WORK FEWER HOURS, MAKE MORE MONEY

Entrepreneur

Make Your Mark

THINK BIGGER

Learn from this famous French cookie maker's U.S. push

+

Find *your* time to go international

WHY NOW IS THE MOMENT TO FIND AN INVESTOR

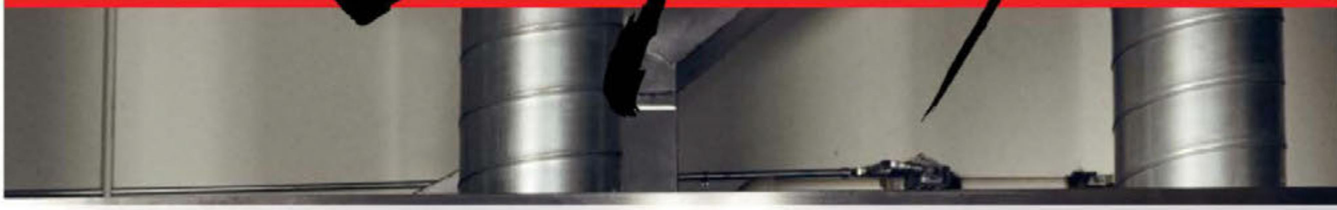
How to Win on *Shark Tank*

(WE HAVE DATA!)

THE FUTURE OF COMPANY CARS

Augustin Paluel-Marmont, CEO of Michel et Augustin, speaks the international language of dough.

It's All About Content



40
Evan Kuo of San Francisco's Pythagoras Pizza uses Uber to deliver his pies.

PHOTOGRAPH BY CODY PICKENS

ON THE COVER: Photograph by Donald Milne.
Cover design by Nathalie Kirsheh.

Content

Culture

56

22

Tools

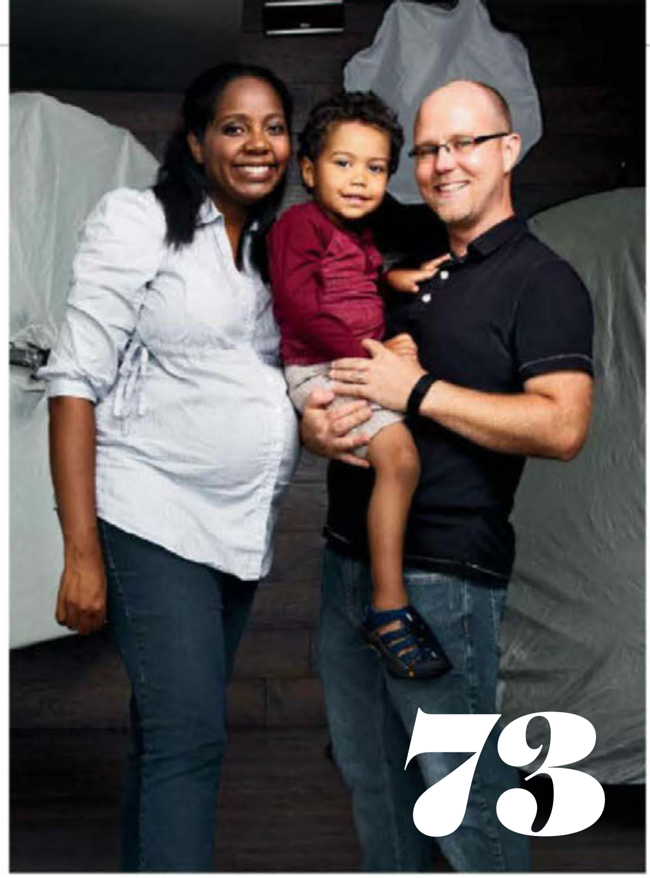
57

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP: PHOTOGRAPH BY MELISSA KASEMAN; PHOTOGRAPH BY DONALD MILNE
ILLUSTRATION BY MARTIN LEON BARRETO; PHOTOGRAPH BY DONALD MILNE

Content

Money

Start Up



Franchise

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP: PHOTOGRAPH BY JESSE CHEHAK; ILLUSTRATION BY JAMES VICTORE; PHOTOGRAPH BY CHRIS DELORENZO

Entrepreneur

Grad student at work:
Kristin Carpenter-Ogden runs a thriving PR business and is earning an MBA degree online. Turn to page 49 to see why.

