-knit franchise network, with a wealth of ongoing support to guide you on your journey to running a successful business of your own.

A RECESSION-PROOF SECTOR

The services X-Press franchisees provide are essential to every house purchase, sale, repossession and remortgage. Despite any fluctuations in the property market, they are still essential – making X-Press' business model recession-proof.

Franchisees provide a wealth of support to the conveyancing sector, often becoming part of the team for smaller conveyancing firms. Their internal conveyancing online system (ICOS) hosts a wealth of

reports, products and searches, helping conveyancers access everything they need, all in one place.

As well as exclusive access to this ICOS, X-Press franchisees benefit from a strong brand awareness in the sector and proven quality service – they are trusted to provide quality reports to hundreds of legal firms across England and Wales.

Much of their business comes from referrals, but franchise owners go out into their community and network within the sector to build a thriving client base. They are helped in their venture by the team at X-Press's head office, that supports with solicitor CPD sessions, webinars and training.

A FAMILY-LIKE NETWORK

The X-Press network support one another through their journeys, with a wealth of peer-support and collaboration.

The Lister family franchised their business in 2005, and have carried over this 'family-like' culture into their franchise network – always on the end of the phone to help a franchisee, and frequently helping and guiding them throughout their journey. The Listers also 'walk the walk', running their own franchise office, so advice comes from a place of experience and understanding.

50 per cent of X-Press' franchisees have been with the business from day one. This is not only testament to the collaborative culture they have nurtured and the stability of the business offering, but also to the level of support and innovation provided.

And many franchisees have gone on to buy neighbouring territories to expand their X-Press business. Its longest serving franchisees are continuing to extend their franchise licenses by five to 10 years, showing extreme faith and trust in X-Press and the future of the business.



BE YOUR OWN BOSS

X-Press offers a great opportunity to be your own boss, scale your business and achieve the success you want with more flexibility and enjoyment in your working life.

Entrepreneurs who are computer savvy, have a great attention to detail and thrive on building relationships with clients are a perfect fit for X-Press; your business will pride itself on customer service.

There are a number of X-Press territories available across England and Wales, where you can start out in a home office with minimal overheads before scaling up your business and team.

“The services X-Press franchisees provide are essential to every house purchase, sale, repossession and remortgage”

At a Glance X-Press Legal Services

Established: 2004

Number of franchised outlets: 27

Location of units: England and Wales

Investment range: £32,500

Contact: 01925 393333

xpresslegal.co.uk

Recruitment that gets results

In the era of 'The Great Resignation' it is very much an employee's market. How can franchisees, often hiring for the first time, recruit the best people – and keep them?

WORDS BY ANDREW SANSOM



THE AUTHOR

Andrew Sansom is a content writer for What Franchise

Before the pandemic, many of us saw the world differently. Before the age of hand sanitizer and awkward elbow bumps, those of us not fortunate enough to be our own boss, had employers dictate large parts of our working life. But things have changed. Having spent the best part of two years stuck at home, employees have en-masse re-evaluated the importance of a healthy work-life balance and working conditions and now with plenty of available jobs, they can afford to be picky.

Franchisees across a number of industries will likely find themselves responsible for hiring as they look to expand or even open for the first time. This is not something that comes naturally to everyone and requires its own set of skills.

David Delacy Jones, director of franchise development at Kenect Recruitment, agrees that there are challenges to this moment in time with higher pay being a key motivator. "It is a very, very candidate-driven market at the moment, the candidates are driving the market through salary expectation." But we can't all offer sector-leading wages.

When salaries are non-negotiable, candidates often look for incentives to make a role more attractive. This is often something

that franchisees can offer to improve employee work-life balance such as flexible hours, the option to work from home or as Delacy Jones outlines, "employers are now offering health care insurance. They're offering medical and dental and optical insurance. They're offering bonuses which wasn't a big thing in the past because it was based on salary."

On the hunt for the perfect candidate

Sanjeev Sanghera, MD and co-founder of international franchises Doner Haus and Doner Shack agrees that employees are looking for employers to make offers more enticing and to be treated like human beings. He says: "The restaurant industry hires and fires people with any loophole that they can find, to not have to commit to contracts." Having seen the dark side of zero-hour contracts himself, Sanghera is not one to subject his employees to similar treatment. He explains passionately how all Doner Shack and Doner Haus employees work on 100-hour contracts. This stable income is a big draw to job hunters.

In 2022 the interview process for many jobs is now different. Remote interviews are considered the standard. This might make it harder for franchisees to get an overall impression of applicants, but Delacy Jones sees the benefits.

"The time save is immense," he says. Recruiters can now "do multiple Teams calls which is very easy because you're not asking someone to come and visit." When asked if the remote process lets recruiters see more candidates, his answer is an unequivocal "100 per cent yes."

David would always suggest using a recruiter when possible but giving advice for those choosing to hire candidates themselves, he warns: "If they've had a number of jobs over a short period of time, that's a red flag." He goes on to explain one key question recruiters ask themselves, "can we match the skills (of the applicant) to what our potential customers are looking for?" This logic applies to franchisees recruiting employees as well. Are you willing to train someone to grow into the role or do you need them to come in fully ready to go? If it's the latter you may have to pay a premium.

Sanghera prefers to simplify things, he explains: "If you find someone who turns up every day and has the skills, you're 90 per cent of the way there, then you can help them get to the next stage and you can start to help shape them."

The missing piece of the puzzle

Of course, no one has a perfect record of recruitment. There are simply too many factors involved to guarantee a new hire is right for the job. Even agencies encounter these situations, as David says, "It's the very nature of it, we all started our jobs with our employer thinking that we're the best thing

"If you find someone who turns up every day and has the skills, you're 90 per cent of the way there"

they've seen. It doesn't always work out that way." This is why probationary periods exist, and if either party is unhappy then chalk it up to experience and begin the process again.

One of the best ways to ensure a hire hits the ground running is to employ people whose work culture aligns with that of the company. This is something Sanghera looks for in his recruitment process: "do they actually want to work because they enjoy and love what they're doing? Are they motivated

by the vision of what we're trying to achieve collectively? Or are they a pickup a wage, clock-watching type?"

As well as interviews, Doner Shack regularly offers paid trial shifts to evaluate candidates in the conditions they could expect if they get the job. He stresses the importance that such trials are paid to show candidates you are committing to them.

Of course, recruitment is nothing without the ability to hold on to star employees once you've found them.

Working in hospitality, a sector that has a particularly high staff turnover, Sanghera knows this all too well. "It's about lifestyle, about work-life balance, experiences, about creating memories as a team and that is very, very important to us," he says.

While he admits that paying staff "slightly over the average industry rates" helps, incentives don't have to be purely financial. Doner Shack and Doner Haus regularly work with their brewing partners to reward employees with brewery tours in Germany and other once-in-a-lifetime experiences. Sanghera says: "These are really exciting trips away and you're able to say to your team that you get all expenses paid trips for performing really well within our company. Creating memories as a team is very important."



More than a job

After acquiring his first Dyno-Rod franchise at a franchise fair in 1993, it's been quite a ride for Russell Hand, now the owner of the largest plumbing franchise in the UK



By his own admission, Russell Hand didn't know what he was getting into. He says, "I went into it thinking I had bought a job." It's clear that some 28 years later he has gotten much more than that. Now with his wife and two daughters also working in the business, Dyno-Rod is very much more than a job for Russell.

Purchasing the Shropshire franchise as a resale from a retiring franchisee was not what Russell first had in mind. He says, "I wanted to do marquee hire. I thought it would be easy enough, I didn't realise how much it was going to cost me." With a territory now covering North Wales to Lands' End, it's safe to say he made the right choice: "I was lucky," he laughs.

PROVEN TRACK RECORD

However he fell into it, Russell has found a varied career which he enjoys, even after almost three decades. He says: "Everyday is exciting really. You should come to work excited every morning, or stop coming to work. What's kept me here for all these years is just being able to work on the business and create a bigger business each day and each week."

Despite its near 60-year history, Russell is impressed with Dyno's adaptability. "We've been able to move with the times and get into markets that have been quite exciting because I'm not a plumber and yet my business is the largest plumbing franchise in the UK." Prior to being bought by British Gas in 2004, Dyno dealt solely with drains but now Russell sees plumbing

as the largest part of his business. He explains, "on the drain side, we'll do 70 jobs a day now. On the plumbing side, we can do 400/450 jobs a day."

But how has someone with no plumbing experience acquired such a large franchise territory? "I think that if you've been doing a good job for the franchisor, then a neighbouring area comes up for sale. They're either going to get somebody new in there, or sell it to somebody who's got a track record," says Russell.

As a three-time franchisee of the year, he was approached by Dyno with an offer to take on additional territory. "You're not pushed into anything," he says, "I never intended to have a business in Cornwall. It's just happened because we've done a good job with Dyno. They feel more than

satisfied with us and I suppose, obviously I've got to feel more than satisfied with them if I'm still here after all these years."

SUPPORT FROM THE TOP

Despite jokingly calling them "hard taskmasters," Russell is quick to give Dyno and (parent company) British Gas credit with things that "make a lot of difference to the business," such as an increased marketing profile and stringent health and safety procedure. Russell is also grateful for the "massive buying power" and back-end services his franchisor provides. "We have support helping us forward with audits or more information and demographics of areas so we can understand the type of customers we get in particular areas."

In terms of hands-on support, Russell says, "If I've got a major problem or even something quite minor, I can approach the franchisor to be able to get some help or advice or clearance on something." He cites one recent example of the franchisor's support after struggling to find enough vehicles for the scale of his operations, "what has been brilliant is that we have borrowed 12 British Gas vans."

An obvious selling point of most franchises is the use of a name people know, but what are Dyno's values? What does it mean to customers? "It's an above-average service," Russell explains. "They're not ringing us because we're going to be the cheapest but they've got a problem and they want it sorted to a good quality and right first time."

PUTTING PEOPLE FIRST

Customer service is also a big part of Russell's personal ideology and this is an area he insists new franchisees should excel in. He elaborates: "For us, it's just another blocked drain, or just another leak. But for the customer, they're devastated. If they've got water pouring through the ceiling, they're devastated. It's a customer's home that you're dealing with. Not just their house."

Russell is someone who enjoys his work; asked for his favourite aspect of the job he can't decide: "I want to split it between interacting with people and turning around a dissatisfied customer into a very satisfied one."

These are perfect traits for someone in Russell's position and his management style is similarly personable. He describes a regular weekly meeting in his Telford office (the only office needed for his large franchise network) as 'Russell's Roundup' which when things are not going to plan he describes as: "A cross between Russell's Roundup and Russell's Rant. Thankfully, we get more roundups than we get rants."



"I never intended to have a business in Cornwall. It's just happened because we've done a good job with Dyno"

As he mentions, Russell's day-to-day is not hands-on with every aspect of the business. He has made his franchise work for him and for Russell, that is a management franchise. He says, "I'm quite lucky that the office is up and running before I get here. I almost do a meet and greet with as many people as possible and I try to make time even if I'm busy. I'll try and make time to actually talk with people. A lot of my day is taken up looking at new employees, then either I make zoom calls, interviews, or look at apprentices. I don't get involved with day-to-day jobs. I get involved more with the broader structure really of what we're doing and get more involved with people."

Russell is typically honest with his advice for potential new franchisees. He says, "I'd probably say don't do it, don't

come into this type of franchise if you just want to do what I did very originally, which was just to guarantee myself a job and to buy myself a job. If somebody was looking seriously looking to have a managerial role? Then then this type of franchise would be ideal."

At a Glance Dyno-Rod

Year established: 1963

Number of franchised outlets: 40+

Location of units: Full UK coverage

Investment range:

Only resales - £300,000 to £1.5m

Minimum required capital: Minimum £150,000

dyno.com/franchise-opportunities



The secret to franchise success

An interview with Lee Parry, Dyno-Rod's network performance and strategy manager



WHAT SUPPORT DOES DYNO-ROD OFFER ITS FRANCHISEES?

LP: Dyno-Rod is always looking for opportunities to leverage our broader relationships to help our franchisees. A few examples of support being provided to our franchisees to help bring down costs is the offer to use the British Gas motor insurance policy, we also offer support with employee uniforms, vehicle leasing and parts.

The management and visibility of cash flow is key to any successful business and we support our franchisees by paying them immediately for commercial jobs whilst we wait to be paid by the account on normal payment terms.

We have 12 regionally-based managers supporting our franchisees by providing expertise in technical areas, operational challenges as well as health and safety and customer service. The British Gas employee assistance programme has now been extended to cover franchisees as well, providing many additional benefits personal benefits for all employees within our franchisees.

Listening to our franchisees lets us know what they want from us. Our regular franchisee forums meet on a regular basis and consist of a mix of franchisees and members of the franchisor leadership team.

WHAT DOES THE LONG HISTORY OF DYNO-ROD MEAN FOR THE COMPANY TODAY?

LP: We've come a long way since 1963. Nowadays when someone has a problem with their drains, Dyno-Rod is usually the first name that comes to mind. Our business became part of the Centrica group in 2004, and is now part of British Gas and Scottish Gas, with the backing of one of the UK's most influential companies we are confident that we can continue growing, while also supporting our local communities and businesses. Although we are proud of our past, we're always working hard to improve our products and services. We'll make sure you can depend on Dyno.

WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE TO NEW FRANCHISEES/ RESALE PURCHASERS?

LP: Understand Dyno-Rod in terms of the marketplace it operates within and the customers both domestic and commercial. Have a very clear three-to-five-year business plan that supports mobilisation of your business and delivering an ROI at the earliest opportunity. Know what you're getting into – engage with members of the franchisor team and franchise network to find out what makes a successful franchisee.

WHAT ARE THE CORE VALUES OF DYNO-ROD?

LP: If I had to sum up 60 years in a few words I would say: care, delivery, collaboration, agility, and courage.

We care about our staff of course, but our customers, too; we want to make a difference in society and to those we touch. Dyno is all about delivering great service and customer outcomes, not quick fixes. We do things the right way. We are a team; we win together, face new challenges and innovate together.

WHAT MAKES DYNO STAND OUT FROM ITS COMPETITORS?

LP: With six decades of experience, we know the market like no-one else. Customers recognise the brand and know they can trust us to do the job right. For franchisees, Dyno-Rod's history has enabled us to develop tried, tested and proven methods that continue to ensure their franchises deliver professional, customer-focused services that ensure regular repeat business to support growth and long-term sustainable franchise success.

“We'll make sure you can depend on Dyno”



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- Each large territory has a minimum of 2000 restaurants in addition to other types of commercial kitchens. Huge opportunities are available across the UK and the ROI
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- Full training is given in cooker extraction, duct cleaning and business management
- Total investment is £48k plus the lease of a van
- Potential to be trained in a range of other add-on services that will increase customer spending and customer satisfaction
- This is a recurring revenue business model. Van based with multiple teams of technicians
- Cooker and duct cleaning carried out following TR-19 compliance. A key service that reduces the risk of fire that could potentially lead to serious injury or even death
- A service that is required both legally and to fulfill insurance requirements. Gives residents, employees and owners confidence that work is being done to legal specifications.

Photo above, Nathan Willard, HOODZ International President (left) with our Liverpool franchisee, Stephen Farrelly, who has been trading for just 3 months and is already profitable and running ahead of his business plan.

For more information contact **Fran Anderson 07487 588821**
fran.anderson@belfranchgroup.co.uk | www.hoodzfranchise.co.uk

The path to fulfilment

Simon Ellson has lived in Tring with his family since 1999 and, after over 30 years of growing his own and other people's businesses, he decided to join ActionCOACH



Simon Ellson, ActionCOACH franchisee

Simon's work took him from start-ups, to SMEs and all the way to large corporations. In total, he has started five businesses and worked so many hours that he would of course take his laptop on family holidays.

"My businesses were successful but the pay-off was a shocking work-life balance – my wife, Viv, had the patience of a saint. My friend Rob Pickering introduced me to ActionCOACH about nine years ago when he was looking to join the franchise. He had disappeared off to Las Vegas for initial training and when he came back he was raving about this business coaching

franchise, telling me I needed to join too. But I was busy managing the entire retail sales for Symantec in Northern Europe.

"I had a very challenging start to 2018, with personal loss and a close family member being ill. So, I decided to do something different, just for me, that would benefit my family and my community and I reached out to ActionCOACH again."

A NEW JOURNEY

"I went to ActionCOACH University training in May and launched the business in June. The initial training was excellent and we were lucky to have an

experienced franchise partner, Andrew Kureishy, leading the training with his pragmatic, down-to-earth style. I warmed to him immediately and, whilst I had brain ache when I walked out of there on Friday evening, by Monday night, I had my first seminar booked with 14 attendees in a local rugby club! The bar was open, as you would expect in a venue like that, and I signed my first one-to-one weekly coaching client – an events business.

"Almost immediately, I felt like I was born to coach and I can honestly say it's the best thing work-wise I've ever done in my life. It brought out a philanthropic streak in me – it's the most rewarding work you can do. Even though it's handsomely paid, for me, it's about helping clients get rid of those problems I regularly saw as a manager and business owner."

BUILDING MOMENTUM

"To help you grow your own business and give advice on client challenges, ActionCOACH gives you access to a master coach as part of your ongoing support. I had one in my initial business start-up phase and then Rachel Woods became my personal coach, providing shots of brutal honesty as well as sound advice.

"The early help they give you in getting your business up and running quickly and efficiently means that within just a short amount of time, you're ready to begin expanding and scaling up. This is exactly what I've been able to do; our clientele grew by 60 per cent in 2021 and, with our current trajectory, I'm feeling so positive about the future. It's honestly incredible what you're able to achieve when you're given the right support and guidance, something ActionCOACH ensures you get."

