

Noteworthy Events

CHRISTMAS



December 25, 2014

HANUKKAH



December 16-24, 2014

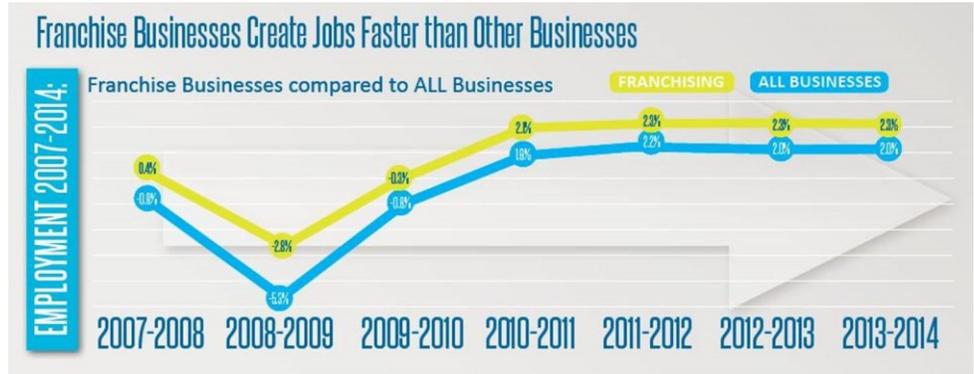
FRANCHISE EXPO SOUTH



February 5-7, 2015
Houston, TX

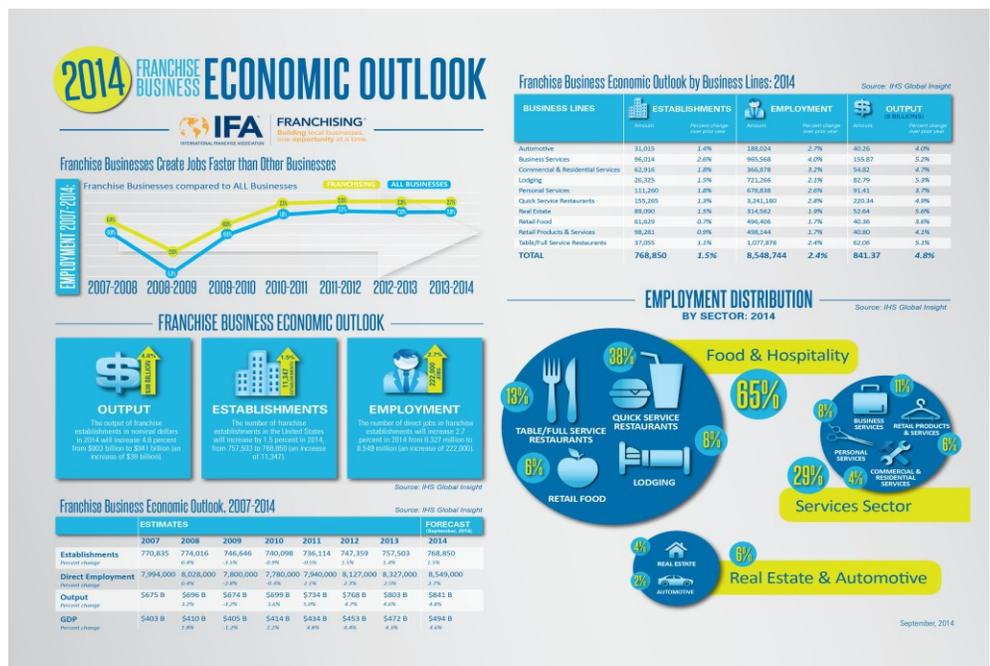
Franchises Added 16,970 Jobs in October

IFA – November 7, 2014



According to November's ADP National Franchise Report, franchises added nearly 17,000 jobs in October. This number is slightly less than last month's and is below the 12-month average, which is just above 22,000 new jobs per month.