CUSTOMER SERVICE entrepreneur.com/customerservice
SUBSCRIPTIONS subscribe@entrepreneur.com
REPRINTS PARS International Corp., (212) 221-9595, EntrepreneurReprints.com
ADVERTISING AND EDITORIAL Entrepreneur Media Inc., 18061 Fitch, Irvine, CA 92614, (949) 261-2325, fax: (949) 752-1180, entrepreneur.com
Printed in the USA GST File #r129677027

Alliance for Audited Media

Vol. 44, No. 10. ***Entrepreneur*** (ISSN 0163-3341) is published monthly by **Entrepreneur Media Inc.,** 18061 Fitch, Irvine, CA 92614. Periodical postage paid at Irvine, CA, and at additional mailing offices. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to ***Entrepreneur,*** P.O. Box 6136, Harlan, IA, 51593-1636. One-year subscription rates in U.S.: $19.97; in Canada: $39.97; all other countries: $49.97; payable in U.S. funds only. For customer service go to entrepreneur.com/customerservice or mail subscription orders and changes to ***Entrepreneur,*** Subscription Department, P.O. Box 6136, Harlan, IA, 51593-1636. For change of address, please give both old and new addresses and include most recent mailing label. ***Entrepreneur*** considers its sources reliable and verifies as much data as possible, although reporting inaccuracies can occur; consequently, readers using this information do so at their own risk. Each business opportunity and/or investment inherently contains certain risks, and it is suggested that the prospective investors consult their attorneys and/or financial professionals. ***Entrepreneur*** is sold with the understanding that the publisher is not rendering legal services or financial advice. Although persons and companies mentioned herein are believed to be reputable, neither **Entrepreneur Media Inc.** nor any of its employees accept any responsibility whatsoever for their activities. Advertising Sales (949) 261-2325.

PHOTOGRAPH BY MICHAEL FRIBERG

INTRODUCING ENTREPRENEUR LENDING

FINANCING IS one of a small-business owner's major roadblocks. Sometimes it's hard to raise money. Other times it's just hard figuring out which financing option meets your needs. For nearly 40 years, we've done our best to guide you on those decisions. Now we'd like to offer something a little different—not just advice in the pages of a magazine or on a website, but actual capital. We're here to invest in our readers, with dollars.

I'm the president and CEO of Entrepreneur Media, and I want to introduce you to something we launched this summer: Entrepreneur Lending. It's a financing service powered by CAN Capital, a forward-thinking finance company that, since 1998, has provided access to more than $6 billion in working capital to more than 175,000 small businesses. (And don't just take our word for it: *Forbes* called CAN Capital an "innovative business with a revolutionary financing model.")

Through Entrepreneur Lending, small businesses throughout the United States can access multiple types of loans, sometimes up to $150,000 per location. If you qualify, in most cases the funds can be on their way to your company's bank account in as few as two business days.

We created this program because we truly believe it can help entrepreneurs grow—whether they want to open new locations, purchase inventory or equipment, hire new employees, or fulfill other business needs. Entrepreneur Lending's quick access to working capital will be a game changer for entrepreneurs who need it. Its application process is designed to be quick, to fit easily into busy schedules.

Now, I want to be clear: Although I'm proud of this new service, and am telling you about it in this magazine, this will not impact our coverage of other financial subjects. Our reporters and editors will continue to do what they've always done—give you important, unbiased information about loans from other sources, including banks, crowdfunding, VC investments, and all the other valuable ways to raise money that have nothing to do with us. I know why you trust us: It's because we cover a wide spectrum of accurate and relevant subjects for entrepreneurs, without making ourselves the story. That's good journalism. That's our integrity. None of that changes.

But if we know anything about entrepreneurs, it's that they embrace alternative ways of doing things. They do what others might think is crazy. We believe we should run our business the same way. That's why we want to take this bold step—an actionable and exciting new way for our brand to be along for our readers' journeys.

If you're interested in learning more about Entrepreneur Lending, visit entm.ag/lending.