After an initial schedule of seminars and networking to bring clients in, Simon decided to invest in a second territory in 2021. With his original ActionCOACH business in West Hertfordshire, he added West Dorset – where Viv wants to retire to – with the intention of bringing in a general manager.

"Including me, I'm up to eight staff, more than doubling where the team was just over a year ago. The past 12 months has felt like a step up for the business. Once you gain a reputation for yourself, things become easier. Now 100 per cent of my coaching clients come from referrals. James and Lorna also are ActionCOACHes and whilst they still acquire their new clients through networking and marketing, it's made easier because they have the support of a marketing executive and a business development executive.

"Our firm just hit personal bests four months in a row. James, Lorna and I all hit two consecutive personal best months for both revenue and number of clients. It's a clear signal of our direction, and with another coach about to go through training, I can't wait for what this year has in store.

"If you'd have told me 10 years ago I would buy a franchise, I would have told you to stop being ridiculous! But the ongoing support, advice, and resources are categorically the best support of any business I've come across – you just don't get that in a corporate environment. Plus, all the franchise partners and employee coaches are great – they embody ActionCOACH's culture of abundance.

"When I started with ActionCOACH, I committed to a vision to support over 500 local businesses to grow over five years. Even with the complications of COVID-19, we've assisted just over 250 people and businesses so far in the last three years."



Simon sharing his knowledge at the annual Europe, Middle East and Africa conference in Farnborough this year

"Almost immediately, I felt like I was born to coach and I can honestly say it's the best thing work-wise I've ever done in my life"

A REWARDING DESTINATION

"My main goal for 2021 was to have four days in Hertfordshire and then three days in Dorset where we could spend more time house hunting and exploring the county. By scheduling all my coaching within the first three days of the week, I've been able to achieve that goal. I also wanted to ensure the

business is in a position where it has forward momentum even when I'm not there. Viv and I just went away to Edinburgh for four days and the entire time I didn't get a single email or phone call.

"My work-life balance is better than it's ever been in my entire life. I'm earning well and in the last four years I've picked up six grandchildren, so I'm really enjoying being the fun grandad. It's great, I regularly send them back to their parents exhausted and covered in mud!

"I have a fabulous relationship with my children, of course I was always away travelling the world and working hard when they were young. I'm happy that I can now be there for their children. I even cook the Sunday lunches which I haven't done since before we got married over 30 years ago!"



Coaching a client to success

At a Glance ActionCOACH

Year established: 1993 in Australia, 2001 in the UK

Number of franchised outlets: 200-plus in the UK

Location of units: UK

Investment range: £69,000

Minimum required capital: £20,000

actioncoach.co.uk/franchise

“Our carers are more important than our clients”

Why is it important that your home care franchise wins the recruitment race?

In the past 10 years there has been a dramatic increase in the number of franchise opportunities in the home care sector. An ageing population, pressure on the NHS and a resistance to going into residential care has meant huge and increasing demand for in home care providers.

At the same time as the increased potential presented by more elderly people, the U.K. has seen a reduction in those wanting to work in the care sector. News coverage and industry commentators are highlighting that it is harder than it has ever been to recruit

care staff. Many home care franchisees choose the sector because they can build a satisfying business making a difference to those in their local community. To do this you need to be differentiated as an employer. Put simply if you cannot find staff in your local market you will not be able to build your business.

Many new business owners worry about finding clients for their product or service. In the social care sector this may be the wrong question to ask. There are thousands of people in the U.K. needing care and support. Visiting Angels advises people to try telephoning a home care provider and asking them when they could

start a new package of care. There may be a delay before care can start and many home care providers cannot take new care packages at all due to a shortage of staff. So, the right question to ask is: where can I find my staff?

CARERS COME FIRST

There are dozens of care franchise opportunities but there are subtle differences between the models that they operate. Visiting Angels is the U.K.'s first carer-centric home care franchise. When founder Dan Archer brought the business to market in 2017, he knew that having enough quality care staff was key to the business' success.

Dan says, “Our business is carer-centric; we are the first care business in the U.K. to make carers the most important people in the business. When launching Visiting Angels in the U.K. I spent weeks researching the market. Every care business that I spoke to had a mission which was care delivery focused.

“They wanted to be the best care provider, they wanted to deliver outstanding care, they wanted to provide care that you would expect for your own family. I asked myself, how can we do this unless we focus on staff? Business owners don't deliver care, caregivers do, it is our job to support our caregivers to deliver excellent care. At Visiting Angels we say our carers are more important than our clients. That is what we mean by being carer-centric.”

Dan continues, “this has given us a significant advantage during and coming out of COVID-19. Our market leading staff retention rates mean that each client sees a limited number of carers. This means fewer people going into the home, it also means we have had staff available when many other care providers were





struggling to find them.

“Our staff retention rates are up to five times better than the industry average which means when a Visiting Angels franchisee recruits, they recruit to increase their workforce rather than recruiting to replace leavers. Having more caregivers means you can deliver more care allowing you to build your business.”

THE SHAPE OF THE CARE INDUSTRY

Visiting Angels say that franchisees should make sure the business opportunity that they are considering has flourished during the last few years. Visiting Angels is one of the fastest growing care businesses in the U.K. and a runner up in the bfa Franchisor of the Year awards 2021 as an emerging franchisor. Some care franchises were proven 10 or 15 years ago and Visiting Angels says that the recruitment landscape has changed in this time.

Dan says, “15 years ago there was no minimum wage, we were in Europe and there were more people working in the care sector. Following the Visiting Angels model allows our franchisees to be differentiated as an employer. In the current market for care staff it is important that you have a system proven to help with recruitment. We support

our franchisees in marketing their job vacancies and support them in the recruitment and selection of candidates.

“We have also established a proven way of working which bakes in loyalty from day one. Once we have successfully recruited caregivers, we have a number of innovative retention techniques which encourage staff to stay.”

There are between 120,000 to 130,000 staff vacancies in the care sector. Many home care businesses are struggling to find care staff. It could be argued that the most important question that a home care provider needs to answer is “how can the franchisor help me find care staff?”

Visiting Angels has been conceived, developed and proven for the challenges of today’s market. The mission statement for the franchise involves redefining the role of carers in society. Making a care job more attractive is according to Visiting Angels an essential part of succeeding in finding caregiver staff.

Dan concludes by saying, “Today more than ever you need a franchisor who recognises what the problems are and helps you to succeed, you need a franchisor who is carer-centric. The Visiting Angels model has unique strategies for recruitment and most

“Our carers are more important than our clients”

importantly retention of carers. The competitive advantage that this gives their franchisees helps them to grow faster.”

Visiting Angels is a substantial, premises-based management franchise with the potential for a multi-million-pound turnover. Started in the U.S.A. 24 years ago, Visiting Angels is an international network of 800 franchisees in five countries.

At a Glance Visiting Angels

Established: U.S. 1998, U.K. 2017

Number of franchised outlets: 70+ worldwide, 24 U.K.

Location of units: Nationwide

Investment range: £80,000 - £100,000

Minimum required capital: £30,000 - £50,000

Contact: Dan Archer, 07584 178458

visitingangelsfranchise.co.uk

POWERBRANDS

CARE & ELDERLY- FOCUSED FRANCHISES GUIDE

IF YOU'RE LOOKING FOR A BUSINESS THAT PROVIDES
MORE THAN JUST FINANCIAL RETURNS, THEN THIS
BENEVOLENT SECTOR COULD BE FOR YOU



PUTTING PEOPLE FIRST

The pros and cons of entering the competitive and flourishing care and elderly sector

WORDS BY LINDA WHITNEY

Starting a homecare business presents the chance to do good things for your community while making a good living. Better still, there are lots of care franchises that will help you get started.

But is the care sector for you?

Not if you only want to make money. Trevor Brocklebank, co-founder of Home Instead Senior Care, and former chair of the sector's professional body, the Homecare Association (HCA), says: "A care franchise is never a get rich quick scheme – more of a make money slowly by working very hard scheme. There are far easier ways to make money – but few are more rewarding.

"If you just want any old business, the homecare sector is not for you. You must be motivated by wanting to make a different to people's lives."

If you think it is something you can commit to, consider the pros and cons. While demand is high and ongoing, homecare is (rightly) a highly-regulated industry, competition is fierce, and the penalties of getting things wrong can be ruinous.

That's why it's easier to get into the homecare market with a franchise. A franchise provides help with the regulatory process (including inspections by care regulatory bodies), marketing, and recruitment, and provides systems to help you run the business.

PRO: A GROWING MARKET

Around one in five people in the UK is over 65 and this is set to increase to one in four 2042.



"If you just want any old business, the homecare sector is not for you. You must be motivated by wanting to make a different to people's lives"



THE AUTHOR

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

There were 1.6 million people over 85 in 2018, and this is expected to reach 3.5 million by 2048 – and this is the age group most likely to need care (ONS, 2020).

But the homecare market is not limited to older people. Among people of working age there is forecast to be a 29 per cent increase in adults aged 18 to 64 requiring care by 2038 compared with 2018, according to a 2021 National Audit Office report into local authority spending on adult social care in England alone.

PRO: HIGH UNMET DEMAND

Hours of unmet care in England alone reached 1.5 million in late 2021 according to the Homecare Association, and about half of domiciliary care providers are no longer able to take on new requests for help. That means

there is room for new businesses to get into the market.

PRO: INCREASED GOVERNMENT FUNDING

The government has announced a ten-year plan for care, supposed to address long-standing issues in the industry. One of main problems is the low rates that local authorities (who supply a large percentage of social care) pay to their outsourced care providers.

This is one of the reasons that care companies serving the local authority market can have trouble making a profit, and thus may provide minimal service, such as 15-minute care calls, while paying their carers low rates of pay.

Delivering fun, seated sports activities to enhance health and wellbeing

Debbie Heffernan was always interested in fitness and the wider care sector, and is an active volunteer in her sporting community and has recently worked for a mental health charity.

"When my mother-in-law had to move to a care home, I saw first-hand the huge impact that activities could have on people in a care setting. The activities co-ordinator there brought the whole care home to life!" says Debbie, from Epsom, Surrey.

Then she and husband Andrew, who had previously worked in the care sector, found out about the Rise franchise, which means delivering adaptable seated sports programmes which enhance mobility, social interaction and mental stimulation.

Debbie launched Rise Epsom in February and is busy delivering Rise sessions each week, but says: "The programmes are suitable for children as well as adults, so I expect to be working in a range of sectors, including community groups."

As well as running the activity sessions, she has been marketing the service around local care providers, and says: "I am delighted by the positive response to Rise by participants since starting to deliver sessions over the past two months."

"It's rewarding to see the delight on the faces of people taking part and know you are contributing to their physical and mental wellbeing – and we all have a lot of fun."



Care specialist gets into business with a franchise

Nicky Sealey had worked for a large care provider in Essex. When she was looking to relocate to Oswestry, she weighed up starting a business on her own against investing in a franchise.

"Ultimately, it made much more sense to invest in a care franchise, as having the foundations already established for you from day one is incredibly helpful to delivering services at consistent, high standards. What's more, considering the regulatory systems and certifications you have to go through in order to become active, I knew that if we opted to go it alone, it would have been much harder to get to the position our franchise is in today."

She looked at a variety of care franchises. "I started Visiting Angels North Shropshire after meeting with Dan Archer and discussing the services, areas and the ethos of care that I was looking for. I wanted a premium brand, with top-quality service."

"Visiting Angels treated their care team well, and everyone worked to be carer-centric as a way to get a good outcome for the clients, and this was exactly what I found was lacking elsewhere and what I wanted to achieve. To have a happy team and happy clients is paramount for me."

Nicky and co-director Mark Goodall, who has strong family ties to the Oswestry area and experience in logistics and management, launched their franchise this year.

"Although I had good knowledge of the sector and of providing a quality service in Essex, I felt more reassured to have the franchise behind me," says Nicky.



So, home care providers which source care work from local authorities could get more cash. But Trevor says: "It's good that spending is increasing but it's not enough. The sector needs billions, not millions."

Home care franchises vary: some only do private work (which means selling their services direct to clients themselves) while others do local authority work (though they have to bid for contracts). Some franchises offer a mixture. Ask any franchises that you are researching how their model works.

PRO: EMOTIONAL REWARDS

The care industry is often perceived as a very serious business, but in reality, it's not one long round of misery.

"It's hugely rewarding to run a care franchise, because it's about putting smiles on people's faces – and that includes our franchisees and their teams as well as clients," says Amrit Dhaliwal, chief executive of homecare company Walfinch. "One of our company values is fun – we want fun to be a part of our franchisees' lives. That sense of enjoyment passes from the franchisees and the care teams to the clients, which means better care, so everyone benefits."

PRO: VARIETY OF SERVICES

You can get the rewards of working in care without investing in a homecare franchise. The Rise franchise concentrates of delivering seated sports programmes which enhance mobility, social interaction and mental stimulation. "Rise offers the same level of rewards but with a different business model," says Trevor, who co-founded Rise.

CON: RECRUITMENT IS CHALLENGING

There are 100,000 vacancies in the care sector at any one time, and providers reported that the average vacancy rate for carers was 12 per cent in February 2022, up five per cent on the March 2021 figure.

But franchisees can get recruitment help from franchisors; Walfinch, for instance, provides recruitment workshops for franchisees.

Dan Archer, managing director at Visiting Angels, says: "One of the challenges across the sector is carer recruitment. Care providers often struggle with this but we are constantly addressing



Making a difference to my community after just one week

Tanya Santos launched the Walfinch Hammersmith and Fulham care franchise in February this year, and within a week found she was making a difference to people's lives.

"A client with neurological issues had retreated to one room, and was neglecting his diet and self-care. Only a week after our carer Antonia began visiting, he's started dancing, holding hands, eating vegetables and fruit again and taking more care of himself," says Tanya.

Tanya formerly worked in recruitment, but when things went quiet during lockdown, she voluntarily delivered meals to elderly people. "It felt so good to help them, and I remembered the rewards of caring for my gran. Then my mum-in-law suggested I start a care business. We talked to someone who was a care franchisee and I realised that it would be a way to own a business and do some good for the community at the same time."

Tanya and husband Richard chose the Walfinch franchise and she has now recruited a small team and has four clients.

"We chose a franchise for the head office support on issues such as compliance, and Walfinch also offers a business coach. The network of franchisees is very supportive, swapping business tips and advice. I've already helped others with my recruitment expertise.

"Running a care business is hard work, but so rewarding. This is the best decision I ever made."



it with our understanding of carer recruitment strategies.

“One thing that has helped is our carer-centric model, where we put our care workers at the heart of everything we do. So we pay fairly, reward our carers, train them well and ensure their wellbeing is paramount. Several of our franchise territories recruited over 15 carers in March 2022 alone.”

It's not just about pay, though. The HCA quotes a survey of care providers that says flexible working hours and regular feedback from line managers appeared to be more effective than increasing pay.

CON: REGULATION IS TOUGH

There are numerous hurdles to be overcome just to get started, and then regular inspections from regulators, but franchisors typically offer help with this, including rehearsals for inspections. Trevor Brocklebank says: “There are a lot of heavily regulated processes. This is no sector for mavericks.”

CON: COMPETITION IS RIFE

There are over 20 homecare franchises in the UK, as well as non-franchised providers, so it pays to select one that has something that makes it stand out.

Walfinch emphasises what it calls the ‘Mum Test’. Amrit says: “When deciding what care is best, how it should be delivered and who should deliver it, we always ask ourselves: ‘Would I like this for my own mum?’ All of Walfinch’s 22 franchisees, and its hundreds of carers, have been chosen with this in mind.”

Visiting Angels stresses its carer-centric approach, while Guardian Angels highlights its combination of in-person care and care technology.

Look at how an individual franchise markets its services. Is it offering something new or is it an also-ran?

CHOOSING YOUR FRANCHISE

It's never been more important to choose the right brand, Trevor points out. “Look for one with a culture that matches your own. When times get tough, will you be happy to lock yourself on a room with the franchisor and sort it out?”

“The best care franchises combine a proven system with a genuinely caring attitude – if they have both, the franchise will almost certainly make money.”

THE HOMECARE MARKET BY THE NUMBERS

- The number of people receiving homecare in the UK totals at least 957,831 (homecare.co.uk)
- By 2024 the number of people over 65 will rise to more than 20.4 per cent of the population and nearly 60 per cent over the next 25 years (ons.gov.uk)
- Among home care providers surveyed in July 2021, 32 per cent said demand had increased, and 57 per cent said it had significantly increased (Home Care Association 2021)
- Requests for adult social care support soared to 1.9 million in 2019-20 but around 29 per cent of them resulted in no care being delivered (King's Fund, 2021)
- The number of older people experiencing loneliness is expected to reach two million by 2025, and many are turning to homecare services for companionship so private companionship services are more important than ever. (Age UK)



“It’s hugely rewarding to run a care franchise, because it’s about putting smiles on people’s faces”

“My Walfinch care franchise is transforming lives”

Tiffany Meachim has built a highly rewarding care business that's exceeding its ambitious targets, thanks to her team-orientated approach



Patrick's family told Tiffany how pleased they were to see the huge improvement in his mobility since her team started working with him, and Patrick himself says: "Walfinch Mansfield is one heck of a company. Everyone who works there from office staff to carers has been absolutely amazing."

REWARDING FEEDBACK

"One of my greatest pleasures as a Walfinch franchisee is hearing stories like this," says Tiffany. "I often get messages telling us what a difference we've made to clients' lives."

"I pass them all on to everyone, including carers, office staff and management, because we're all part of one team working together to improve the quality of life for our clients. The results speak for themselves."

REWARDING INCOME

Tiffany enjoys pay back by growing her business too, and last December won an award from Walfinch as the franchisee with the highest turnover growth. Walfinch chief executive Amrit Dhaliwal says: "Tiffany grew her business from launch to deliver over £48,000-worth of care in December 2021 - double the usual expectations in terms of care hours by week 52."