Restaurants continued to lead the way with 13,240 new jobs. Accommodation and Auto & Parts Dealers also added a combined 2,300 new jobs. In total, franchises now account for 8.33 million jobs. Accommodations now account for more than 700,000 jobs.





Helping Dementia Patients Through Franchising

Entrepreneur Magazine Q&A - Nov. 29, 2014 by Kate Taylor

As a physician that works primarily with elderly patients, Dr. Nicole Ross saw first-hand the need for better in-home care in her community. So, Nicole and her husband Mark decided to open a Right at Home senior care franchise. In addition to the typical in-home care services, the Ross's location also offers a new program called Alive Inside. The program taps into music's ability to battle memory loss to improve the lives of elderly patients.

Here's what the couple has learned while running a franchise that serves the elderly.

Why franchising?

My wife and I have always loved the idea of being entrepreneurial. We moved to a new city and looked to open a business in that community. We did not want to start another business from scratch, so we researched the needs in our community and utilized a franchise consultant to help sort through various industries and companies. We were willing to work very hard, but we needed a plan for success that had been tested. We understood there are no guarantees for success, but we knew with our efforts and integrity that the probability was high.

What were you doing before you became a franchise owner?

Mark practiced law for four years, and then decided to transition to the real estate development industry. He decided to make this career move because he wanted to have a career that didn't bind him to an office and one that he could create something positive and have more community involvement. We had a lot of success in this industry for many years because the residential construction industry was really booming in Atlanta at the time. But then, after nine years in the business, the housing industry slowed, and we realized we needed to find another business venture that would be more profitable.

Nicole is a physician and works primarily with senior citizens. She saw firsthand the need for home care, post hospital visit with this demographic. She would too frequently see her patients leave the hospital but have to return shortly after for additional care, which could have been prevented if they had some assistance at home with taking medication, cooking meals or hygiene.

Why did you choose this particular franchise?

We spoke with local Right at Home franchisees throughout the country, which was really helpful to hear their experiences with Right at Home. We did our own research on the web and also went to Right at Home's corporate Discovery Day, which was almost like a first date. We visited to see if we liked them and they wanted to see if they liked us. Fortunately, there was a mutual admiration.

Where did you get most of your advice/do most of your research?

We used a franchise consultant to help us determine what companies fit our investment requirements, our time commitment and our income goals. We then contacted those companies and determined a comfort level with their representatives. Finally, we contacted existing franchise owners and went to visit the corporate headquarters to go see the team that was going to support us.

What advice do you have for individuals who want to own their own franchise?

Make sure you do your research on the organization, make sure it a business that you would mind not being consumed by, and talk to other franchise owners of your choice with backgrounds similar to yours. Finally, allot yourself enough cash reserves to get past your startup period.



What's Your Wish?

The White Envelope

It's just a small, white envelope stuck among the branches of our Christmas tree. No name, no identification, no inscription. It has peeked through the branches of our tree for the past 10 years or so.

It all began because my husband hated Christmas---oh, not the true meaning of Christmas, but the "craziness" of Christmas – where he had a tendency to sit back and do WAY too much thinking, about his future, his family, what he wanted to be when he grew up, so to say. Knowing he felt this way, I decided one year to do something for him. The inspiration came in an unusual way – I was watching a magician on television doing a "trick" when it struck me...

I asked him to write down for me, every New Year's Day, what he wanted from his life. It didn't matter what he put down – this was for him. And I didn't want to see it. Then, every Thanksgiving weekend, when we put up the Christmas tree, I'd ask him to open it and see what it said. And then I'd ask him, "Are you closer to reaching it? If not, what can I do to help?"

After a couple of years of this, my husband turned to me and said, "Yes, you can help. You see – I want to own my own business. I've always realized I could build equity for our family better this way – plus get away from the corporate nonsense I deal with every day. But if we do this, we're going to have to tighten our belts in the short-term. Are you ready to help?" I nearly keeled over from shock. I had become accustomed to our nice little life – and knowing my husband was able to make a good salary and support our family well. I worked as well, but was also busy with the kids, so we depended largely on his salary.