Thanks,
Ryan Shea

THIS MONTH'S FEATURED CONTRIBUTORS

ASHLEA HALPERN
Halpern (whose monthly columns appear on pg. 22 and pg. 76) is a former magazine editor turned traveler who has been on the road for two years. She writes for *Condé Nast Traveler, Bon Appétit,* and *New York.*

DONALD MILNE
Milne, who splits his time between London and Scotland, photographed Paris and Brooklyn cookie king Augustin Paluel-Marmont (pg. 24) in Paris. Milne's work has appeared in *Vanity Fair, Vogue,* and *Wired.*

PHOTOGRAPH BY ANDREW PARKS (ASHLEA HALPERN)

Ryan Shea photograph by Marc Royce


DON'T LOOK NOW, BUT THE FUTURE YOU PLANNED FOR JUST BECAME THE PAST.
GROWTH IS LIVE.
Work, grow, and evolve as one. SAP's suite of affordable, easy-to-use solutions helps small and midsize companies automate and integrate business processes – live and in the moment. So all your functions and departments can grow together. Without falling behind.
sap.com/growth
©2016 SAP SE or an SAP affiliate company. All rights reserved.
SAP
Run Simple

THE ART AND SCIENCE OF SUCCESSFUL INTERRUPTIONS.

By Ross McCammon

HI! SORRY, SORRY, SORRY. Just want to say one thing before you continue flipping pages! Totally sorry for interrupting. You look fantastic, by the way—what is that, like, a tunic? Anyway, the thing is: We're always interrupting at work. We interrupt each other. We interrupt ourselves. An email is an interruption. An instant message is, too. A phone call; an office drop-by; a "Can I grab you for a minute?"—those are all interruptions. And they're all (mostly) unavoidable. Like all unavoidable problems at work, interruption should be embraced as an effective tool of business. And the key to making interruption effective is good intentions: You have a desire to facilitate the goals of the one you're interrupting, even if, you know, the one you're interrupting doesn't want to be interrupted.

Now, if you don't mind, I'd like to continue interrupting you. It'll take, like, three minutes and five seconds, tops.

Interruptions come at great cost. Researchers at the

Illustration by Paul Sahre

FIND NEW ROADS™
CHEVROLET
COMMERCIAL VEHICLES

University of California, Irvine, found that, on average, people spend three minutes and five seconds (see, it'll be fine) on an activity before switching to another task, and 10.5 minutes before switching to a completely new project. And, they found, if a task is interrupted, it takes more than 20 minutes to fully adjust back to the task. (Which is one of the reasons you need to stick with me here.)

Other studies show that interruption scenarios significantly decrease work quality. Researchers at Michigan State University asked participants to complete a computer-sequencing-based task. Every so often, the participants were interrupted with a request to input two unrelated letters—a task of 2.8 seconds—before continuing with the sequence. Those interruptions led to twice as many errors in the sequencing task.

The key to a successful interruption? Make sure you're balancing that cost with benefits. An interruption should be productive, not counterproductive. And the interruptee should understand that right as the interruption begins.

Here are questions to ask yourself before interrupting someone:

Are you about to...

- Suggest a way to move the task forward?
- Provide relief, comic or otherwise?
- Ask for key information that seems to be missing from the discussion?
- Defend someone who is being unfairly maligned?
- Point out a deadline that's about to be missed if we don't move things along?
- Offer someone a doughnut?

Or are you about to...

- Make a stressful situation more stressful?
- Speak while angry, hurt, indignant?
- Prevent a person from making a point they've been leading up to for the past five minutes? (Never deflate a colleague's rhetorical balloon.)
- Say, "Wake me when this is over"? And then put your head on the table? And then fall asleep? And then snore? And then do the thing where you sort of jolt awake 30 seconds later and exclaim, "I never loved you!" and then fall back asleep? (Maybe that's just me.)
- Otherwise be a jerk?

A well-received interruption is one that places the interruption in context. And that context is the goal of the person you're interrupting. Which is why the interruption introduction is so important. The following phrases are useful for introducing an interruption:

"Excuse me; I know you're trying to [insert goal here], but I want to make sure I'm clear on..."

"To your point about..."

"What you said earlier struck me as instructive for what we're talking about now..."

"Sorry to interrupt. Have you been eating some sort of superfood the past few weeks? I'm seeing a glow, and I am liking that glow. Anyway, I wanted to make sure I was clear about..." (A compliment is a transparent attempt to ingratiate yourself, sure, but it's disarming and kind, so go for it.)

Notice that "Can I ask you a quick question?" is not on that list. And that's because it is an unbelievably irritating way to interrupt someone. The problem with "Can I ask you a quick question?" is that "Can I ask you a quick question?" is itself a quick question. It's the equivalent of saying, "I'm going to walk now" and then walking or "I'm going to eat this sandwich" and then eating it. Only it's worse because you're forcing someone to verbally concede to something that there is zero chance they will not concede to. Which is an inefficient communication approach. Just ask the question. The real question. Quickly.

