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Experts show the way

DECIDING to invest in a business of your own is one of the most important life decisions you will ever make. Getting your own boss isn't easy but it is incredibly satisfying and brings a range of benefits such as independence, flexibility and the opportunity to make the kind of money you're unlikely to achieve as an employee.

But it isn't if you opt for a franchise business many of the risks and downsides associated with "going it alone" simply don't apply. You'll buy into an established and proven track well-recognized brand with a proven track

By Megan Dunmore

record out in the marketplace. What's more, you'll enjoy the support of an experienced, professional management team whose aim is to make sure you succeed. The basics are outlined. They know that the chances of a franchise business start-up going well are statistically significantly higher than the non-franchise alternatives and will be behind you all the way.

On October 3 and 4, the NEC will open its doors to thousands of visitors eager to find out about franchising at the biggest industry event of the year. The National Franchise Exhibition is the biggest UK show with more than 140 exhibitors from almost every business sector from food and drink to fitness, cleaning, property and care.



All franchisees taking part have been approved by the industry's independent regulatory body, the British Franchise Association (BFA), so you can be sure that whatever kind of business you're looking for, whether "man and a van", a shop or management franchise, it will be commercially viable and operated ethically. Many of the franchisees taking part will be offering seminars

part will be household names such as McDonald's, which will be hosting open theatre sessions to talk about support and set-up costs and take you through the process required to complete the training.

"This year's show will include seminars from the world of self-made business. Come along to hear Neil Cough from BDC's The Apprentice programme and be inspired by Mark Dwyer. Dwyer, a 42-year-old entrepreneur who will be sharing the secrets of his success.

Support

Among the key speakers will be one of the leading personalities in the franchise industry in America, Dina Dwyer-Owens, chief executive of the Dwyer Group, whose franchisees include Rainbow International, Mr. Electric and Drain Doctor - all of which are exhibitors at the NEC.

"There will be help and advice on franchising available at the NEC too. The BFA will host a series of seminars, with expert contributors including a franchise lawyer and a banker or you can visit the NPIF Patient Clinic for specialist business planning support and independent advice on raising capital.

Finally, find out what it's like to be your own boss. Take part in one of the Real Franchise Stories panel and hear from people who have already made the move and are happy to share their invaluable experience with a franchisee.

You can gain free admission by using the promo code **NFPEX14** when you register at franchise2014.co.uk.

LEADING LIGHTS: Expect help and advice from a series of seminars

Exhibition launched new career

AFTER 30 years in the Lanesborough police force, Graham Costain-Hornham decided that he wanted to be his own boss. With no fixed hours of the type of business he was looking for, he started his research into opportunities at the British Franchise Association in Manchester and found himself spending most time on the Dutchback stand.

"I was really impressed by the friendly, helpful team but I also liked the principles behind Dutchback, particularly the guaranteed turnover in your own area," he said.

"The start-up costs were quite low in comparison to some of the other franchises. As a family man, I was also attracted by the maturity of the Dutchback franchise."

"So I opted to buy into the franchise at the guaranteed £25,000 turnover level. I achieved that figure by my seventh month and haven't looked back."

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Mapping out a future

WITH IT comes to buying a franchise a well-defined territory based on property research and market analysis can make the difference between success and failure of your business.

So understanding the rules applied by your franchisor in this regard is vital.

Especially, when your franchisor forces you a protected territory, this means that no other franchise will be set up in the same area, nor may other franchisees seek customers in that area. But there is so much more to a good territory than simply exclusivity.

Stuart Tice, sales and marketing director of Atlas Mapping, says territory should not be a simple matter of observing up the country by postcode.

Professionally designed franchise territories should be created to contain the right level of commercial opportunity for a franchisee to be successful.

He said: "A good franchise territory should work intelligently with the local market and transport infrastructure."

Stamp of approval

FORMER the deputy chairman and West Provincial Association (WPA) franchise director, Stephen Harris has joined award-winning sales and management training franchise Saville UK.

He chose to invest in Saville based on its structured model and extensive support for franchisees, he said: "My role at WPA included developing franchisees businesses and helping them to progress as individual business owners."

"As a former franchisee I will be offering advice and support for businesses in the British area looking for an effective growth strategy."

Stuart Thomson of Saville UK said: "The decision to invest in the Saville system at the highest level."

Flexibility on menu

NEIL and Lorraine tailored their business to suit their lifestyle. Mr. Stapleton handles deliveries and Mrs. Stapleton looks after the shop.

Neil said: "I was looking for a franchise to invest in an OSCAR pet food franchise. It was a family man, I was also attracted by the maturity of the Dutchback franchise."

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Oliver in driving seat

NOW in his fifth year as a franchisee with leading automotive business Oliver Roberts has just completed his first month's job.

Mr. Roberts said: "I would have support and security of local company. I was looking for a franchise to invest in an OSCAR pet food franchise. It was a family man, I was also attracted by the maturity of the Dutchback franchise."

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Tasting the rewards

CONTRIBUTING to the continued success of the Subway brand are ambitious franchisees like Damian Harlin, who don't stop at one store.

Mr. Harlin initially worked as a consultant for Subway's regional development office in Belfast before purchasing his own restaurant in Northern Ireland, he said.

"Now the owner and operator of four stores, he said: "I'm proud to be a Subway franchisee."

Clean break is a joy

ALL they approach the occupation of their first year with Overclean, franchisees and staff have been successful.

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Building on success

THE appointment of new Director of Franchise Development in the Republic of Ireland has opened up franchise opportunities for the brand.

Paul Griffin, John Dempsey and Mark O'Connell are looking for the Master Licensor after 11 years running a successful Drain Doctor Plumbing franchise in Dublin.

"We want to bring Drain Doctor's award-winning service to the entire population of Ireland," said Paul Griffin.

Start at cutting edge

IF you're looking for a profitable, hands-on business in the outdoors, take a look at Lawnrite. Now it's time to take the first step.

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