"What are you considering?" I asked, trying to sound supportive.

"Well, I'm looking at buying a franchise," he said. "I've been working with a franchise consultant, and they have helped me understand my skills and what franchise companies would be right for me. I'm in the process of investigating several right now – and one, in particular, is looking like a really good fit for us."

"Oh. K..." I mumbled, and then quickly began thinking of ways I could submarine this radical thinking that was going to destroy the security of our family. "Have you spoken with your Dad about this?"

"Yes, I have," my husband said, "and he asked me if I had the 'stuff' to make it work?" "Well, do you?", "I asked.

"I don't know," my husband replied, "but I DO know that if I don't see this through, I'll never be happy, because I will have never seen through what I thought I could do with myself in life." "Well, obviously this is important to you." I offered. "Let's share it with family when they're here for the holidays – and see what they have to say," hoping in my heart they'd help me out on this issue.

"We can do that," he said, "but I don't need another WIPE-OUT. You know, WELL-INTENTIONED PERSONS OFFERING UNINFORMED THOUGHTS? My Dad has been doing that to me my whole life. It took me years to understand that he didn't mean me harm, but that he wished for my safety, and that suggesting I avoid risk was his way of doing it."

"I've already spoken with a lot of people," he went on to say. "And I've learned that once you begin to talk about your desires to own your own business, you will get all sorts of comments back that don't always reflect an understanding of who you really are, and certainly don't reflect a knowledge of the business you are investigating.

Be it your father, or your "know-it-all" sister-in-law, or your neighbor, or your co-worker, or your banker, or accountant. They all seem to have an opinion. I have learned I needed to understand two things. First, as I said, I've learned that my loved ones have my "safety" at heart – not my "success" – so they are hardly in the position to advise me to do something that would put me or my family at any risk at all. Secondly, many can make a comment that may appear to have my best interest at heart, but that person doesn't have the details I have in investigating a business.

I guess I've learned this is something I simply have to do on my own." Wow, I thought. He's got me pegged. "OK, then what can I do here?" "Join me in this investigation process," he requested. "Work with me to learn about these businesses. And then we can decide together – if this one particular business isn't right, it won't change how I feel. I still want to do this."

Well, we did exactly what he asked me to...and 7 years ago, we purchased a franchise business together. It has met his personal fulfillment needs – and neither of us has ever regretted a minute. But why still the "white envelope," you say? Do I still have him fill it out every year?

No, I don't. These days it is no more than an empty envelope. But it's a constant reminder to me to that I almost "blew it." That I was thinking about what I thought was right for me, not for my husband, or for our family. And that reminder is the best message I can receive every holiday.

New Survey Finds Veterans Thriving in Franchise Industry

IFA, by Jenna Weisbord Nov. 2014



WASHINGTON, Nov., 10, 2014 – More than 50,000 veterans have found employment in the franchises industry over the past year and more than 400 veterans have become local franchises business owners, according to a new Veterans-in-Franchising Study, released today by the IFA.

“Franchise businesses realize that creating employment and small business ownership opportunities for veterans, military spouses and wounded warriors is not only the right thing to do, but it makes good business sense,” said IFA President & CEO Steve Caldeira, CFE. “Veterans thrive in the franchise industry because they are used to following systems, structure, working as part of a team and they truly understand what leadership is all about. This is exactly how the time-tested model of franchising works, by following the same proven and successful template. We are proud of our efforts to help veterans become local franchise business owners as well as find employment in franchise establishments.”

The study surveyed a variety of industries and company sizes in order to capture a representative sample of the franchise industry. According to the survey, conducted by Franchise Business Review a total of 52,333 veterans have found employment opportunities in the past year across 13,446 business locations. Additionally, 62 participating franchise brands successfully recruited 416 veterans as new franchisees, during the same period, and an additional 350 veteran franchisee candidates are currently under consideration. The survey also found that 70 percent of the franchisors surveyed indicated they had hired a veteran or spouse of a veteran in the past year. The most popular industries among veterans coming into franchising include Automotive (16%), General Services (17%), Food (14%), Residential/Home Services (14%) and Business Services (9%). Of the franchisees surveyed, 98% believe that veterans are a good fit for employment within their businesses.