The trick is to interrupt mindfully but authoritatively. You need to imply that you understand you're risking taking the interruptee off their game but you know it's worth it. Reading a situation is crucial. Which seems hard but is not so hard. "Reading a room" is all about rhythm. If you listen—really listen, like you would while listening to music—you can feel the rhythm of any discussion. You'll sense the upbeats and the downbeats. You'll know when it's a good time to interrupt. Interruption, which seems like a random rhetorical burst, should be a purposeful act.

And it should end graciously and as suddenly as it started. Like this. □

Ross McCammon is an articles editor at GQ *magazine and the author of* Works Well with Others.

ask a pro

Star Power

Q How do I get a celebrity to showcase my wares, but without paying much?

A Amanda K. Ruisi, founder and president of AKR Public Relations, says: "First, figure out which celebrity is in line with your brand. Say you have a BPA-free baby bottle. Make a list of celebrity parents who are active in the green community. Find ones you think would genuinely like and use your product, then seek out their agents' contact info and inquire. Send each an email offering their client a gift of the item and a description of how the product will make the celebrity's life better. Write, 'If [the celebrity] loves the product, I'd love some feedback.' About one out of 10 will do that. Or you hit the jackpot: The celebrity snaps a selfie with the item or tweets about it. Their team may even ask you for a more formal partnership—pay-to-play in the form of a photo op, social endorsement, or a press event. The days of massive endorsement deals are fading fast. Instead, there's a much bigger concentration on very brief brand ambassadorships. You may be able to afford that, and the ROI is proven." □

–As told to Lambeth Hochwald


I'm glad I missed my delivery.
Said no one ever.
Nobody likes to worry about missing a delivery. UPS Access Point™ locations give today's customers the convenience of picking up and dropping off deliveries at more than 8,000 neighborhood businesses across the country. Just one of the many ways UPS is helping companies solve for today's rising customer expectations. See how we can help you at ups.com/solvers
ups
united problem solvers™
Copyright ©2016 United Parcel Service of America, Inc.

How to Win on *Shark Tank*

What all 495 pitches say about wowing investors.

By Alexandra Zissu

In *Shark Tank*'s seven seasons (the eighth begins September 23), a total of 253 teams scored deals and 242 did not. What made the difference? "Presence and personality matters just as much as ideas," says Vanessa Van Edwards, founder of Science of People, a human behavior research lab. Her team studied the winners and losers, and found patterns that every entrepreneur should know. Here are some. For more results, visit entm.ag/sharkdata.

/MAJOR ADVANTAGES

Knowing Your Math

Investors are numbers people, and that means you need to **know your digits cold.** Fuzzy arithmetic was deadly in the Tank: In 64 percent of "no" deals (and only 32 percent of "yes" deals), the entrepreneur tripped up on their math, didn't have hard numbers, or asked for an unrealistic equity split.

Nodding and Smiling

Make the right entrance by showing off your pearly whites. Forty-five percent of those who scored deals **entered the Tank with a smile**. And the numbers went up further when the smile was combined with a friendly nod of "hello": That combo made entrepreneurs 9 percent more likely to get a deal.

Being Interactive

The Sharks want to **touch or play with stuff** before they put money down. That may be why 81 percent of successful pitches were interactive. Top types: examining a product (55 percent got deals), consuming a product (21 percent did), and, for those who had nothing to touch or taste, simply making the pitch itself interactive (13 percent).

Telling Your Heroic Journey

The heroic tale is a formula, whether it's told by Homer or by you to an investor: *I was inspired to start this, I struggled, and I broke through.* **That story really works**—21 percent of successful entrepreneurs shared a version of it, and only 5 percent of unsuccessful ones did. So tell your version.

/MINOR ADVANTAGES

Using Humor

Laughter pays. Successful pitches had an average of 2.15 funny moments; unsuccessful pitches had an average of 1.93. And of the 10 Tank contestants who went on to build the most successful companies, four made the Sharks laugh.

Crying

We're not saying you *should* tear up, but here's an intriguing result: A total of 29 entrepreneurs had wet eyes in the Tank, and they fared well—with 19 of them winners and only 10 of them losers. (Of all deals, 8 percent were made after crying.) Do the Sharks have soft hearts?

Making a Personal Connection

You know the investor; the investor may not know much about you. So bridge the gap. On the show, some entrepreneurs say things like "I did the same thing as you, Mark…," and the Sharks respond: In 9 percent of "yes" deals, a Shark said they "saw themselves" in the entrepreneur.