Tiffany, who has a background in management, says: "As well as the rewards of delivering high-quality care, the high point for me has been hitting the targets we put in place when we started and going above and beyond them." She aims to reach a turnover of £750,000 in year two.

She continues: "Walfinch has great initial training and good support from the onset, and the continuing support has been excellent."

Amrit adds: "Tiffany's success is down to quality networking, following the Walfinch franchise model and her mature and realistic attitude - and she does all this while caring for her son, Henry, with the support of her husband Ian, and being an active member of her community."

"I knew soon after she sought me out at a meeting that she had the makings of an outstanding franchisee."

“As well as the rewards of delivering high-quality care, the high point for me has been hitting the targets we put in place when we started and going above and beyond them”

At a Glance Walfinch

Year established: 2021

Number of franchised outlets: 22

Location of units: across the country

Total investment: £90,000

Minimum required capital: £25,000

Contact: Simon Mills, 020 4541 4545, franchising@walfinch.com

walfinchfranchising.com

“It's never too late to improve a life," says Tiffany Meachim, managing director of the Walfinch franchise in

Mansfield. "Our client, Patrick, who is prone to balance problems, was only able to complete 10 to 15 steps unaided - so his family were stunned on the day that he got up from his chair and walked upstairs. It was something he'd been unable to do for years."

The transformation was down to Tiffany and her team. Patrick, who's in his 50s, has experienced mobility problems since an accident when he was seven, and then a stroke 10 years ago. He became an hourly care client with Tiffany's Walfinch service in March 2021.

"After daily visits from our care team, who accompany Patrick round his village on social calls and help him with physiotherapy exercises, he can now walk up to 200 yards," says Tiffany.

Build a caring business in a booming sector

If you're looking for a financially and personally rewarding business opportunity, Caremark's home care franchise has all the right elements

As a top UK home care franchisor, Caremark's business opportunity has plenty to offer any serious entrepreneurs

looking to move into the booming care at home market.

The fact is, people are living longer and enjoying greater independence by having skilled care workers supporting them in their homes, so demand is high.

A market analysis report produced in 2019 on the homecare market said: "The UK market for domiciliary care rose in value between 2014/15 and 2018/19 by a cumulative five per cent – from £81.6bn to £85.9bn. While the market is believed to have remained at a fairly consistent value over the last five years, the commercial sector is expected to represent just over a fifth of total market value (£17.2bn). This also comprises the direct private sector supply and voluntary informal sectors, which meet the needs of the vast majority of low intensity contacts." (Source: Mintel: UK Domiciliary Care Industry Report 2019)

If you are wondering why you should look at a Caremark franchise, here are six plus points to help you decide:

REWARDING

Perhaps you are reading this and are already thinking 'I really want to do something worthwhile and not just earn a salary'?

Being able to work and give back something to others are two reasons why Caremark's franchise opportunity is proving to be so attractive.

Julie Oommen left her nursing career to join Caremark and now she has a growing business, has won her first Caremark award and is loving the change.

Reflecting on what made her take that leap, she said: "I always knew there was a

risk if I left my nursing career, but I wanted to do something different. When I read through the values of the company, they really resonated with me and I thought, this is something I can do, and I can help people."

The pandemic brought misery to millions, but it also allowed those who were furloughed or made redundant to seriously think about being their own boss. The need to carve out a more secure future became important, as well as have a meaningful job rather than simply replenish the bank account each month.

Owning a Caremark franchise has all the ingredients for personal satisfaction, financial rewards and bring positive change to the lives of many in your community.

"When I read through the values of the company, they really resonated with me"

FINANCIALLY BENEFICIAL

Like all the Caremark franchisees before you who have built profitable, successful businesses using its proven model and systems, you too have the potential to build your own £1m turnover business within three years. If you put in the hard work and dedication, you can look forward to owning a great business which has both commercial and social value.

AFFORDABLE

With a minimum capital investment of £35,000 a franchise is well-priced and within reach of professionals who have funds from redundancy or from the sale of another

business, for example. The remaining investment needed of up to £115,000 can be sourced through a bank loan via one of the four commercial banks who work closely with Caremark.

ACCESSIBLE

You don't need to have a background in care. Caremark's franchisees come from many different backgrounds, varying from IT to hotel management. What you do need is the desire to build a business that delivers a quality care service to people who really need it, ambition and determination to make your vision of success a reality, and of course, the necessary business acumen.

Barney Davis, owner and managing director of Caremark Warwick, decided to buy his business after he was made unexpectedly redundant from his career in the wine trade.

"Following redundancy, I wanted to do something for myself, and something more personally rewarding. Franchising offered more security and stability than going into business on my own," said Barney.

GREAT TRAINING AND SUPPORT

When you join Caremark you may know next to nothing about the care sector. But that's not a problem because your journey will begin with an intensive, two-week residential training course equipping you with all the knowledge and know-how to get you started and on your way.

The tried and tested training modules cover all aspects of understanding the highly regulated care sector, how to market your business, understanding those all-important financials, as well as advising on appropriate business insurance, and more.

But it doesn't end there. Each franchisee has access to a team of specialists at the



franchise support centre to help with queries from IT to HR, plus ongoing advice and guidance from an allocated regional support manager.

So, there is no need to worry that you will be left on your own once you have signed the franchise agreement. Far from it! Your support manager is there for you from day one to guide you through those early days of business, holding your hand until you are ready to fly solo.

Even then, regular visits from your support manager will ensure your business is compliant and heading in the right direction to achieve your goals and targets.

REPUTABLE BRAND

Caremark is rightfully proud of the fine reputation it has built up over the

last seventeen years and is now considered one of the leading home care franchisors in the UK. Over the years, local authorities and Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs) have come to know and respect the quality of care delivered by franchisees, which in turn has given Caremark a greater penetration of the social care market.

Despite the turmoil of the last two years, the proven business model continues to be resilient in the face of economic challenges and instability, with a network sales growth of 20 per cent in 2020/21.

So, if you are wanting a business that is fulfilling, financially rewarding and a great long-term investment, a Caremark home care franchise must be top of your list.

Now is the perfect time to make that change. You will be glad you did and so will your future clients and care workers.

At a Glance Caremark

Established: 2005

Number of franchised outlets: 132

Location of units: UK, India, Ireland and Malta

Investment range: up to £115,000

Minimum required capital: £35,000

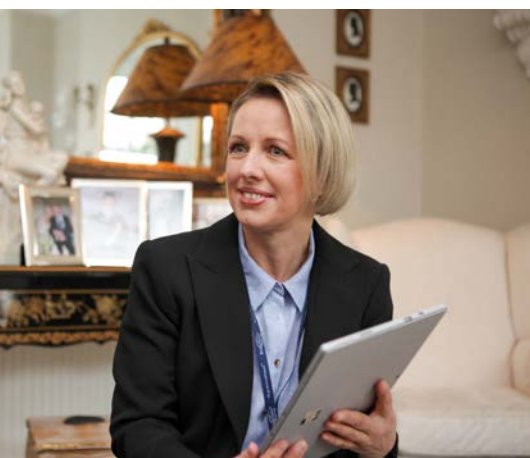
Contact: 01903 266392

franchise@caremarklimited.co.uk

caremarkfranchises.com

Putting franchisees at the forefront

Bridgewater Home Care is raising the standard of franchising by providing a game-changing franchise model with the success of its franchisees at the heart of everything it does



As founder and managing director of Bridgewater Home Care, Phil Eckersley has experienced every role in the business; from delivering care to managing and growing each of the three pilot offices. Having over three years' experience as a franchisee of a multi-national home care franchise himself, Phil wanted to create a franchise with a focus on the success of its franchisees.

The business, first and foremost, has been built from a passion to exceed expectations in all aspects of delivering care. It is a UK born-and-built model that not only suits the needs of the UK market,

“With the first two out of three ‘Bridgewater Pioneer’ programme spaces already snapped up, it couldn’t be a more exciting time to join the network!”

but also fulfils the wishes of clients and their family members.

Having trialled the model across various markets, locations, demographics and challenging and testing various operating methods, the Bridgewater Home Care franchise is now proud to welcome other like-minded individuals to join the network.

With a goal to become the UK’s preferred local provider, the business has huge plans for growth over the coming years.

A FRANCHISE FOR FRANCHISEES

Launched in 2021, the Bridgewater Home Care franchise model was built to create something new that potential franchisees won’t have seen time and time again when seeking their new venture. The offer is unlike many others on the market; it is a franchise built for franchisees.

What sets Bridgewater Home Care apart is not just its hands on experience and expertise, but also a game-changing offer for franchisees; all core operating systems are included within the service fee.

The systems in place enable business owners a better work-life balance and a business that truly works for them and for their future. The whole franchise model has been built around adding value to franchisees.

The franchise model provides all the tools necessary for franchise partners to focus on what matters most – growing their businesses!

YOUNG, DYNAMIC, AND AMBITIOUS

The franchise support team are what make the Bridgewater Home Care franchise such an exciting business proposition. Working alongside a young, dynamic team, franchisees can expect unrivalled support from an energetic network of individuals.

LOOKING TO THE FUTURE

The future for the Bridgewater Home Care franchise is to create a strong, supportive network of happy and successful franchise partners.

With the first two out of three ‘Bridgewater Pioneer’ programme spaces already snapped up, it couldn’t be a more exciting time to join the network!

With direct access to mentoring from the owner, as well as opportunities to help shape the future of the model, franchise partners can expect a supportive and exciting business opportunity with strong financial performance for the future.



At a Glance Bridgewater Home Care

Franchise established: 2021

Number of franchised outlets: 4

Location of units: UK

Investment range: £100,000 - £120,000

Minimum required capital: £40,000

Contact: franchise@bridgewaterhomecare.co.uk
bridgewaterhomecare.co.uk/franchise

Caring for older people and the wider franchise network

Home Instead continues to be the most recommended home care company in the UK

Home Instead, the UK's most recommended home care company, delivers quality companionship-led services to over 12,000 older people in the comfort of their own homes.

Franchisees join the brand to build successful businesses which really make a difference, with a shared passion to 'help change the face of ageing' through its innovative services.

More people have chosen Home Instead to invest in than any other home care franchise in the UK. Why? Because of its award-winning support, established brand awareness, and consistent quality.

INVEST IN A GROWTH SECTOR

Home care is not only a growing sector, increasing every year with our ageing population, but it is a sector which is becoming increasingly understood and respected as a choice for care in later life.

The pandemic has highlighted home care's benefits and pushed it into the public eye. Home Instead kept thousands of older people safe and well in their own homes throughout an unusual and troubling time.

Home Instead franchisees not only recognise the market potential of an ageing population; these entrepreneurs want to make a real difference through their business venture – choosing a pursuit that is rewarding as well as profitable and scalable.

CONSISTENT INNOVATIONS

To raise brand awareness and to improve the quality of their care, Home Instead is continually forming partnerships with leading brands and organisations.

Recent partnerships with Boots UK and Barclays not only aim to raise awareness of home care more widely, but also to equip older people with digital skills and understanding.

"Home Instead is continually forming partnerships with leading brands and organisations"

An industry-leading partnership with Parkinson's UK has created a bespoke training programme for Home Instead care professionals, allowing franchisees to provide further specialist care within their communities.

And these partnerships stretch into mainstream television and media. Home Instead are the proud sponsors of ITV's *Love Your Garden*, featuring Alan Titchmarsh, putting the brand in front of thousands of viewers in their target audience. A new sponsorship of Lorraine Kelly's podcast furthers brand awareness, whilst also raising understanding of care in general by bringing it into her podcast conversation topics.

LEADING THE WAY IN CARE AND FRANCHISING

Home Instead is recognised as the leading UK franchise in the Elite Franchise Top 100, as well as being named the bfa's Gold Franchisor of the Year for 2020, and receiving the Global Franchise Award in the Nursing and Care sector.

But as well as in franchising, the company also leads the way in care, being the most recommended home care company on homecare.co.uk. Over a third of its franchise network in England has been rated 'Outstanding' by the Care Quality Commission, the highest rating possible.

Home Instead is a pioneer in innovating, with a recent move to recognise the skilled



nature of the caregiving profession by announcing its workers will be known as 'care professionals'. Care pros from throughout the UK have also been invited to join a council, giving them a vital voice in future decision making for the network.

HELP YOUR COMMUNITY

Home Instead has a number of opportunities available across the UK, including greenfield and resale territories. It is looking for passionate people to bring care to the North East and East of England, as well as Northern Ireland – there are huge opportunities to introduce home care into these areas.

At a Glance Home Instead UK

Established: 2005

Number of franchised outlets: 246

Location of units: UK

Investment range: £90,000 - £110,000

Minimum required capital: £41,000

Contact: franchise@homeinstead.co.uk

homeinstead.co.uk/franchise

A new standard of home care

Blossom Home Care is a trusted name that leads the care industry



homes and keep their independence and dignity,” says Blossom co-founder Fiona Leggott.

“That’s something way beyond price to them and is one of the main reasons why I and my husband, John, set up Blossom in the first place.

“I’d been nursing for many years and was mortified by the dreadfully inadequate level of care so many people were having to endure.

“Carers were under-paid and over-worked and barely had time to say hello and goodbye to a client in a 15-minute visit, never mind give them the sort of care they needed and deserved.

“So John and I decided to move those goal-posts ourselves and set up a care-in-the-home business offering 50-minute visits as standard, a completely transparent monitoring system that lets relatives see exactly what care their loved ones are getting from anywhere in the world, and much better pay for our carers who, for the first time, actually have time to care properly for the clients they support.

“The reaction’s been phenomenal, both from clients and carers, and we’ve won award after award for setting new standards, showing leadership, and delivering first-class care in the home.”

FINDING FRANCHISE SUCCESS

Fiona and John decided to franchise their business to help make those higher standards available nationwide, beginning with one territory in a sparsely-populated area no one else was bothering to serve.

Within 15 months of launch, those pioneering franchisees beat all-comers

to the title of Best Business, the most prestigious prize in the Teesdale Business Awards.

The network is growing fast, with franchisees being able to take their pick of territories throughout the UK.

Franchisees don’t need to have had any experience of nursing or the care sector as they will be able to employ a registered manager to secure CQC registration, and Blossom offers in-depth training and wraparound support to help franchisees every step of the way.

“Our franchisees are rightly proud of the difference they make to people who need care in their own homes,” adds Fiona, “and purely by following our proven business model, they find their bank managers are very pleased with them, too.”

“You’ll be transforming lives, day after day, helping clients remain in their own homes and keep their independence and dignity”

At a Glance Blossom Home Care

Year established: 2015

Number Of Franchised Outlets: 9

Location Of Outlets: Nationwide

Investment Range: £35,000 to £70,000

Minimum Capital Required: £35,000

Contact: hello@blossomhomecarefranchising.co.uk

blossomhomecarefranchising.co.uk

Few franchises offer the chance to make serious money while doing serious good for society, but Blossom Home Care has built its success on daring to be different.

Appealing to franchisees with a social conscience as well as an insatiable need to succeed, Blossom is a care-in-the-home business that offers a premium service to clients who demand the best and are happy to pay for it.

Blossom franchisee Amy Shearsmith reached financial break-even in only her first month – an achievement almost unheard-of in the world of franchising – and already has her sights on a huge turnover.

But the rewards for owning a Blossom Home Care franchise are far more than merely financial.

MORE THAN A JOB

“You’ll be transforming lives, day after day, helping clients remain in their own

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Top tips for mastering expos

Great news for people looking to buy a franchise now, says Richard Pakey. The lifting of pandemic restrictions brings the long-awaited return of welcoming and buzzing events and exhibitions, designed to help you make meaningful connections

WORDS BY RICHARD PAKEY



THE AUTHOR

Richard Pakey is a franchising expert and managing director of the award-winning Lime Licensing Group (limelicensinggroup.co.uk). Email richard@limelicensinggroup.co.uk

The franchising calendar has always been full of events, exhibitions and conferences, but many have been cancelled or postponed during the past two years. However, as we return to normality at last, we can expect to see a ramping up of these all-important face-to-face gatherings which are so vital for fact-finding, networking and feeling your way into the franchise market if you're new to the sector.

As a leading UK franchising expert, Richard Pakey is a regular attendee and speaker at expos and conferences. In this column, he explains why attending exhibitions

is so useful when it comes to finding the perfect franchise, and also passes on his best advice on how to ensure you get the most out of your ticket.

They're free to attend

This might seem too good to be true, but exhibitions are very well supported by the franchise sector and often don't charge entry. They are instead funded through sponsorship and via franchise brands, which pay a fee per stand to be in the mix of flying their franchise brand to you. Attending one of these events really is a great opportunity to potentially meet

hundreds, if not thousands, of people over one or two days.

Prep before you go

If you register early for an event, you'll automatically end up on a mailing list. Use this to your advantage and scour the follow-up emails for further information about who is attending, marking the brands and speakers that look interesting.

On the day itself you can seek out these specific companies and speak to their representatives in person. From a list of potentially 200 exhibitors, whittle your hit list down to a few dozen – this is a manageable figure to aim for on the day, and a good way to make sure you use



your time most productively while you're there.

Even if you don't get a chance to plan beforehand, on the day you'll be given a show booklet featuring all the exhibitors and where to find them. Before you start wandering around the hall, sit down with a coffee and plan your day ahead. Then take a walk around the entire hall before you talk to anyone. This way, you'll familiarise yourself with the event and have a better feel for where everything is located.

Franchisors want to talk to you

Don't be intimidated by the slick and colourful branded stands and suited and booted consultants and employees. Many franchisors have spent considerable sums of money and time in preparation and travel just to have a conversation with you. You'll receive their undivided attention, as 'potential franchise enquiries' is often the main purpose of attending the event for them.