They survey results reflect a continuing commitment in the franchising community to provide career opportunities for veterans. In 1991, IFA Launched VetFran, a strategic, initiative to help Gulf War veteran’s access business ownership opportunities in franchising. IFA’s VetFran program currently consists of over 645 franchise brands that voluntarily offer financial discounts, mentorship, and training for aspiring veteran franchisees and veterans seeking employment. In 2011, Operation Enduring Opportunity was launched to expand that initiative to include hiring veterans as well. The IFA also joined the U.S. Chamber of Commerce’s “Hiring our Heroes” initiative which helps veterans and military spouses find meaningful employment.

On Veterans Day 2011, the franchising industry was part of the first largest private-sector commitments to the White House Joining Forces Program passionately let by First Lady Michelle Obama and Dr. Jill Biden. IFA and its membership pledged to hire as employees and recruit as franchise business owners 80,000 veterans, wounded warriors and military spouses through 2014. Since 2011, the franchise industry has significantly surpassed the goal, with more than 203,890 veterans, military spouses and wounded warriors entering the industry – including 5,608 new veteran franchisees.

“The impact made by VetFran, Operation Enduring Opportunity and the White House Joining Forces Program is a profound demonstration of the opportunities afforded by franchise businesses to pave the way for business ownership by Americas veterans,” said Caldeira. “Franchising is proud to enable our nation’s veterans to fulfill their dreams and find career opportunities here at home.”

In November 2013, IFA received the U.S. Chamber of Commerce and Capital One Bank Award for Small Business Veteran and Military Spouse Employment at the 3rd Annual Lee Anderson Awards Dinner hosted by the Chamber. Additionally, the IFA was also honored in a White House ceremony in April, 2013 along with other for-profit and not-for-profit organizations for their significant commitments and contributions to veterans-related hiring programs.

Christmas Fun Facts



- The Germans made the first artificial Christmas trees out of dyed goose feathers.
- Each year more than 3 billion Christmas cards are sent in the U.S. alone
- All the gifts in the Twelve Days of Christmas would equal 364 gifts.
- Most of Santa's reindeer have male-sounding names, such as Blitzen, Comet, and Cupid. However, male reindeers shed their antlers around Christmas, so the reindeer pulling Santa's sleigh are likely not male.
- According to the Guinness world records, the tallest Christmas tree ever cut was a 221-foot Douglas fir that was displayed in 1950 at the Northgate Shopping Center in Seattle, Washington.
- The traditional three colors of Christmas are green, red and gold.
- Christmas trees have been sold in the U.S. since 1850.
- Christmas trees usually grow for about 15 years before they are sold.
- The British wear paper crowns while they eat Christmas dinner.
- Alabama was the first state in the United States to officially recognize Christmas in 1836.
- Christmas was not declared an official holiday in the U.S. until June 26, 1870.
- Oklahoma was the last U.S. state to declare Christmas a legal holiday, in 1907.
- Mistletoe is from the Anglo-Saxon word *misteltan*, which means "little dung twig" because the plant spreads through bird droppings.
- A yule log is an enormous log that is typically burned during the Twelve Days of Christmas. (December 25-January 6) A burning log or its charred remains is said to offer health, fertility, and luck.
- President Teddy Roosevelt, an environmentalist, banned Christmas trees from the White House in 1912.
- It is estimated that the single "White Christmas" by Irving Berlin is the bestselling single of all time, with over 100 million sales worldwide.
- Approximately 30-35 million real (living) Christmas trees are sold each year in the U.S.
- In 1962, the first Christmas postage stamp was issued in the United States.
- Christmas purchases account for 1/6 of all retail sales in the U.S.