/USE YOUR LIFELINE

Shark Kevin O'Leary often says, "Bad things happen when you leave the Shark Tank." But is that true? The data says no. Of the 253 total "yes" deals on the show, 43 involved entrepreneurs leaving the Tank to get advice or talk over the deal. Of the 242 "no" deals, only 13 involved leaving the tank. That's 17 percent success versus 5 percent failure. Math doesn't lie. If you need more time, ask for it...whether on the show or in an investor's office.

PHOTOGRAPH BY GETTY IMAGES/MICHAEL DESMOND/CONTRIBUTOR

Illustrations by Andrew Roberts

Fewer Hours, Better Business

Some companies are choosing to work less—and are thriving because of it. You ready for a longer weekend?

By Chris Kornelis

John Dionas is a car dealer's car dealer, with a big grin, a gold ring with five diamonds, and a deep tan authenticated by a white line across the bridge of his nose. He has been in the business for three decades. For roughly 26 of those years, he says, he worked every Mother's Day, Father's Day, and kid's birthday. ¶ He hated it. And so, he was sure, did his employees. ¶ So five years ago, he decided to close Peninsula Auto Group, his Subaru dealership, on Sundays for "family day." He was influenced by Mormon employees who couldn't work when they needed to be at church, and by his general manager, who had been reading about how religiously minded companies like Hobby Lobby and Chick-fil-A reduce hours to increase productivity and profitability. But Dionas' decision wasn't about faith; it was about numbers: His Bremerton, Wash., dealership, which is a ferry ride away from Seattle, averages between 90 and 100 new car sales each month—and only about two of those happened on Sundays. When he announced the change, all of his managers got emotional.

"Closed Sundays for Family Day" quickly became Peninsula's brand. It's spelled out on the letter board sign. It's on Dionas' voicemail. It's plastered on wrap ads across the front of the local paper. Dionas is unequivocal that the move has been good for the business's bottom line: "It was the best thing we ever did."

This idea of working fewer hours to gain so much more pops up from time to time. In 2007, Tim Ferriss' book *The 4-Hour Workweek* inspired both eye rolls and important conversations. In 2012, Jason Fried wrote a *New York Times* op-ed sharing that when his software company, 37Signals, switches to a 32-hour week between the months of May and October, "better work gets done in four days than in five."

There's plenty of evidence available supporting the benefits of fewer hours. Still, experts say, this approach has been slow to pick up. Anna Coote, the head of social policy at the U.K.'s New Economics Foundation, has seen a few companies successfully cut back, especially in Sweden. Amazon is currently testing 30-hour workweeks for some tech employees. But Jake Knapp, a design partner at Google Ventures, believes it's going to take a *full* embrace from a big, well-respected company—be it Amazon, Apple, Nike, or others—before the idea gains mainstream traction. And he thinks it's coming, thanks to small businesses. "The big companies look to those, and

Photographs by John Clark

then they really kind of amplify it," says Knapp, who wrote a best-selling book about getting more productivity out of less time called *Sprint: Solve Big Problems and Test New Ideas in Just Five Days*.

The big guys may need to look in unexpected places. Take Cooper Fuel and Auto Repair, which happens to be 15 minutes down the road from Peninsula Auto in Bremerton. Its manager, Jason Hood, had read about moving to fewer hours, and then his management coach recommended that he look into it at Cooper. So he did, calling 10 of the shop's regular Saturday customers, asking if they'd still come to Cooper if it were closed on the weekends. Eight said yes. The shop made the switch.

Instantly, morale shot up. Employees were energized on Mondays after restorative weekends, and proved more productive. And the shop itself was more efficient. When it was open six days a week, Cooper never had its full crew together; it had to stagger days off, meaning there was always an empty bay. But with a Monday-to-Friday schedule, the shop is, well, firing on all cylinders. Cooper gets through more cars in a five-day week than it did in six. And those two customers who said they'd find another shop? Hood says one still brings in his car.

Sometimes the pivot that boosts business isn't closing for one extra day a week but for months at a time. It sounds counterintuitive, but shuttering for the entire slow winter season helped Patty's Mexican Kitchen & Catering, an outdoor/walk-up restaurant in the college town of Moscow, Idaho, increase sales. Owners Patty and Gerardo Alvarez used to operate it year-round but now say they sell more burritos in eight months than in 12, get to spend more time with their young children, and experience a nice grand (re-)opening rush every spring.


Dionas closes his car dealership Sundays for "Family Day."