Go to the free seminars

Seminars are another free resource for you as a visitor. You may be able to simply walk in to any that

"Attending an expo is to surround yourself with franchise brands, suppliers and consultants, and of course the several thousand people who have come along to do the same. Franchising is never a lonely place – come along and be part of it!"

you see are taking place, or book ahead to guarantee a seat.

Use the show programme to see if any of the planned seminars are on topics or brands that interest you or are run by experts who have the knowledge that you want. Remember, there will be a Q&A session at the end of the seminar, or if you wish to discuss a matter in private the host will often make themselves available for you if you ask.

Don't expect to sign up on the day

If you're concerned that you'll be confronted by a hard sell, or you'll be pressured into committing to something that you are really not

ready for, then don't be put off. The art of franchising is ensuring that you make a considered purchase after you have all the information you need.

While great to do, franchise exhibitions should only form a part of your research into buying a franchise. You probably won't be able to dig too deep into a specific franchise at a show, purely because there really isn't the time to go into great detail for either you or the franchisor. Expect instead for a brief discussion and for details to be taken. After the show, you'll receive a follow up from the franchisor offering further information. You can then engage further with the franchisor if the brand is still of interest to you.

Research into a franchise is often done in several stages, and opting to give the franchise brand your name and details in exchange for further information is considered by the franchisor to be only the beginning of this journey. In fact, if you try and 'buy' a franchise at this early stage, you will often rule yourself out!

You might think that the purpose of exhibiting for franchise brands is to sell more units or territories. Sure, it's a numbers game, but you must also bear in mind that they're looking to find the right fit for their brand above all else. They're not after your details so they can bombard you with further information and unwanted sales patter. Franchisors would rather spend their time with people who have a genuine interest in their brand and will respect you for saying if their one isn't quite right for you.

Be open to meeting others

Franchise exhibitions are great networking opportunities. Attending an expo is to surround yourself with franchise brands, suppliers and consultants, and of course the several thousand people who have come along to do the same. Franchising is never a lonely place – come along and be part of it!



Addressing care's biggest current challenge

Right at Home has taken a great deal of work getting recruitment just right



Every business faces industry challenges – both ongoing sector challenges, and those driven by market forces such as the pandemic, or Brexit.

Over the past six months, our team at Right at Home national office has focused a huge amount of support on addressing the biggest current challenge in the care industry: staff recruitment.

THE CHALLENGE

Demand for our services is higher than ever, but like many other industries right now, we're experiencing a shortage of candidates applying for jobs.

A Skills for Care report in October showed that the equivalent of 105,000 adult social care vacancies were being advertised on an average day in 2020/21 – 6.8 per cent of roles were unfilled. Staff turnover was also highlighted as a major issue.

OUR RESPONSE

Right at Home is known for a commitment to

supporting and retaining its staff: we're very proud to be an accredited five-star employer, based on the outcome of independent and anonymous feedback from employees which is benchmarked against other companies.

That's why our team set about turning the situation into a positive opportunity to shine the spotlight on our sector; giving the incredible talent across our network a voice to showcase the many rewards, benefits and opportunities that come from working for a good company that is focused on delivering quality care.

THE CAMPAIGN

In December we launched a wide-ranging recruitment campaign, incorporating a broad variety of online and offline content, that our franchise offices could easily roll out in their local marketing strategy. Highlights include:

1. Proud of My Profession – a library of digital and video content of our care

teams talking about why they love their jobs and their colleagues

- 2. New Year, New Career** – a multimedia campaign aimed at attracting people from sectors such as retail, leisure and hospitality – highlighting the job security in care, that was lacking in other industries through the pandemic
- 3. Careers In Care** – wider education: editorial, social and website content highlighting the varied roles and career progression opportunities within the care sector. This included a new careers brochure demonstrating some of the progression routes that can be taken with Right at Home and the support on offer to help our employees get there
- 4. Careers Quiz** – our national office team also devised an innovative interactive online quiz, to help people considering a career in homecare match their skills and personality to the best job fit.

THE RESULTS

Since the first of January, the careers section of our website has seen more traffic than any other topic area, delivering record results:

- Visitor numbers up 892 per cent year-on-year
- Jobs pages viewed 197 per cent more times than the previous period
- Time spent on page up 103 per cent
- Job applications have increased by 488 per cent.

CREATING FUTURE CARE LEADERS

We are also employing a long-term strategy to build our own highly skilled, motivated leaders of the future, by developing and nurturing talent from within the network.

This year, we launched the Gold Standard Career Pathway Programme to allow newcomers and established workers to have visible and structured progression routes into multiple roles. This encourages



career aspirations among our employees and recognises outstanding performance in their role.

This programme was backed by the launch of 17 brand new, bespoke, in-house training programmes to aid internal learning, development and progression. From coaching and mentoring, to quality and compliance training, and leadership and management, we can guide employees into any number of progression routes.

This approach allows us to support homegrown talent and leaders from within, supporting and developing people who absolutely share our values and commitment to quality.

CHAMPIONING CHANGE

As a brand we also champion for change in sector-wide challenges – such as social care funding and the post-Brexit sponsorship process for health and care workers – achieving regular coverage in the industry press such as *Homecare Insight*, as well as on the BBC and in national newspapers.

We're particularly well positioned to represent quality-focused care providers via our CEO Lucy Campbell's role on the board of the Homecare Association.

COVID-19 has gone some way to shifting perceptions of care workers, and we're passionate about continuing that change.

Our national people and brand development manager, Heather Wehrle, told *Wales Online*: "The pandemic has more than demonstrated the vital role we play in the communities we serve and how we are

able to protect the NHS by caring for people at home. At the peak of the pandemic, care givers were for the first time recognised by the government as the heroes that they are. Care givers are highly skilled professionals with a multitude of skills and abilities."

ONGOING SUPPORT FOR FRANCHISE OWNERS

We work in collaboration with franchise owners and their managers via a Recruitment and Marketing Steering Group, and wider consultation and feedback from our franchisees' regular one-to-one support calls.

Working this way makes sure that our support incorporates franchisees' ideas and directly addresses their experiences, whilst freeing up owners who are under operational pressure to focus on the day-to-day running of their business.

We have also invested significantly in boosting our recruitment support capacity at national office by recruiting:

- A second full-time talent attraction consultant
- Two new digital marketing co-ordinators
- A campaign co-ordinator

Our experts work strategically at a network-wide level; they deliver regional clinics to franchise owners, shaped around data from the network; and they're also directly accessible for one-to-one support calls.

WHAT FRANCHISE OWNERS SAY

"Recruitment is always a challenge, but we are constantly given ideas and prompts on how to recruit effectively."

"Right at Home's in-house talent attraction consultant is first class. She has a great no-nonsense, practical approach to everything. Always encouraging, I love working with her and my recruiter feels the same."

"From previous experience, the recruitment support offered by RAH is far superior and more detailed than anything I have seen...franchisees should really appreciate this service, as it is very supportive and comprehensive!"

The difficulty of care giver recruitment isn't going away quickly. But with a quality franchise behind you, there is a team working full-time on supporting you to address and overcome such challenges in your business.

At a Glance Right at Home

Established: 2011

Number of franchised outlets: 70+

Location of units: UK-wide

Investment range: £120,000 inc. working capital

Minimum required capital: £40,000

Contact: Kate Dilworth, kate.dilworth@rightathome.co.uk

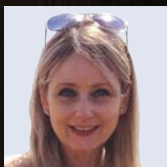
rightathome.co.uk/franchise-opportunities



Feeling flush: Charlie Mullins' life in business

Charlie Mullins OBE sold his £145m business last year to focus on property, politics, and the music industry. Angela Sara West talks to the outspoken entrepreneur about his journey from rags to riches

WORDS BY ANGELA SARA WEST



THE AUTHOR

Angela Sara West is a BBC-trained celebrity journalist and freelance writer

You may recognise him from BBC's *Question Time* or Channel 4's series *The Secret Millionaire* or *How'd You Get So Rich?*, where he took Canadian comedian Katherine Ryan villa-shopping around Marbella...in one of his £300,000 Bentleys.

Or maybe his face is familiar because he once popped round to repair your dishwasher, in between fixing David Cameron's dripping tap and Simon Cowell's leaky loo.

Charlie Mullins OBE, used to be Britain's best-known – and richest – plumber. He's also a highly-respected business leader who's become a

household name and a leading proponent of British business, particularly microbusinesses.

The former celebrity plumber to the stars tells me he's passionate about politics, apprenticeships, and his coveted OBE. "Receiving such an honour from Prince Charles at Buckingham Palace was great! I'm still living off it today! That's a day I will never, ever forget."

However, Charlie's not your stereotypical multimillionaire. He hails from a poor background and says growing up on a rough south London estate drove him to achieve. "At nine, I bunked off school and

helped a local plumber, Bill Ellis. He had money, when we, as a family, had nothing. He was the only guy I knew who had anything in life – nice cars, clothes, holidays, a motorbike, a house – all of which was very inspirational. It's what I wanted to have!"

Bill taught Charlie the value of hard work. "And to do what you say you are going to do and never overcharge."

He was also influenced by former PM, Margaret Thatcher. "She inspired people like me, who didn't have the best start in life, to get up and do something. She lit the entrepreneurial spark in a lot of people with the message that self-starters can

have a good life. For me, the flame still burns!"

Switching the stigma

Charlie left school at 15 with very little education and no qualifications. "That was a big mistake," he says. "I should have left at 14!"

Following a four-year apprenticeship, he became self-employed and worked in Pimlico with Samantha Fox's dad, a carpenter. "People started calling me the Pimlico Plumber," says Charlie, so in 1979 he launched Pimlico Plumbers from an estate agent friend's basement. "I didn't set out to have my own company – I was just in that much demand and someone said, 'You need more Charlies'!"

"When I was an apprentice, there was such a bad stigma about plumbers – turning up late and scruffy, old vans, not finishing a job, ripping people off. It's a trade where you need trust, and I didn't want to be tarred with the same brush. So, I did the opposite – I'd turn up early, wear a uniform, had a good van et cetera."

Establishing a reliable reputation was key to Pimlico Plumbers' phenomenal success. "We were very proud of our vans, our uniforms, our image. I think we changed the plumbing industry because a lot of plumbers have upgraded their uniforms, vans, and transparency."

Charlie's attention to detail and business aptitude led to Pimlico Plumbers becoming London's largest independent plumbing and service company, amassing a star-studded clientele including Dame Helen Mirren, Keira Knightley, Daniel Craig and Richard Branson.

Champion of apprenticeships

As a patron of the Prince's Trust, Charlie is passionate about the provision of apprenticeships, keeping alive his entrepreneurial spirit and commitment to helping young people into employment.

"I'm proud of the work I did with the government to increase the social status of apprenticeships," he says. "It improved a lot, although there is still more work to do to make them equal to – if not more valuable – than a university education."

"Going back to the very start of my life in plumbing, working with Bill Ellis, I remember him telling me: 'Get an apprenticeship and you'll never be out of work again'. He was right, and



Images: Christopher Bissell

it's something I always said to the youngsters at Pimlico. That's been the most rewarding thing – seeing my apprentices learn from the best in the business, realising they can have a good life if they work hard and gain the skills. I've seen kids with similar backgrounds to me complete an apprenticeship with Pimlico and go on to earn a very decent living with the company."

Costa del plumbing

Every plumber needs a break from pipework and Charlie found the perfect escape plan – and business opportunity – when Pimlico Plumbers grew and he could afford holidays in Spain. "A few friends owned places there and once I saw the incredible lifestyle they were having, I wanted some of it!"

The hunt for the perfect property in a prime location began, and he finally found it in a gated community of nine villas, just 500m from the beach. He bought the villa, as well as the one next door.

Following in Charlie's footsteps, a few of his crew decided they, too,

"I didn't set out to have my own company – I was just in that much demand and someone said, 'You need more Charlies'!"

wanted their own slice of Spain, so Charlie set up Pimlico Marbella, covering the whole Costa. "Doing up my two villas, it was impossible to get the right people here to carry out the work so I used some of my guys from Pimlico Plumbers. A few wanted to move there and now do a lot of work for very wealthy ex pats, many of whom are London customers with second homes."

Teamwork for a top franchise

So, what does it take to be your own boss, particularly by investing in a franchise? "The assumption is that an entrepreneur is a loner, but that should never be the case," explains the great British businessman.

"Yes, they'll be a visionary and



“I have a real desire to encourage the next generation of entrepreneurs – there is so much fresh talent emerging”

but I got it to the point where I could move on and try new things.”

Charlie's now basking in his new role as a business advisor in the music industry. “I'm as busy now as when I was running Pimlico,” he reveals. “I'm working with a fabulous singer called RaRa – she's a great singer-songwriter who has new music coming out later this year. I love music, and although I can't sing a note and have never worked in the industry, I am fascinated by it. However, I do know about business, and that's what I am advising her on. I've helped put a great team together for her and her management is really excited. Watch this space!”

Charlie also has big plans for our capital city. “I plan to run for London Mayor,” he discloses. “It's a big job, but London is my city and has given me so much that I'd like to give something back. I'm good at solving problems, and I see plenty!”



most recently, the pandemic. They were all tough times, but on each occasion, we came back stronger and won more business. We adapted quicker than competitors, outliving many of them too, to win more of the work out there.”

Ventures new

After building it into a highly profitable enterprise, Charlie sold Pimlico Plumbers last year for a cool £145 million. “I didn't want to be carried out in a box,” he explains. “Don't get me wrong, I loved every minute of setting up, growing, and running the business,

someone who can lead from the front, but they will also need the right people around them. The support of a good team is the difference between a good entrepreneur and a successful one. And the same is true for franchises. If you're a solo ‘man in a van’, having the backing of a proactive franchisor and the support package they provide is essential – for those running larger franchises where they employ people, surrounding yourself with good people is a no brainer.”

There have been huge challenges on this past plumber's path to success. Among the biggest? “Undoubtedly, making it back from near liquidation, but also navigating through several recessions and,

CHARLIE'S TOP FIVE BUSINESS TIPS

- Don't try and be the cheapest in the world but certainly aspire to be the best
- It doesn't matter if you are the best at what you do, but if no one knows about it, it's pointless. Profile is key
- Have a good team around you and don't try and do everything yourself. If you want to grow your business, employ more people. One man can only do so much work. But one man can employ 10 and earn more for himself and income for his workers
- Don't borrow money if you really can avoid it
- Trust your instincts. Get advice, but ultimately make the decision yourself. And always trust common sense...but remember, it ain't always that common!

For further information, visit Charlie's website: charliemullinsobe.com

Growth market

What's On In is the website for people wishing to find out what's on in their town, city and holiday location



f the What's On In franchise, managing director Dani Smith says: "It was simple, we know the UK online advertising market is worth £189 million and we saw the market was wide open.

"We also wanted to make our franchise available to anyone and that's why we priced it at £798. The return on investment is amazing. We also offer an interest free finance package and payment over three-six months."

USER FRIENDLY

She goes on to explain: "I needed to make sure our web platform was user friendly for the advertisers and that we could offer any business a free sales web page. 82 per cent of UK businesses have no website, so

we needed to address this with a free web page for every advertiser."

THREE FRANCHISE PACKAGES

What's On In offers three types of franchise:

- Single franchise postcode
- Master franchise, UK or globally
- Corporate franchise, Europe and globally.

FLEXIBLE OPPORTUNITY

A typical What's On In website not only offers a franchisee an excellent income from advertisers, but also allows them to place affiliates on their website, which pay franchisees up to 70 per cent commission. There are three income streams:

- Income for main businesses
- Income from tradesmen
- Income from affiliates.

A franchisee needs no technical knowledge, as all loading of adverts is carried out by the What's On In support team. Bookings are made online via the website and payment is made within three minutes direct to the franchisee's PayPal account, which means excellent cash flow.

OPTIONAL 50-50 SYSTEM

What's On In has an optional 50-50 system, whereby you have a commission only sales person building your postcode

area for you, offering complete freedom, and is perfect for someone with an existing business or job who wants a 'hands-off franchise'.

This option obviously requires less commitment from the franchisee.

Potential monthly incomes are £5,000-£20,000, depending on commitment. Franchisees receive a fully exclusive postcode area. The exclusive online franchise members' area provides in-depth and comprehensive franchisee support and access to tips, advice and training tools.

LOW COST ENTRY

Dani believes What's On In offers the perfect low cost entry into the profitable franchise arena.

New franchise opportunities are continually added throughout the UK. With its self service platform, high visibility, full tracking and low advertising cost, the What's On In franchise offers the ultimate in online advertising.

At a Glance What's on in

Minimum required capital:
franchise costs £798. Interest free loan available

Contact: Dani Smith
enquiries@woifranchise.com
07860 833822

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Nick Barclay - OCC Apparel CEO and Managing Director

For more information please visit : **www.occapparel.com.au**

Do your homework

Finding the right franchise for you: the questions that need answering

As with running any business, it takes a certain type of person to succeed in franchising. Do you have the skills required? Think about your strengths and weaknesses, your skills and qualifications, and your personal history.

QUESTIONS TO ASK YOURSELF

Here are some questions to consider for anyone thinking about investing in a franchise business:

- Do you have the necessary skills and experience?
- Are you willing to work hard?
- Are you able to make tough decisions?
- Do you have enough money to invest?
- Do you have a good credit history?
- Are you willing to take full responsibility for the success of your business?

CHOOSING THE RIGHT TYPE OF FRANCHISE

Once you've decided that opening a franchise is the right path for you, it's time to find a franchisor to work with. With so many franchise businesses and market sectors to choose from, finding the right one for you can be a time-consuming and sometimes overwhelming process.

