

THE MAGAZINE FOR FRANCHISEES

# CANADIAN Franchise

ISSUE 2#3 - 2015

[www.canadianfranchisemagazine.com](http://www.canadianfranchisemagazine.com)

## GIVE ME LIBERTY

## WHICH PATH TO CHOOSE

INDEPENDENT BROKER  
OR FRANCHISEE?

## THE BANKING RELATIONSHIP

## HOME BASED FRANCHISING

SPECIAL SUPPLEMENT



# 3 FOOLPROOF WAYS TO GROW A BRAND WITHOUT A BRICK AND MORTAR LOCATION

The days of commerce taking place only in storefronts are long gone. Big ecommerce companies like Amazon and EBay conduct massive amounts of business without anyone ever passing a shopping center containing either of those stores.

On a smaller scale, dozens of franchise brands have successfully launched concepts that operate from the franchisee's home, online or in a mobile unit.

The advantages of skipping the brick and mortar location are primarily financial – no exorbitant cost of rent and maximum

flexibility. Plus, these franchises likely do not employ many people, so the money saved in labor and overhead generates more profit.

But, it can still be difficult to build a brand identity and experience significant growth in this nontraditional setting. Here are some ways to pass these roadblocks and continue to grow.

## Build name recognition

In order to build name recognition in a new business, you first have to identify your audience. Who is your ideal demographic? In order to appeal to them, you have to appear in places they'll see you. This doesn't necessarily mean spending a fortune on advertising – be strategic about where your name shows up. If you're a B2B concept, join a BNI group or the Chamber to make those critical connections that might result in good business.

The idea is to work in tight, concentric circles – showing up again and again in a

few places, rather than appearing in many places only a few times. Once you've identified your demographic, you know where they spend their time, attention and money. You know which events they attend, which clubs and organizations they belong to and where they do their shopping. Those are the places you want to be. Join those clubs, attend those events, and visit those stores. Make your presence known.

## Utilize social media

Social media is one of the most affordable and easiest ways to target your key demographic. Google+, Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Pinterest, LinkedIn – the choices are many, but it's important for you to identify the networks that best support your brand image. If you're selling a visual product, try Instagram. If you're in tech, Google+ could be a good fit. Trying to sell to women? Pinterest can help you with that. B2B concepts and franchises have found great

success with LinkedIn, whose business-focused audiences are more receptive to these messages. You don't need to be everywhere, but make sure that the networks that you do use are working toward your goals.

Once you've identified the proper network, ensure that the content you share is valuable to your audience and shareable. Infographics, photos, videos and other visual content are generally seen by more people than only text. Find industry-relevant content that your audience will appreciate and share it in a concise way. Get your audience involved with contests, interactive posts and giveaways.

### Give an authentic and exceptional customer experience

The best way to grow your business is by keeping your current customers satisfied. If they keep coming back, they're going to tell their friends, thus bringing in new customers for you. So what makes a customer experience great? Authenticity. Today's consumers can sniff out what they determine to be genuine, and authenticity can open up the hearts and wallets of customers of all ages.

When looking to project authenticity on your brand, know your origins – a genuine spokesperson or founder who can tell his or her personal story of what influenced him or her to open the business. Customers can identify with these tales of entrepreneurship, hard work and motivation.

In addition, customers appreciate a transparent service experience. They want eye-to-eye, person-to-person interactions wherever possible. They don't want to be condescended to with excessive formality or made to feel like a nuisance.

When you don't have a storefront, customers can't simply walk into a store and ask to see a manager if they have a question, comment or concern. This means that you have to make yourself, or a customer service representative, available at all times to address any messages that your customers might have for you. If they feel cared for, they'll always come back.

While not having a brick and mortar location for your business might create some minor hurdles, with a good plan of action, a solid social media program and excellent customer service skills, you too can experience exceptional growth.

### About PigOut

Alan and Anne Dickson, a pair of successful hospitality executives from the United Kingdom, founded PigOut

in 2007. They launched the business together to create a unique catering experience with the highest quality equipment and culinary experience through a revolutionized full-service concept. The brand is quickly expanding and continuing to "WOW" its clients and guests at every event it caters.

For more information about PigOut Catering, visit [www.pigout.catering](http://www.pigout.catering)