Whichever market you consider, the following are just some of the main types of franchise business available to you:

- Management franchise
- Retail and fast food
- 'Van' or 'job' franchises
- Investment franchises



QUESTIONS TO ASK OTHERS

Here are some questions to ask other parties which will help you through this process. And remember, before entering into any agreement, make sure you are happy with your research.

You should ask the franchisor:

- How long has the franchise been operating for?
- Who are the directors and what background/experience do they have?
- Are they a member of the British Franchise Association (bfa)?

On the financial side of things, you should ask:

- How much does the franchise cost and what does this include? Is it cheaper or more expensive than other franchises on the market?
- Is the franchisor's business system financially viable? Ask for audited accounts and discuss the data with an accountant
- Are there any minimum performance requirements? Do you need to hit a certain turnover and if so, what will happen if you don't?

And when it comes to the market, make sure to ask questions like:

- Is there enough demand for the product or service? Have you conducted market research?
- Who will your competitors be and how will your offering compare? Will you be able to compete on price or quality?

OTHER FRANCHISEES

Ensure you find out how many other franchisees are currently operating in the network. Get the franchisor to provide you with details so you can speak to other business owners and get a better understanding of what's ahead of you. Consider asking them the following questions:

- How accurate were your initial projections in terms of turnover, or profit?



- How long did it take you to break even?
- Did you run into any unexpected fees?
- How regularly do you receive support from the franchisor and has it been helpful? How often do they visit you?

These are just a handful of questions that will get you thinking about the important things when building your franchise business. For further guidance and support, get in touch. Novuna Business Finance is here to help!



At a Glance Novuna Business Finance

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Contact: franchising@novunabusinessfinance.co.uk
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Five franchises making a difference to the local community

While franchising can be a great way to generate income, these brands are also prioritising the betterment of their customer base

WORDS BY ANDREW SANSONM



THE AUTHOR

Andrew Sansom is a content writer for *What Franchise*

While the globe-spanning operations that are synonymous with franchising are often affiliated with hard facts like profits, revenue and scale, the majority of franchise brands allow entrepreneurs a great route to owning small businesses. Profits and making money are a huge part of owning a business, but many relish the opportunity to become an active, upstanding asset to their local community.

For these business owners, it's about more than business. However, if you think that money talks, then keep reading. A 2021 report by the Co-op (more on them later) found that the ethical consumer industry is worth £122bn compared to £11.2bn in 1999. Who says nice guys finish last?



Pieminister

THE UPPER CRUST OF ETHICAL BUSINESS

The Bristol-based Pieminister has been delivering industry-leading pastries since 2003. Always one to do things the right way, its products are known to be ethically sourced and its methods responsible. Its franchises range from kiosks to large 2,000 square foot restaurants, but they all have a part to play.

In 2020, Pieminister set itself nine goals to accomplish by 2025 covering its impact on the planet, and the way it treats people. As well as committing to being carbon neutral and using 100 per cent slow-grown chicken, this year will see all of its managers complete diversity training, ensuring they represent everyone in their communities.

Its 'Little acts of pieness' scheme has been running for several years and saw over 90,000 pies donated to local causes and charities in 2019/20 alone.

"It's great to be able to

give back to our community in this way," says head of marketing for restaurants and franchises, Ginny Payne. The brand is always looking launch schemes designed to champion worthy causes. She explains: "Pieminister employees also now benefit from a new volunteering policy, where we're given one day per year to volunteer for a registered charity of our choice."



InXpress

MORE THAN JUST SHIPPING

Operating in the UK since 1999, InXpress has global partners who can offer small and medium businesses shipping rates usually reserved for the largest orders.

Outside of the bottom line, InXpress is also a market leader when it comes to its charitable efforts. In addition to its penny-per-shipment campaign throughout November, franchisees are given the chance to suggest causes close to their hearts and make a difference year-round via the 'InXpress Gives Back' program.

Melanie Spencer, global head of marketing for InXpress, says it best: "Giving Back is one of InXpress' core values, and we love finding ways to make a genuine difference to the lives of people we know, as well as those in other countries."

The perfect example of this was when franchisees from Manchester South started taking their amazing therapy greyhound Ellie to a local school to help children with special needs. After notifying their franchisors, InXpress were quick supporting the cause, making a sizeable donation to Pets As Therapy.

Co-op Food

A PILLAR OF ALMOST EVERY LOCAL COMMUNITY

The Co-op is perhaps the most famous community champion in business. The whole ethos of the company is built on supporting local projects, with some 25,000 local causes supported this year through its Local Community Fund. These beneficiaries are chosen by its group of members in each community. Over its lifetime, more than £100m has been raised and donated to good causes by the Co-op.

One of its recently supported programs includes the #iWill scheme. In 2021, the Co-op supported 55 different local youth social action projects under this initiative which sees 10- to 20-year-olds work to improve their own communities.

Co-op Food franchisees will need a pre-existing grocery store and to invest between £250,000 to £300,000, but financial support is available with the strength of the Co-op name enough to reassure most banks.

Co-ops are often considered the hubs of their communities, and with ethically traded goods and a proven model that sees everyone win, it's not hard to see why.



The Little Foxes Club

BRINGING CHILDREN TOGETHER THROUGH SPORT



Team sports are a great way to not only to help children get fit but also to bring them out of their shells. The Little Foxes Club offers grassroots coaching across a number of sports for all ability and accessibility levels with a name that parents know and trust.

Following the business model, you will see yourself become a large part of the local community as your business blossoms into after-school clubs, parties and even leading PE lessons – plenty of business opportunities for a minimum investment of £14,950.

Hiring other coaches means you can be as hands-on or as hands-off as you like and work hours best suited to you. These extra coaches can focus on other sports, providing opportunities for children to broaden their horizons or expanding your franchise's area of operation.

The Little Foxes Club knows how important sport can be to help young people grow and destress; it is important that no-one who wants to join in has to miss out. Regular partnerships with charities, councils and not for profits help deliver its services to underprivileged groups.

This is a franchise opportunity with very high job satisfaction as seeing children grow and develop their own interests is one of the most rewarding ways to work, especially for sports lovers. Team sports such as football are famous for the sense of community they develop and this is a proven way to unite people in your area.

Right at Home

CARING FOR THOSE WHO NEED IT MOST

For this home care franchise, looking after the community is the whole business model. "Right at Home has a mantra of 'making a difference every day' and this ethic applies to everything we do and everyone we deal with," explains Right at Home franchisee Janet Bennett. "There is a very clear and common purpose right across the whole company."

Going round an area and caring for those

who cannot look after themselves is something that requires a great deal of empathy and compassion. Janet herself embodies this, saying that she hopes her own work makes "a lasting difference to my community."

It is not just Jane who possesses such community spirit. Franchise recruitment manager Kate Dilworth explains: "When franchise owners join Right at Home, they understand that our services are not just aimed at helping people at home. We want our clients to lead active, fulfilled lives; to have fun and to do the things they enjoy."



Tezlom: A different kind of care franchise

Since being established in 2008, Tezlom has placed taking care of others at the very heart of its day-to-day practices



Carol and Kevin



An additional feature that helps to ensure that Tezlom is unique within the world of care franchising is the emphasis that has been placed on the importance of mental health and wellbeing. All franchisees are given access to a variety of resources and support through a collaboration with Whysup which can be accessed at any time.

WHAT DO THE FRANCHISEES HAVE TO SAY?

Any company can tell you that they are doing a good job, but this doesn't necessarily make it true. Taking the time to speak to those who have invested their money into creating a franchise can help to give valuable insight as to what a company is really like for those within it. After speaking to a variety of Tezlom franchisees, you can quickly see that they do far more than simply talk the talk.

Speaking to franchisees, it is easy to see that while everyone may have unique and personal reasons for choosing their franchise, they have all found joining Tezlom to be a welcoming and supportive experience that allows them to grow individually while creating a personal approach to care recruitment. Lesley Jackson

Having started life as a small, family-run business based in Southport, Tezlom has now grown to include 13 franchisees which are spread across the U.K. and provides workers for some of the country's most well-known care providers.

This includes staff for the NHS, Mental Health Hospitals and Learning Disability Units. Since 2008, Tezlom has been headed by Ryan Armitage and his mum, Roz. They have embraced a bold, new approach that has seen Tezlom grow substantially in a relatively short amount of time

SUPPORTING THE NETWORK

Over the years, Tezlom has found that one of the most important factors when it comes to ensuring the success of franchisees is ensuring that they have

the best possible support in place from the very start of their journey. At its heart, Tezlom is still a family company. This has grown and developed over time, with franchisees being included as a part of that family feeling; creating a sense of loyalty and trust within the company which reassures, comforts and gives confidence.

There has also been a significant push towards adopting a transparent approach wherever possible. This is designed to help everyone stay up-to-date with changes and news within the company. By ensuring that franchisees, staff members and candidates are all informed as much as possible, it has been possible to create a warm and friendly working environment throughout the franchise as a whole.

from Doncaster says, “with Tezlom, it was very clear that the network is a working network and that it supports each other so actually, this opportunity to come together is really important.”

For Raghav Prasad in Reading, Tezlom has offered the opportunity to leave his previous career as a business analyst and embrace a new challenge running his own business. He has found that his previous customer service background has helped to ensure that his customers are happy and satisfied.

He has also found that one of his favourite aspects of being a franchisee is the variety: “What I love about my business right now is no two days are the same. Every day is different and you have to face new challenges every day.”

Others, such as husband-and-wife team Kevin and Carol Fitzpatrick from Scotland, found that combining their individual expertise helped to create a successful partnership. Kevin had a background as the managing director of an engineering company, while Carol had been a nurse.

Carol had originally begun the franchise by herself, with Kevin joining her at a later date. When choosing to join Tezlom, Carol says that it was the family business aspect and additional support which really swayed her: “We just like the feel of a family business, I like the support that they give you.”

Kevin has also found that the regular Tezlom conferences have helped to reassure any worries he may have had. He attended the most recent conference in Milton Keynes and said that it was exactly what he



“We just like the feel of a family business, I like the support that they give you”

had needed: “As a newcomer to the business (on a full-time basis) it has really settled my mind and convinced me that I have made the right decision.” Conferences happen twice a year and are open to all Tezlom franchisees.

For more and more of us, ensuring that our career is compatible with family life is a pressing issue. This was the case for Samuel Smith in Tonbridge who chose Tezlom because it was able to fit around family life.

When asked, Samuel said: “Family is a big thing for both me and my wife. When

we first moved into our offices, we brought the kids down there to let them see it. They love coming down to the office.”

This ability to adapt and adjust to family life which Tezlom offers has meant that he has been able to create a successful franchise while also balancing all of the other issues that being a parent brings.

IS FRANCHISE LIFE FOR YOU?

With Tezlom, the family environment starts before you even decide to sign on the dotted line.

If you have any questions about starting your own franchise or what a Tezlom franchise could look like for you, Ryan and the team are more than happy to discuss the options with you. They will talk you through the process and make sure that you are feeling fully supported every step of the way.



At a Glance Tezlom

Year established: 2008
Number of Franchise Outlets: 13
Location of Franchises: U.K. wide
Investment Range: £25,000 + VAT
Minimum Required Capital: £15,000
Contact: franchise@tezlom.com
tezlomfranchising.com

Why it's always a good time to spring clean your franchise

As the weather gets nicer, what better time to take stock and reflect on your business?

WORDS BY CHRIS WOOTOON



THE AUTHOR

Chris Wootton is owner, managing director and also longstanding franchisee of Poppies with over two decades of personal experience in both the cleaning and franchise industries

We all know how busy the winter season can be for businesses in any industry. As business owners, a natural side effect of successfully navigating this period may be that keeping track of your well-oiled machine slips through your fingers somewhat. So, as the weather gets nicer and the days get longer, what better time to take stock and reflect on your business with the same refreshed outlook as you would for your home and give your franchise a good spring clean?

Spring cleaning, in any context, can often present itself as a daunting task. Looking at the bigger picture can seem like a time-consuming, complex process. But, as with all spring cleaning, decluttering and revitalising your business environment with a systematic and logical approach can ultimately have a hugely positive impact on the wellbeing of those within your network.

Here are some top tips to successfully spring clean and streamline your franchise so it can continue to thrive for the rest of the year and beyond.

Consider your priorities

Busy periods can naturally cause us to lose sight of our priorities. The pandemic has taught us that balance is an imperative aspect of success in any context, but it is almost too easy to get caught up and forget to give yourself and your

employees the much-needed time to recoup and rejuvenate.

Prioritising the wellbeing of those in your franchise, in tandem with your business goals, is a great way of keeping yourself and your business in check. Equally, prioritising the wellbeing of those in your network as a franchise owner is a nice way to demonstrate that money is not everything to your success.

Do not be afraid to spend money

In the same respect, not shying away from investing money to create greater efficiency can in fact be a big step forward when spring cleaning your franchise.



It is no secret that we live in a very different world to the one we all knew before the pandemic hit, and time has become significantly more valuable. Technology has enabled businesses to streamline many aspects of day-to-day operations, but of course, this has come at a price. By investing the money necessary to reduce the time you spend on routine tasks as a franchise, those in your network become free to nurture your brand's reputation and the role it plays for consumers.

In the post-pandemic 21st century, positive human relationships in a consumer facing brand have never been more important.

Set expectations

From operations in head office to the services you deliver to your customers, everyone involved in the success of your business should know what to expect.

Maintaining high, consistent standards is vital to continued success and growth, but more importantly it keeps your franchise and franchisees from drifting away from the brand's core mission and goals.

Simply stepping back and taking time to ensure everyone is on the same page is an important practice for all businesses.

Learn from current developments in your industry

As painful as it may be for business and franchise owners, one of the best ways to spring clean in business is often by swallowing your pride.

Learning from the success stories of others in your industry and applying them to your own business operations is a brilliant way of staying current when meeting the demands of consumers.

It may not be broken, but that's not to say marginal changes to your own business operations won't create more efficiency and have a long-term positive effect.

Revisit your culture and core values

None of what has been discussed can be achieved without ensuring your brand's culture and values are still relevant.

As your franchise grows, it should become common practice to regularly revisit your values but equally ensure you still believe in what you are promising and

delivering. As new experiences and ideas are brought into your network, it is important that the foundations of your brand, no matter how big or small, stay current and maintain inclusivity.

"Spring cleaning, in any context, can often present itself as a daunting task"

As business owners, it can often be easy to lose sight of our priorities and ultimately our organisation, so why shouldn't spring cleaning be a regular practice in business as well as our homes?

We all know how satisfying a spring clean can be, and it can ultimately play a huge role in improving our wellbeing. Taking the time to regroup, declutter and balance your franchise is as important as any business operation.

So, by being methodical and using this period as a way to truly dust off the effects of the pandemic, treat your franchise as you would your home and get ready for summer with the well-needed spring clean!



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5 expert tips to help you master your franchise's finances

Cash management is absolutely key to business success, but can be a tricky area for new franchisees. Rick Smith has some good advice

WORDS BY RICK SMITH



THE AUTHOR

Rick Smith is managing director of Forbes Burton, an insolvency and business rescue specialist and business consultancy. Rick and his team offer free help and advice for distressed businesses which are struggling with financial problems, cash flow issues, and HMRC tax debt

It's often hard to seek out a path as a new business, especially when you're a franchise. The added brand loyalty and awareness can be fantastic, but managing cash flow, funding and growth, while trying to run a business day to day, can be a challenge.

Rick Smith, managing director at insolvency expert and business consultancy, Forbes Burton, shares five ways you can ensure a smooth first few years as a business owner:

1 Set money aside for emergencies

It doesn't take long to use up initial savings as a new business. You can use credit cards and loans in tight situations, but it's better to have money set aside to help your business avoid paying interest and provide a cushion for when times get tough. These reserves can also be invested in expanding your business when the time is right.

Keeping three to six months of expenses in reserve is a great idea, as it means you have enough to fall back on in the case of unexpected expenses, or if you need to recruit or expand to meet demand quickly.

This should be topped back up if anything depletes it. It's also canny to invest in tangible assets if you can afford to. A long-term investment is often better than a short-term payoff.

2 Don't use HMRC as a bank

As much as they are loathsome, taxes are part of running a business and must be paid. You are effectively borrowing money from HMRC by not paying them, which is never a good idea.

Tax returns are usually put off for lengthy periods and can catch some people unawares. Before you know it, it's another year, and you are rushing to submit your tax returns



with just a few days to remit, and the amount may turn out to be larger than your expectation.

The easiest solution is to prepare your tax returns as early as possible after April 6th, which will help you handle this critical task on your to-do list efficiently and quickly. Doing it this way also informs you of the amount you'll need to pay the following January, avoiding any horrible surprises, and giving you time to save if the need arises.

HMRC is relentless in its pursuit of debt, but it's also flexible – often offering arrangements to pay what you owe in more affordable terms.

3 Minimise overheads

Every purchase you make as a business will eat into your profit so it's best to prioritise purchases to keep costs down. Look into everything you intend to buy and consider whether it is essential, needed or could be acquired by cheaper or more effective means.

It's always worth shopping around and seeking the best deals. For larger purchases, it's best to weigh up the long term benefits. Will it pay for itself in time, or will you be stuck with something you can't use beyond a certain point, or will become obsolete?

Review your service providers regularly, as this can include energy prices, consultancy fees and more. Can you make these one-off payments? Could you reduce your outgoings easily?

“Having a hold on your cash flow can be the difference between your business succeeding or encountering trouble. Not knowing the figures is almost impossible to square with a business that will fly”

4 Borrow and spend wisely

Sometimes spending money can be the best way to make money; however, this needs to be done strategically. Don't fall into the adage of speculating to accumulate without a plan and defined objectives. Investing in someone to look after your accounts, for example, may be one of the wisest decisions you make, as it will free up your time to do other things, although it doesn't mean that you still shouldn't keep a close eye on what's going on in your accounts.

You can also borrow money if it provides a long-term benefit and has the potential to generate profit for the business. If you're borrowing money at a higher interest

rate to pay off other debt, there may be an issue.

5 Use a cash flow plan to track income and spending

Running the bank account dry is one of the top reasons why small businesses fail. It may sound obvious, but it's best to keep track of every single pound that comes in and goes out of your business. It can be challenging at first but it will reward you and your business in the long run.

If you can afford it, hire an employee to keep track of the ins and outs of your money and the cash flow in general. If this isn't possible, then you could also use a bookkeeper.

Having a hold on your cash flow can be the difference between your business succeeding or encountering trouble. Not knowing the figures is almost impossible to square with a business that will fly.



Light the franchise spark

Questions to ask yourself before becoming a Jackson Fire and Security franchisee



HAVE I DONE MY RESEARCH?

Whatever franchise you are looking at buying, it always pays to do your homework. On a general level, do you understand what a franchise is and how it works? What would my day-to-day life look like as a franchisee?

Gary Johnson, Jackson Fire and Security franchisee for Bolton, has advice for potential franchisees before making an investment. When looking at a specific franchise he says, “understand whether that’s the correct business model that you are comfortable with and, if you are, then I would say just go and talk to as many franchise owners as you can.”

Franchise discovery days are a great way to ask franchisees and the franchisor itself anything on your mind. Make a list of questions before you go and make notes. Jackson Fire and Security hosts its own discovery days at its head office in North Wales, just by the Chester border. For Kris

Milner, the Leeds franchisee, a discovery day was an important tool for him. He says: “I got to meet the managing director and engineers and I went out for the day with an engineer to see what they do on a day-to-day basis. This was really important and helped me make my decision.”

WHAT SKILLS DO I HAVE?

Even if you don’t have specific experience of the sector you are looking to franchise in, it’s surprising what transferrable skills your work (and life) experience will have taught you. Having spent time in the military with the Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers, Sam Gale, franchisee for Cambridge, saw the chance to use the skills he had learned. “Taking on a fire and security franchise felt like a good match for me,” he says. “I enjoy the variety and challenge of what I’m doing now – if you’re focused, flexible and determined, you can make a real success of it.”

AM I WILLING TO WORK HARD?

“The more you are prepared to put in, the more you will get out,” says Martin Lawton, Jackson’s franchisee for Kingston. “Yes, it can be tough, and it certainly wasn’t the easiest first year of trading with pandemic challenges, but I’m far less stressed than I was in previous roles. Be ready to work hard, and the rewards are definitely worthwhile.”

Starting a new business is hard work; franchisees have a much better success rate

than independent startups, but that is down not just to the proven model of a franchise like Jackson but also the willingness of franchisees to put the effort in.

DO I HAVE CONFIDENCE IN MYSELF AND IN THE FRANCHISOR?

Jackson Fire is a people-led business; exceptional service and client relations are what drive business. There is no point in becoming a franchisee of a business with a poor track record. The Jackson name is one people trust and have high expectations of. Henryk Matysiak, franchisee for Sheffield certainly believes he is heading in the right direction. He says, “with hard work and discipline, we are able to move forward with great confidence and great excitement and the future is very bright.”

At a Glance Jackson Fire & Security UK Ltd

Established: 1991

Number of franchised outlets: 11

Location of units: North Wales, North West England, Yorkshire, Teesside, Cambridge, Kingston upon Thames & Guildford

Investment range: £39,500

Minimum required capital: £40,000

Contact: rachel.evans@jacksonfire.co.uk
jacksonfire.co.uk/franchise





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HOODZ is building on its decades of experience for its European expansion



HOODZ fulfills the legal requirement of restaurant owners via TR19 compliance and offers both the restaurant owner and those who sleep above them peace of mind.

Samantha DesRoches, who is the U.K.'s operational coach, says "HOODZ is an amazing franchise built on the solid foundations of BELFOR Franchise Group. Stephen's commitment to his customers is second to none. His passion and tenacity is what makes him a brilliant business owner and I have no doubt his business will go from strength to strength."

Joe Manuszak, vice president of global development for the BELFOR Franchise Group, shared "Steve is the perfect franchisee, as he has vision, goals, innovative ideas, energy and a well stated business plan that we are quite sure he will execute fully. We look forward to our growth and expansion in the U.K. and E.U. with an array of brands we are bringing from America."

Should you have any further queries, please reach out to Joe Manuszak at joe.manuszak@belfranchgroup.com.

HOODZ has been established for over 40 years. Although a name not known to the general public, it is a name revered within the food industry, as we remove grease and buildup inside the extractor ducts.

HOODZ is the market leader in the U.S. and Canada in commercial extractor cleaning and in 2021 BELFOR Franchise Group UK started franchising the highly successful HOODZ Franchise in both Ireland and the United Kingdom.

Stephen Farrelly, our first U.K. franchisee, was quite excited to learn that the BELFOR Franchise group was expanding into the U.K., as he knew what an exciting opportunity it was and became the U.K.'s first HOODZ franchisee.

Stephen shared why he chose HOODZ: "I always wanted to be a business owner so have been focused on that goal. As soon as I heard that HOODZ were coming to the U.K., I knew it was the business for me." Since he has joined Stephen is not only very busy, but profitable.

Farrelly continued, "Commercial kitchens are always going to get dirty and any business with high standards will always want them to be cleaned to a high standard. The potential for repeat business is what initially interested

me. It then became clear that the bigger draw to the business is actually to help keep people safe from fires, both employees and the residents in the flats above."

BUILT ON DECADES OF EXPERIENCE

At HOODZ, we find that most restaurant owners and kitchen managers work very hard to keep their premises clean and compliant with the regulations, but not all of them are aware of their responsibilities under the TR19 standards that cover extractions systems and ducts.

BELFOR has decades of experience helping clients clean up and rebuild after devastating fires, thus HOODZ understands the gravity of cleaning and keeping the restaurants and those that live above them safe. In the event of a fire, the consequences are unthinkable as it could threaten lives and destroy homes.

As a customer of a restaurant, you don't really think about what's going on behind the scenes, nor does the person that resides in the flat above it. The reality is that if there is a buildup of grease in the kitchen hood, specifically the exhaust system, the potential for fire is high.

At a Glance HOODZ Franchise

Year established: 2007

Number of franchised outlets: 135+

Location of units: Canada, U.S.A, Ireland and U.K.

Investment range: £50,000 - £100,000

Minimum required capital: £35,000

Contact: fran.anderson@belfranchgroup.co.uk

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Collaboration makes us better

Working together has meant we've achieved great things, Sarah Beattie, managing director of Fun Fest Franchising says

Welcome to collaborative franchising, a fresh new approach; by working together we can achieve great things.

By collaborating with franchisors such as Sarah Beattie and her team at Fun Fest and Canopy Children's Nurseries, business savvy entrepreneurs can achieve the best of both worlds: combining their vision and ideas with the knowledge, experience and proven systems of franchisors.

Sarah Beattie, managing director of Fun Fest Franchising, fiercely advocates the benefits that a collaborative culture brings to her business effectiveness and the personal satisfaction she derives from working successfully with other people.

Fun Fest Franchising, which has an extensive network of Fun Fest Holiday Clubs and before and after school clubs, has recently launched the Canopy Children's Nurseries franchise, with its first nurseries taking root in Wembley Park, Shrewsbury and Bromley.

OPEN TO NEW IDEAS

When asked about what collaborative franchising means at Fun Fest and Canopy,

Sarah explains: "I appreciate that this is our franchisees' business which needs to reflect their personality and passions to be truly fulfilling and that they can become frustrated if there is no scope to do this.

"This means I'm always open to new ideas and suggestions and remain flexible where it's appropriate.

"For example, one of our new Canopy Children's Nurseries franchisee teams have a vision for their nursery to incorporate a special educational needs centre for their community, while another wishes to establish a coworking space alongside theirs.

"As long as their vision fits with the Canopy brand and ethos, why wouldn't I want to embrace and harness ideas that will enhance their business?

"It also makes sense to encourage collaboration between franchisees, as they're all facing the same challenges and can help and support each other.

"For example, all our Fun Fest franchisees share their activity plans on our shared drive, providing a wealth of ideas and resources for them to use if they feel in need of inspiration.

"Again, why wouldn't I capitalise on the wisdom and creativity of the network?"

SIGNIFICANT INVESTMENT

Franchisees are investing a significant amount of their time and money into a franchisor's business concept.

They choose to do this because the business model and brand resonates with them and they recognise the contribution that the franchisor's systems, tools, training and support will make to their success.

It does not follow that franchisors will behave in an autocratic manner or that franchise agreements are unnecessarily restrictive, requiring franchisees to relinquish control of their business.

At a Glance Canopy Children's Nurseries

Established: 2020

Number of franchised outlets: 2 open, 3 under cultivation (Bromley, Ruislip, and Stratford)

Location of units: Wembley Park, Shrewsbury

Investment range: £45,000

Minimum required capital: £200,000-£300,000

Contact: 0121 392 2925

canopynurseries.co.uk

At a Glance Fun Fest Franchising

Established: 2017

Number of franchised outlets: 25

Location of units: Altrincham, Birmingham, Cheadle, Chorley, Coleshill, Droitwich, Dunstable, Eton, Hartford, Hounslow, Lichfield, Luton, Milton Keynes, Olton, Orpington, Redditch, Ruislip, Solihull, Stanmore, Sutton Coldfield, Watford, Wembley and Wilmslow

Investment range: £3,000-£20,000

Minimum required capital: £10,000

Contact: 0121 726 2595

fun-fest.co.uk





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10 things to look out for in a franchise agreement

Make sure that you're aware of all the risks and obligations before you sign the contract, says accredited solicitor, Andy Fraser

WORDS BY ANDY FRASER



THE AUTHOR

Andy Fraser is the founder of Albany Fraser, a commercial law firm with franchising at its heart. Andy is accredited by the British Franchise Association as a Qualified Franchise Professional. He is one of only a small number of lawyers in the UK to have been awarded this status. Visit albanyfraser.com or call 0141 403 7065

A franchise agreement is a document governing the relationship between a franchisor and a franchisee. It sets out the rights of the franchisee, the roles and responsibilities of both parties and plenty more besides.

Franchise agreements vary substantially depending on the franchise network and the lawyer drafting them. However, here are some common features:

Length

Franchise agreements are long, detailed documents! While length is no indicator of quality, we would expect a properly drafted franchise agreement to be at least 30 pages. However, some agreements (particularly those from North American brands) can run to over 100 pages.

One-sided

Franchise agreements always favour the franchisor, for good reason. The franchisor is trusting the franchisee with their brand and business model and will want to protect their business from any bad franchisees.

Sometimes, franchisors can be a bit overzealous in their franchise agreements and, as such, it's important that a franchisee checks that the agreement is drafted in a manner that complies with the European Code of Ethics for franchising before they sign on the dotted line.

Personal guarantees

It's not just the franchisor and franchisee companies that are parties to the franchise agreement. Invariably the franchisor needs the shareholders and directors to personally guarantee the obligations of the franchisee company.

Fees

The franchise agreement will contain a section dealing with the fees that are payable by the franchisee. Usually these include:

- Initial fee – the lump sum payable to buy the franchise (this should cover initial training, support and equipment and should not contain a significant profit element for the franchisor)
- Management service fee – the ongoing fees paid by the franchisee, usually on a monthly basis. This fee is often expressed as a percentage of turnover, but may also be subject to monthly minimum amounts
- Marketing fees – another percentage or fixed sum payable by franchisees, to be used by the franchisor for marketing and promotion of the brand and business on a national basis.

Depending on the model, other fees may also be payable, such as those for IT/software or for

products to be re-sold by the franchisee, particularly with QSR and fast food brands.

Operations manual

The operations manual is the document (or more often than not these days, the online portal) which contains all the policies and

procedures of the business. The franchisee is obliged to comply with all these policies and procedures as they are updated from time to time during the term of the agreement.

When a franchise agreement is signed, the franchisor can't amend it without the approval of the franchisee. However, the franchisor can update the operations manual as regularly as they like.

As a result, most franchise agreements will have frequent references to the operations manual, to allow the franchisor flexibility to change processes and procedures over the course of the relationship.

Minimum performance targets

The franchise agreement may contain targets for the franchisee to hit every year. These may sometimes be flexible targets determined in accordance with an annual business plan. Franchisees should always be mindful of targets and ensure, as far as they can, that they're realistic and achievable.

Sale

A franchise is an asset that you're able to build up and sell. As such, a franchise agreement should always set out your rights to sell the business to a purchaser approved by the franchisor.

Robust termination provisions

Once you've signed a franchise agreement it can be very difficult to get out of it. It's likely that all the termination provisions set out in the agreement are in favour of the franchisor, to allow for the removal of any bad apples from the network.

Restrictive covenants

One concern of franchisors when they franchise their business is that they're potentially training future competitors. Therefore, most franchise agreements contain restrictive covenants which prohibit the franchisee (and usually its shareholders and directors) from operating a similar or competing business after the termination or expiry of the franchise agreement. These do have to be carefully drafted to ensure enforceability though!

Non-negotiable

Franchisors will usually present the agreement as being non-negotiable. They like to have one standard form of agreement that all franchisees sign in order to save the time and hassle of having 100 franchisees all on 100 different negotiated versions of the document.

However, in reality, unless you're looking to invest in a particularly well-established and attractive franchise concept, franchisors will usually be willing to accept some amendments or modifications to their standard terms, depending on the particular circumstances of the franchisee. These would normally be documented in a separate side to the franchise agreement, to allow the franchisor to maintain uniformity on the main agreement.

In summary, franchise agreements can be daunting and should not be entered into lightly. However, with the right advice and assistance from an experienced adviser who is able to point out the potential pitfalls, they're not insurmountable.

I strongly recommend using a specialist franchise lawyer, ideally accredited by the British Franchise Association, to check any agreements. They have the expert knowledge required to advise you on matters relating to franchise agreements.

BEFORE YOU SIGN THE DOTTED LINE...

Key tips for anyone about to buy a franchise:

- Speak to other franchisees in the network, and then speak to more! If the franchisor doesn't want you to speak to existing franchisees, it's a major red flag!
- Take your time and don't feel pressured into making a decision quickly. You should always 'buy' a franchise and never be 'sold' it.
- Do your due diligence - find out as much information as you can about the franchisor and the relevant market, particularly if you have little experience in the sector.
- Own the business plan. You're responsible for making the investment decision and you should be wary of any template business plan provided by the franchisor. You need to make sure that the figures stack up.
- Franchise agreements are specialist documents and you should always have the franchise agreement checked over by a solicitor who is an affiliate of the British Franchise Association before you sign.



Ethical apparel thread masters down under

In 2022, brands and consumers alike desire their products to be environmentally and socially friendly. OCC Apparel provides that peace of mind, and is the perfect brand for a screen printer or apparel business to take up and run with



OCC Apparel is a brand with ethical manufacturing and long-term global strategy sewn into every process and decision

it makes. Founded in 2004 by Nick Barclay in Australia, OCC Apparel has grown from strength to strength since inception. As consumers' demand for ethically sourced clothing and apparel has become front and centre, many companies and brands are looking for the exact ethical apparel products, services and advice OCC Apparel offers.

As a result, when an ethically minded company, organisation, university, fashion brand requires ethically accredited t-shirts, hoodies or caps, they consistently turn to OCC Apparel for their needs.

"Ethical fashion styles, highest screen-printing quality, transparent supply chains, reduction of plastic waste and fair living wages for workers worldwide has been a dedicated focus and the founding DNA of OCC Apparel for over 18 years now," says Nick Barclay, founder and CEO of OCC Apparel.

"The demand has increased consistently over the previous decade and will only

grow stronger the further our OCC Apparel green star brand spreads its wings to other countries around the world."

A LIFELONG ETHICAL APPAREL JOURNEY

Nick Barclay is an accomplished operator in the world of ethical apparel, and has always had a deep interest in the manufacturing of durable and sustainable clothing. Almost 20 years ago, Barclay was working in New York as a retail sales associate for Patagonia. The seed of organic cotton was planted in his mind, and it took very little time for his business idea to blossom and be harvested into a profit-making business.

"I was working for Patagonia in the United States. They had a wholesale organic cotton blanks t-shirt and tote bag division at the time called 'Beneficial Ts,'" says Barclay.

"When I returned home to Australia there were no organic cotton apparel wholesale options so I started importing Patagonia Beneficial Ts and sold them at organic farmers markets. From there

more and more businesses and brands not only wanted the blank organic garments. They wanted different styles, more colors, different fabric compositions. They wanted their brand label sewn or heat pressed in the neck, they wanted screen printing, DTG (Direct to Garment) decoration all along with expert apparel advice, speed to deliver and competitive price. OCC Apparel was born."

In little time, Barclay developed the OCC Apparel brand from its humble origins into the recognised green star apparel brand it is today. He recognized the need for truly customizable, blank apparel that could be branded later on and has partnered a global network of ethical suppliers and brands that is unique to the OCC Apparel business.

18 years on since his first organic cotton



t-shirt sale at a farmers market, Barclay has built OCC Apparel into a compelling, honest and globally scalable brand that is destined to be the largest wholesale ethical apparel franchise business in the world.

ETHICALLY ACCREDITED APPAREL IS IN HIGH DEMAND

Ethics are the top concern with almost any product category now, and is especially the case with clothing. Not for profit organisations, corporate business, university's, entertainment, fashion brands and locally made artisan businesses are the leading business types searching and demanding ethically manufactured apparel.

Today's front-end consumers, especially those in a younger demographic, are acutely aware the damage fast fashion has done to the planet. They are environmentally educated, socially conscious and aware, willing to make change and actively searching for accredited apparel alternatives.

This attitude is filtering up into the uppermost layers of business, who need to react to the changing attitudes of customers along with protecting their brand. Fair and liveable workers' wages in the apparel industry are a hot topic too, and one that OCC Apparel has completely endorsed and supported via its long-term supplier

partnership with the Continental Clothing Company and its Fair Share branded range.

OCC Apparel put in place a program alongside its partners, to give its Indian factory garment workers a living wage, with the first stage of the wage increase having come into effect from 2016 onwards. Consumers are happy to pay a small premium on their clothing if it means that money goes directly to the workers who made it.

The Earth Positive range is made completely of organic cotton, and is fully accredited by Fair Wear and the production of these products is carbon-neutral. It doesn't stop there; OCC Apparel has a 360-degree view of ethics, and it is deeply embedded into everything the brand does and the world class leading ethical apparel brands it offers within its business which includes: Earth Positive, Salvage, Fair Share, Continental Clothing, AS Colour, Certton Australia, Stanley Stella, Vapor Apparel and Royal Apparel.

OPPORTUNITY KNOCKS

It wasn't too long ago when the average consumer's concern with the source and environmental impact of their products was an afterthought. The world is a different place compared to just ten years ago, and people's scope of what contributes to climate change and unethical business practices

“In every sphere of their lives, young people want their products and services to have ethics at the forefront of them”

has significantly widened. In every sphere of their lives, young people want their products and services to have ethics at the forefront.

Many companies have long-standing apparel suppliers who are resistant to change, but for those who do not offer ethical garments, it's only a matter of time until they are forced to reconsider the source of their apparel. That's why right now is the perfect time to become an OCC Apparel master franchisee.

The global demand for ethical garments is rapidly rising and acute business leaders have the opportunity to quickly establish themselves as the market leader for ethical apparel in their country by registering and securing the OCC Apparel master franchise rights.

At a Glance OCC Apparel

Established: 2004

Number of franchised outlets: 5

Location of units: Sydney, Gold Coast, Dunedin, Auckland (2022), Wellington (2023)

Investment range: \$44,000 - \$126,000

Minimum required capital: \$44,000

Contact: Nick Barclay, CEO and managing director, nick@occapparel.com.au

occapparel.com.au



Confronting conflict at work

Expert advice on the warning signs, managing of disputes, and why conflict can be a force for good

WORDS BY ANDREW SANSON



THE AUTHOR

Andrew Sansom is a content writer for What Franchise

Franchisees often find themselves as the head of a team for the first time, but conflict is something that affects even the largest businesses. How can small businesses resolve disputes in their team without a multi-million pound HR department?

No one wants to work in a hostile environment but there will always be disagreements in the workplace. It can be financial, such as pay disputes with the cost of living rising, or it can be about work/life balance with hybrid work schedules now the norm, but according to experts the most common source of conflict is something timeless.

Our treatment of others, or perceived treatment of others has been driving conflict in and out of the workplace since time began. Marie Coombes, principal resolution consultant at The

TCM Group of mediators describes it as being “the root cause of every single case I deal with, because the first thing that goes is effective communication.”

James Vincent, UK performance director at ActionCOACH, explains: “That’s where the disputes happen. Because when you think about it, everybody’s different. And there are different personality types and different ways that people communicate.”

But how do you combat this issue of perception? A common golden rule is to ‘treat people how you want to be treated’, though James argues this isn’t enough. He cites Michael O’Connor and Tony Alessandra’s *Platinum Rule*: treat people how *they* want to be treated.

Vincent explains, “Imagine if when you started I asked you this: what’s your preferred management style? In order to get the very best out of you? What’s the best way of communicating?”

Clarity of communication, particularly from a position of leadership, is vital. Coombes agrees, “It is about getting to know the people that work for you. And adapting your style to suit that person.”

Marie’s own top tip to avoid harmful conflict at work is not about delivering messages but listening. “We need to listen to hear more,” she explains. “More often than not, we listen to respond.”

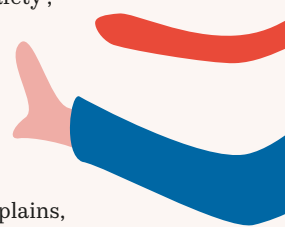
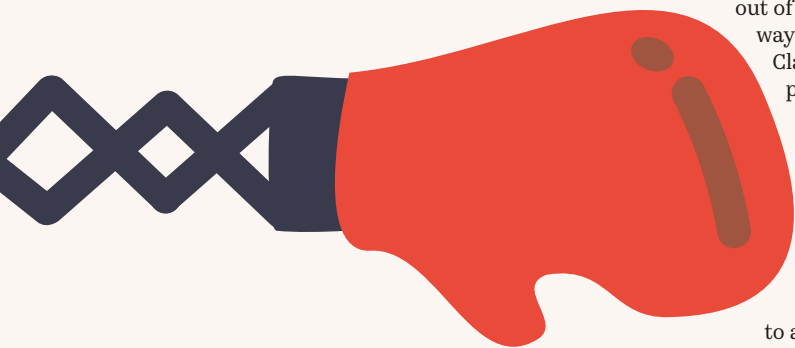
Safe and Sound

Especially as the senior party in a dispute, franchisees and managers can go a long way to making employees feel safe to air their views if they feel they are really being listened to. George Karseras, author of *Build Better Teams: Creating Winning Teams in the Digital Age* and founder of management consultancy firm Team Up describes this as giving team members ‘psychological safety’; one of the three key elements in his formula for a successful team. With psychological safety George explains, “We can speak our mind, we can be honest, we can say how we feel.”

But how can business owners and team leaders help employees feel safe? “You have to feel like you’re not going to get punished for saying something,” George explains. If team members are berated often and put down, they won’t volunteer their ideas and contributions even if they are excellent.

George also implores leaders and team members to use good ‘technique’ when communicating. He says “describe rather than judge,” use statements about your own feelings: ‘I feel...’ instead of ‘you are...’

The third element of safety George lists is courage. Good teams have people willing to have



a tough or awkward conversation. In her mediation work Coombes agrees, "it's very important not to allow things to fester." Always get things out in the open.

During her time as a mediator, Coombes has grown strong feelings about one particular word: "Anything that is termed as banter for me is a red flag." Of course, part of being a good team involves having meaningful relationships with the other members, but misunderstandings, particularly easy in a hybrid working model, mean relationships can sour quickly. Things can quickly escalate to a toxic situation.

On digital platforms things are often perceived with a different

frame of reference than intended. George Karseras explains the perils of communicating via email or direct messages: "Research shows anything that you write with a neutral message comes across as negative. A positive message comes across as neutral and a negative message comes across as absolutely catastrophic." As a rule, save the fun for in person situations when it's easier to read body language and demeanor.

All hands on deck

When things escalate to the point of crisis, this is where teams really look to their leaders. As an ActionCOACH, Vincent has seen plenty of crises come and go, what's the best way to deal with them? "It requires you to respond. Not react, respond," Vincent says, "and there's a big difference between responding and reacting.

It means

you've got to pay attention. You've got to be focused.

When the tides are

against you, you work smart... and we deal with this now. We get together and we strategise. We look at what needs to change."

At its very worst conflict can have a devastating effect on our mental health. Toxic work environments can exacerbate pre-existing conditions and change behaviour. If not disclosed this can cause issues, poor performance and widespread tension. For Coombes the answer to this comes from creating the right work environment.

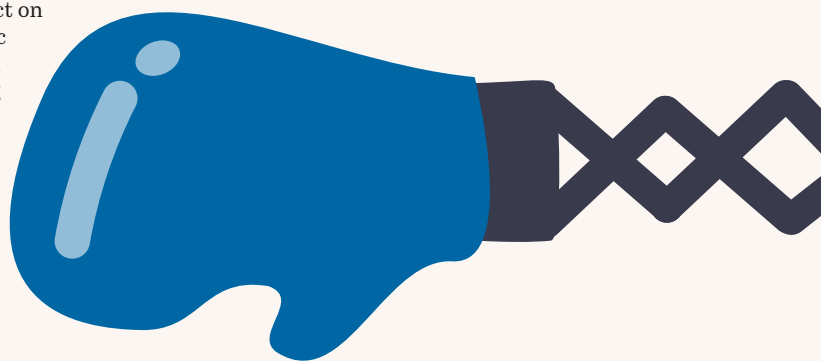
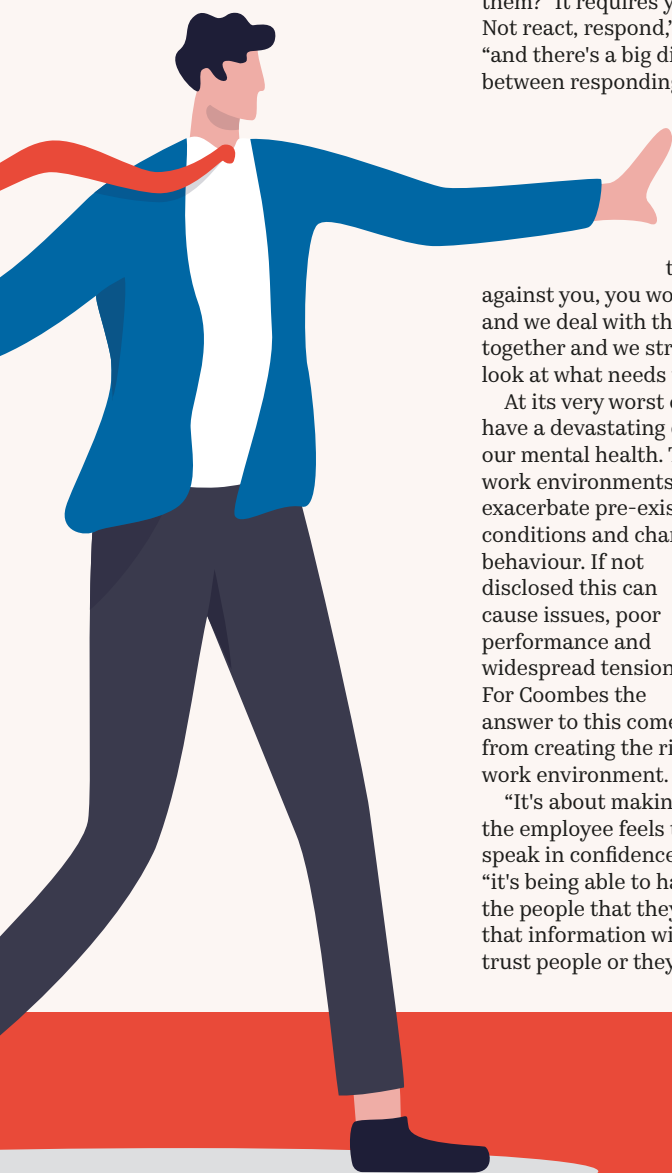
"It's about making sure that the employee feels they can speak in confidence," she says, "it's being able to have trust in the people that they are sharing that information with, if they can't trust people or they are sharing

"The first thing that goes is effective communication"

information, then they won't share it. Employees need to know that they're going to be treated in a respectful way, then a fair way so that they can put their hand up and go, today's not great."

Conflict is not a dirty word. Without conflict teams find themselves lacking autonomy, creativity and challenge. Vincent describes it as "an essential part of success. It's a myth that we need harmony as a team. Actually, we need constructive challenges. So that everyone is challenged at the right level."

Vincent explains that without challenge teams can actually develop something worse than tension: apathy. "It's just a bit of fun. Those who aren't really bothered are rarely competitive." Karseras agrees: "without any tension. The team is flat. It's too harmonious. We have groupthink; people are violently agreeing with everything, but maybe we're not working as efficiently or as creatively as possible."



5 greatest lessons we've learnt from COVID

Granger Forson discusses the impact of the pandemic on business practices and the best ways to future-proof our franchises from further shocks

WORDS BY GRANGER FORSON



THE AUTHOR

Granger Forson is the owner of BizSmart Gloucestershire

The COVID-19 pandemic taught franchisees some very difficult lessons about how quickly things can change, regardless of how successful they were previously.

Most businesses were impacted negatively in some way, with some forced to close, but there were others that survived and even thrived.

But as life steadily returns to normal, now is a good opportunity to reflect on the lessons learnt during the pandemic and craft a better approach to building back even stronger. Here are my five biggest business takeaways from COVID-19, and advice to help other franchisees position their businesses for future success.

1 Cash in the bank is safety

Having a cash reserve is something that many successful businesses have in common and a crucial aspect of the financial

wellbeing of your company, especially in times of uncertainty.

Microsoft co-founder, Bill Gates, always insisted that his business must run with a cash reserve of one year's expenses in the bank, and there is a good reason why.

Having this cash reserve to cover the cost of operations will allow you the chance to experiment and find solutions to maintain the business and help it scale, no matter what the market – or the world – throws at you.

Make sure you always run your business with at least six months' worth of operating cash in the bank.

2 Your people are your greatest assets

The rise of human capital as a company's single-most important asset for value creation has been happening for decades, but the pandemic has helped us to see that putting human capital first is just good business.

Franchisees who treat their employees as important assets and nurture their talent increase their chances of success. Making employees feel valued and developing their talents not only maximises their potential, but also ensures they're more engaged, productive and loyal.

If you invest in your people by developing their skills, inspiring them and leading them – not just managing them – you'll build a company culture where your employees will help you through difficult times.

3 Innovate your product or service

Our customers' needs are continually changing and, as a franchisee, you'll always be thinking of new ideas that could help them. However, we don't always have time to implement our ideas, or experiment to find out if they truly work.

So, as your ideas are generated, put them in your ideas bank. If difficult market situations arise, you'll have a list to turn to, allowing you to find the innovations that you need to drive through.

If you're not always thinking innovatively, you'll find it hard to create new solutions as the market is toughening around you.

4 Evolve your marketing approach

The pandemic showed us that, in times of crisis, a customer's interaction with a company can leave a lasting impression on their attitude towards that business, lingering long after the crisis has passed.

As well as continually innovating your products and services, you should be looking for ways to evolve your approach to marketing and create new ideas on how to reach your audience.

Ask yourself: where are your customers now? What are they now doing? Who and what are they listening to and reading? Store all the ideas these questions generate into your ideas bank. Then, when the market changes, you will be armed with a wealth of new concepts to incorporate into your marketing strategy.

5 Create a culture of business joy

As The Great Resignation has revealed, people value their work-life enjoyment as much as their salary. We need to ensure that our people feel connected and valued if

we want them to join us in working towards business growth, and we can do this by creating a culture of business joy.

There are three elements to achieving this: grow your people, deliver excellence, and scale your business.

You can grow your people through training, coaching (not telling), challenging them constructively to improve, and guiding them to become better.

Deliver excellence by guiding your people to constantly improve the customer experience so your customers become raving fans, and scale your business by designing it to function at its next pillar of growth.

As a business grows, the complexity of leading it changes, so we need to clearly map out what the next stage looks like, develop our existing people for future roles, and find new people that meet our values to fill the rest.

These lessons can be hard to learn and, in some cases, even harder to implement, but one positive to take from the pandemic is the wake-up call it provided to all business owners, including franchisees.

By reflecting on lessons learned from this period of great uncertainty, franchisees can be better equipped to deal with future scenarios and position ourselves for the greatest chances of success.



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Your Guide to Franchising in Web 3.0

Franchising in the metaverse

Many franchise brands are excited about the metaverse and the opportunities it holds, but franchisors should place themselves on certain grounds with expert partners before making the plunge

WORDS BY ROBERT STIDHAM, SUMMA FRANCHISE CONSULTANTS & TRISH MACASKILL, AKERMAN

In 2022, we find that clients are frequently approaching us about the opportunity to franchise and operate their franchise companies in the metaverse. For clarity, the metaverse is essentially a digital environment in which users can interact with others in a virtual environment. It represents the next anticipated iteration of the internet (and is sometimes referred to globally as web 3.0). Simply put, it is a 3D virtual world focused on social connection among users.

Imaginative franchisors are recognizing that expanding their brands, businesses, intellectual property, and ability to deliver goods, products or services in this emerging dimension is an imperative business strategy. Web 3.0 is where our digital and physical lives will soon come together.

CONSIDERATIONS IN MOVING INTO THE METAVERSE

For franchisors that have developed a digital strategy, whether it is an e-commerce platform for products or services or a restaurant that uses digital ordering, moving to the metaverse is likely the next step on this digital journey.

However, it is a mistake for franchisors to think formulating a strategy to make this transition is simple or easy. A franchisor's move into a digital world must incorporate payment mechanisms such as accepting 'non-fungible tokens' (or NFT's) or crypto currency for payment. In addition, franchisors need to act today to defend their businesses and brand in the metaverse tomorrow.

DEVELOPING AN OPERATING MODEL

Once an appropriate business strategy has been developed, including identifying technology partners that assist with the

most challenging aspects of building a virtual presence in the metaverse, important decisions must be made around the role of the franchise.

Who is the owner of that digital space? What is the potential for franchisees to participate? What services should be delivered to support customers and clients? How do the franchisors protect its brand and intellectual property? How does the franchisor monetize this opportunity?

and Coca-Cola having announced initiatives to move into the metaverse, there are opportunities to generate market share, brand awareness, income, and equity. It is necessary to evaluate how NFTs, blockchains, and various forms of crypto currency

DEVELOPING A FINANCIAL MODEL

With franchise companies like McDonald's and Panera, to global brands such as Walmart, Disney, Nike,





“A franchisor’s move into a digital world must incorporate payment mechanisms such as accepting ‘non-fungible tokens’ (or NFT’s) or crypto currency for payment”

are integrated into the financial analysis. Most brands shouldn’t (and won’t) be able to abandon their real-world businesses and move completely onto the metaverse, but clearly, the transition to a blend of real world and digital presence has begun. Giving the customers what they want in the manner that they want it is important to every successful business. The transition to a digital world will take time and it’s critical that franchisors of all

sizes begin to position their company to take full advantage of this new marketplace.

USING A CONSULTANT

There are great organizations that provide technology consulting to begin to build a franchise brand’s presence in the metaverse. However, many of them do not have a well-developed understanding of how to integrate the unique characteristics of a franchise company into the metaverse.

It is important to work with a franchising consultant that both understands franchising and how franchising operates, along with providing both experience and expertise that helps the franchisor bring the digital and real world together.

PROTECTING DIGITAL INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY

It’s critically important to develop a legal strategy in parallel to the business strategy when considering a move into the metaverse. This is uncharted territory and protecting the company’s trademarks and intellectual property in this new world is imperative.

While franchisors may have federally-registered trademarks, not all the international class(es) in which those trademarks are registered will apply in web 3.0. This includes protecting the brand’s unique NFT’s. Franchisors should consider whether they should file for international protection of their trademarks where, unlike the “first to use” standard in the U.S., the protection standards in other countries is given to the first who file their marks. It is less expensive for franchisors to file for registration of their marks in the pertinent classes than it is to enforce their rights against a squatter or infringer.

Web 3.0 is based on an open and decentralized platform (unlike web 2.0 where everything posted belongs to the company who owns the platform,

such as Instagram or Facebook) where company and personal data is not saved on a centralized platform. While web 3.0 provides autonomy to the user, it makes it almost impossible to recover assets in the event of fraud or misuse. It will be critical for franchisors to work with technology consultants who have first-hand knowledge of data security issues.

LEGAL STRATEGY

It's important to work with a law firm comprised of lawyers who understands both franchising and the digital space to ensure that the efforts and investment that the franchisor makes to expand its business into the metaverse is done in a manner that both allows the company to build its brand and run it properly as a digital enterprise.

Offering franchises for sale in the metaverse does not necessarily void the need to comply with franchise regulatory requirements, particularly if the franchisor also delivers services or products in the real world. Agreement

terms to consider include whether national marketing funds could be used for an expansion to the metaverse, how will territories be determined, how will locations be selected, what support from the franchisor will be provided and in what currency will royalties be paid.

IMPLEMENTATION

In best practice, developing and implementing your metaverse presence works best when the franchisor builds a partnership: the franchisor, its legal counsel, its franchise consulting partner and its technology partner as they work together as an integrated team to develop a plan to bring that franchise business to the metaverse.

Ultimately, it will take resources for companies to begin to build this as a separate and distinct business opportunity that fully integrates to the real-world business. Franchise companies will be well served to consider making this part of their planning today to take advantage of new opportunities in the metaverse tomorrow.

BRANDS ARE EMBRACING THE METAVERSE

Franchise companies are already moving to integrate their franchise brand, business operations and franchise opportunities into the metaverse. Franchise brands entering the metaverse currently range from franchising mega-brands such as Arby's, Jimmy John's, McDonald's, Buffalo Wild Wings to smaller brands like TRIB3 (a boutique fitness concept).

It's interesting to note that the businesses – franchised or not – entering the Metaverse are a mix of restaurants, services, and retail brands – the type of business and the type of customer (B2B or B2C) doesn't seem to matter.

Visionary leaders and management in companies are moving rapidly to position their brands as leaders in the metaverse. Our opinion is that 'first mover' advantage will matter to capture opportunity in this new marketplace.

These forward-looking franchisors are following leading global brands such as Gucci, Shopify, Walmart, Nike, Meta, Selfridges, and Disney. Each of these companies has gone as far as to file trademarks, patents and in some cases have even created their own business units dedicated to building their businesses in the metaverse.

“It is less expensive for franchisors to file for registration of their marks in the pertinent classes than it is to enforce their rights against a squatter or infringer”

At a Glance Summa Franchise Consultants

Main HQ: Arizona, U.S.A.

Contact: info@summafranchise.com

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A great leader takes people where they don’t
necessarily want to go, but ought to be.”

– Rosalynn Carter

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The essentials to making your customers feel valued

Five ways that you can encourage loyalty for your business, and build long-term relationships with your audience

WORDS BY TIM MORRIS



THE AUTHOR

Tim Morris is the MD of Cymphony, a communications provider helping thousands of clients to build customer relationships from the first interaction

If you would classify your customers as merely satisfied, your business is in trouble. Every customer should feel special, understood, valued, and unique. A genuine connection can help to inspire customer loyalty, as customers who feel valued keep coming back to use your service.

In a world where some companies are more concerned with closing a sale than with the happiness of their customers, genuine care is essential. It goes a long way toward establishing the company as a “customer first” entity. So, here are my five top tips to make your customer feel valued:

1 Create a personal relationship

We all know that communication is an essential part of business. Quite simply, if you cannot communicate with your consumer, you cannot do business. A business needs to communicate responsively, clearly and with understanding. Even AI development needs a human in the loop.

So, why is it that so many businesses are happily handing over their communication to chatbots and automated systems? The benefits of having a trained enquiry-handling professional are numerous for a business: they make the company more approachable, allow you to maintain a brand personality and, perhaps the most important one for me, it alleviates stress for the consumer.

2 Give your customers what they want

Giving your consumers what they want when it comes to providing customer service is vital. In fact, in a recent survey, it was revealed that 86 per cent of people prefer to interact with human customer service agents. A trained human operator is preferred because they can answer a multitude of questions and enquiries quickly and efficiently. This is something that chatbots struggle with, especially when facing a complex and specific enquiry.

Human operators also provide a welcoming voice, giving the perfect greeting to put the consumer at ease. It is often obvious you are dealing with a pre-programmed chatbot due to their inauthentic responses that prevent you from feeling truly understood.

When a customer feels worried about a service, they need a reassuring voice at the end of the line, not an automated one. Using chatbots can lead to your customers feeling frustrated and annoyed, two words you do not want associated with your franchise.



Remember, there is no better way to show you understand your customers than through your tone of voice, branding and marketing, and even the best customer service can be undermined by the wrong tone of voice. The words used or how they are expressed can say a lot about how customers perceive your attitude. A human operator can help your business get this right from the off.

3 Make it easy for people to use your service

When a customer contacts your franchise, they most likely do not have the time or patience to go through a long-winded and complicated process to fulfil their enquiry. So, making life as easy as possible for your customer is vital.

In today's digital world, customers rely on having diverse touchpoints with a brand during their customer journey. By having a multichannel, also known as

omnichannel customer service, you will be able to

"Customers are no longer willing to wait days or even hours to resolve a query"

provide a seamless, consistent and personalised experience to your customers on the channel or device most convenient to them.

According to a study by Accenture, 89 per cent of consumers experience frustration in repeating their questions to multiple representatives – so eliminating this is one of the most effective ways to improve customer service.

With today's advances in technology, companies can do this by integrating all their online and offline communications into one omnichannel platform. By uniting text, social, and website under one roof, you will guarantee consistent, quality service from the right team member, no matter how the customer chooses to get in touch.

4 Be responsive

Customers are no longer willing to wait days or even hours to resolve a query. According to research from Forrester, live assist channels and engagement tools achieve much higher satisfaction ratings, and companies are increasingly using visual engagement tools to deliver the real-time service people crave.

I understand that answering phone lines and responding to emails quickly can be a struggle for busy franchises at the best of times. When you add to this the difficulties of reduced staffing due to sickness, people working from home and a higher level of customer enquiries, it is no wonder teams are stretched. However, taking calls and

responding to messages is crucial. A survey of 1,600 businesses from BT found that, on average, a missed call loses a UK business a massive £1,200. Remember, in many cases, if you do not respond, customers do not take long to find an alternative through online recommendations and reviews.

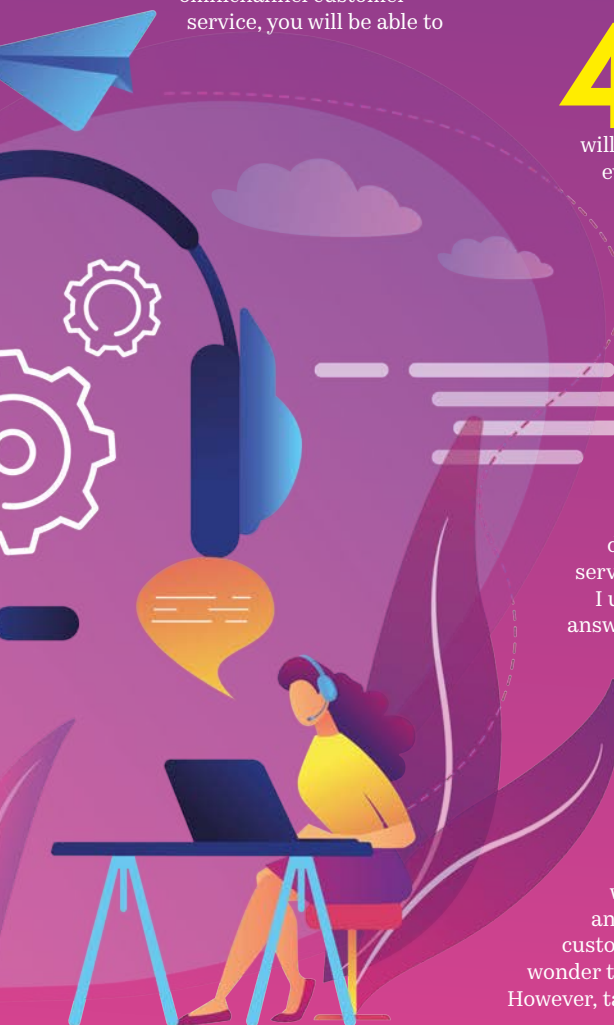
So, you can alleviate the possibility of your franchise missing enquiries by prioritising responding to messages within a minimum 12-hour window, by simply outsourcing your work to a communications provider.

5 Show your customers empathy

Because some consumers will be incredibly shy, anxious, and even nervous when it comes to approaching your business with a problem or concern, it is important to show empathy. Consumers will be contacting your franchise for a variety of reasons, so ensuring you have an operator who can be empathetic to their problems is important.

The last thing a customer wants when calling with an issue is to be stuck on the line with a set of automated options. Sensitive situations require a personal approach. Whether someone is calling with a query, complaint or problem, speaking to an untrained call handler or an automated system usually results in an extremely frustrated person who is reluctant to use your services again.

The personal approach to enquiry handling has numerous benefits for a franchise looking to increase customer satisfaction. Making sure that your service goes the extra mile for customers by providing a more personal customer service is what will set your franchise apart from the rising number of companies looking to adopt automated and, quite frankly, impersonal systems of communication.



Ask The EXPERTS

Our panel of industry specialists answer your franchise questions

Q WHEN CAN A FRANCHISE AGREEMENT BE TERMINATED?

JOHN PRATT WRITES:

Virtually all franchise agreements are granted for a specific term and either contain an expiry date or a fixed duration for the franchise agreement. The great majority of franchise agreements in the UK are granted for five years.

In addition, some but not many – and generally this is not considered to be desirable – franchise agreements give the franchisor and the franchisee or just one of those entities the right to terminate on the giving of written notice after a specified period of time but before the franchise agreement is due to terminate. This would be unusual.

Finally, you would expect the franchise agreement to contain detailed provisions setting out the situations in which the franchisor can terminate for a franchisee's breach. It is important for a franchisee that

those provisions are as specific as possible and should not, for instance, give the franchisor the right to terminate for a "material breach" because what constitutes a material breach is unclear.

Usually, franchisees have much more limited rights to terminate than a franchisor and, indeed often, franchise agreements do not specify precisely in what situations a franchisee can terminate. Nevertheless, as a matter of common law franchisees can terminate if the franchisor commits such a serious breach of the franchise agreement that the franchisor signals, by that breach, that it no longer wishes to be bound by the terms of the franchise agreement. In practice, it is very unusual for a franchisee to terminate a franchise agreement, because generally that is not in the franchisee's best interest.

JOHN PRATT is senior partner at specialist franchise firm Hamilton Pratt and has advised franchisors for over 25 years.

Q I WANT TO FRANCHISE MY BUSINESS. WHAT ARE THE FIRST STEPS I WILL NEED TO TAKE?

LOUISE HARRIS WRITES:

This question is one that many have explored and much has been written on the subject. To summarise it all I've tried to give you the headline information.

I recommend that you thoroughly research, starting with the British Franchise Association website, and consider attending one of their courses. A good franchise consultant will also guide you through the process of initial assessment and ultimately create a plan to franchise. It may feel expensive to take this route, but it will increase your chance of success, with less trial and error.

It is critical to understand what franchising is – the legal aspects,

relationships and the challenges. It is a full-time business in its own right – many fail to launch as franchises because they don't have the key resources: money and time.

Consider first whether your business can be replicated; are your own systems in place, and is it a well-run, financially viable business that has any form of unique intellectual property (a brand, product or methodology)? A yes to these questions is a good start.

It's important to know that it is not 'easy' but it can be a very successful route to expansion. Just make sure you're fully informed, since 'franchising' will be your new business.

LOUISE HARRIS has been in franchising since 2006 and has been both franchisee and franchisor. She runs Franchise Projects, completing critical tasks for franchised businesses.





Q WHAT KIND OF FEES CAN A FRANCHISEE BE EXPECTED TO PAY UNDER A STANDARD FRANCHISE AGREEMENT?

SHELLEY NADLER WRITES:

There are two main types of franchise fee paid to the franchisor in a franchise arrangement: the initial franchise fee paid on entry to a franchise, and the on-going fees usually paid weekly or monthly. The franchise agreement should clearly set out all fees that are payable by the franchisee.

The initial fee is payable on entering into the franchise agreement and covers a range of services provided by the franchisor to help the franchisee establish its franchise business and an element which is attributable to the value of joining the franchised network and the strength of the name and goodwill associated with it. In some franchise networks the initial fee includes an initial package of equipment and/or products comprising all the initial requirements of the franchisee's business.

The on-going franchise fee, often referred to as a "service fee" or "management service fee" or "royalty", is paid in respect of the on-going support and

advice and assistance that the franchisor provides to the franchisee during the term of the franchise agreement. This is usually a percentage of the franchisee's turnover but in some cases it is a fixed amount. In the case of a product distribution franchise there may also be a fee that is a mark-up on the supply of products.

In many cases the franchisor will undertake responsibility for marketing for the network and will set up a central marketing fund to exploit to the full the national corporate image of the franchise network, as the provider of goods and/or services. The franchisor will require each franchisee to pay a marketing fee into the marketing fund and the sum of all of these contributions is spent by the franchisor on advertising and marketing on behalf of the network. The marketing fee is usually calculated as a percentage of the franchisee's turnover and is paid in the same way at the same time as the on-going fee.

SHELLEY NADLER is a legal director in Bird & Bird's international franchising team and has many years' experience of advising on all aspects of franchising.

Q CAN A FRANCHISOR DICTATE THE PRICING OF EVERYTHING AT A FRANCHISE LOCATION?

ALAN WILKINSON WRITES:

The short answer is no. The interesting bit is why a franchisee should actually follow the franchisor's recommendations.

A franchise is an independent business which trades using the brand and know-how of the franchisor. The franchisor has a proven formula for operating their business, and will have learned a lot of lessons along the way. What works, what does not, and the best price point for their product or service. They will know their position in the market, and will have developed systems and procedures around maximising profits based upon this market positioning.

It should not simply be assumed that increasing price will increase profits. This

can be the case, but at what cost? Maybe a good margin on this job, but on the back of this, setting a higher price will mean less jobs in the future.

A franchisor can, if they so choose, set a maximum price, but they cannot set the price for a product or service. Depending upon the offering, prices can and do vary according to location. As a franchise network matures, and the brand has franchisees in different geographical locations, often patterns emerge of higher and lower price points. This can be affected by North/South, or urban/rural.

Although a franchisor cannot set prices, a franchisee would be well advised to follow their guidance, as this will have been learned by valuable experience.

ALAN WILKINSON is head of franchise development at The Franchising Centre and has been in franchising for over 25 years.

Got a question about franchising? Email kieran.mcloone@aceville.co.uk or check out the 'Ask' section at what-franchise.com

Sharing ideas and best practices

James Sedgwick explains the bfa's business support function and its broad and inclusive approach to supporting bfa members



James Sedgwick



Will Strike

continues, "We have developed our use of digital and virtual meeting tools, but there is now a renewed appetite for face-to-face meetings. We've found new ways to support all the franchising industry, and our 'power hour' sessions have proved to be a great inclusive information-sharing franchising platform."

The bfa recognises how important it is to grow and develop its franchise support function and Will Strike has recently joined the team as franchise support manager. Will has already worked for the bfa in a compliance role and has a detailed knowledge of both the bfa and the wider franchising sector.

The British Franchise Association (bfa) prides itself on working collaboratively with its members to deliver the services, training and support required to drive their franchise businesses forward. A key part of the bfa's foundations is its franchise support function, led by James Sedgwick. James acts as a key bfa liaison, visiting members and making sure he is available to support them when needed.

"I love the variety of the role," says James. "All our members are on their own unique journey, but I can help them by making sure they're tapping into our support network. I also enjoy representing the bfa and working with franchisors who are not yet aligned to

the bfa network, developing their understanding of the elements and requirements of the bfa accreditation process."

Rising to challenges

James is proud of how the bfa has evolved and embraced new initiatives to ensure that members still received the support they needed during the challenges of the last two years. He

Expanding support

James notes: "Will is a highly dedicated franchising professional who has already proven himself at the bfa. He has a highly developed understanding of the standards around the bfa membership model, he already knows the bfa members and he's

really excited to be supporting them in a new way. With this expansion to our team, we'll now be able to support our members even more."

"We've found new ways to support all the franchising industry, and our 'power hour' sessions have proved to be a great inclusive information-sharing franchising platform"





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