This past winter, against better judgment, they reversed course and stayed open all season. They had just named their eldest son manager, and he wanted to keep working, so they acquiesced. They're sorry they did. Customers, accustomed to Patty's being closed in the winter, didn't show up. Business slumped—and with no reopening fanfare in the spring, traffic remained sluggish. "This year we're going to go back to what makes everybody happy: closed for the winter," Gerardo says.

The key here isn't Patty's losses, though: It's the Alvarezes' willingness to experiment. That's what gets Knapp, the author, jazzed. You never know the next great change until you try it. And, yes, there can be bumps along the way. But it's the rare company that stops to consider whether its current schedule is best for it and its customers. It just keeps the routine out of inertia.

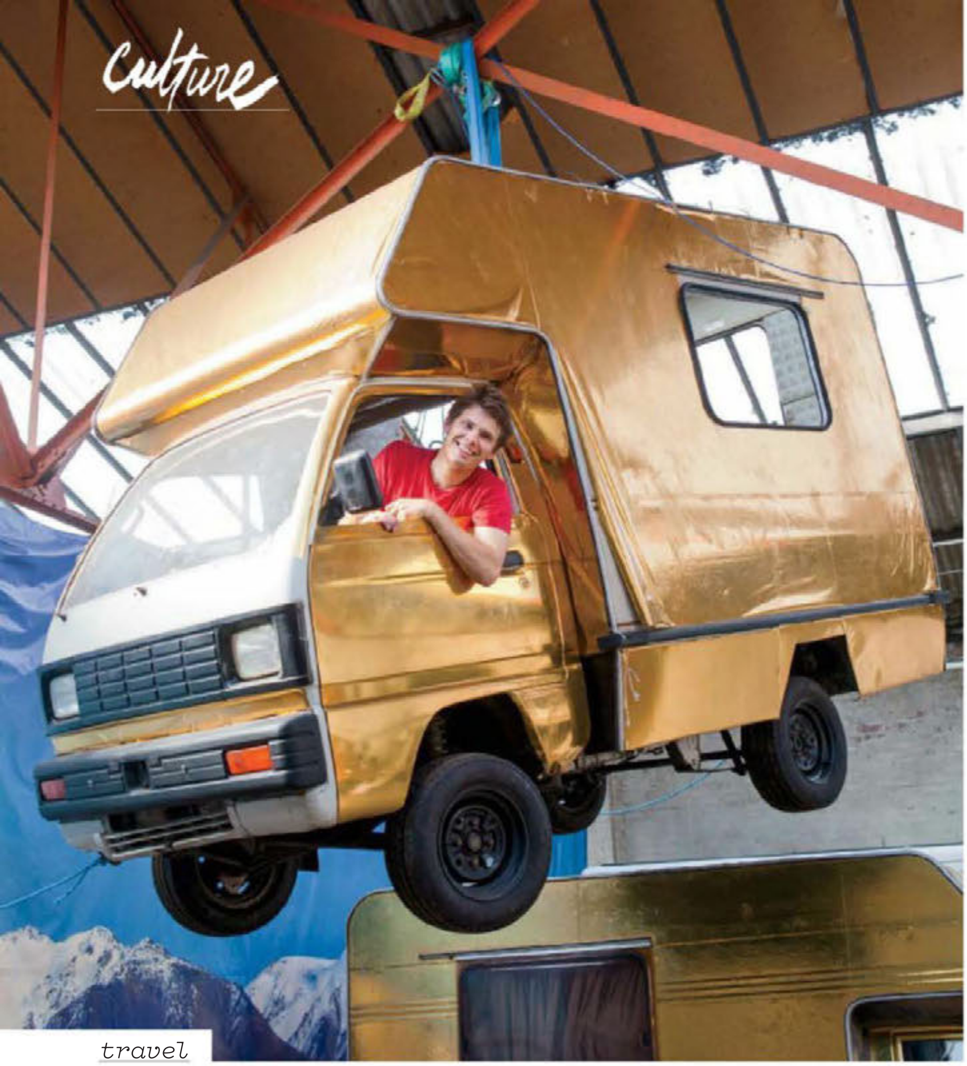
"If you started a new company, I don't think many people would even give a moment's thought to 'Should we be open Monday through Friday? Should we work the same hours our competitors work?' It just seems obvious," he says. "If you're selling hot dogs, you should probably be open as many lunchtimes as you can, but for many businesses, it's not that obvious. It goes back to traditional modes that don't really apply anymore."

Clearly, not every company should throw out its business hours or days. But it should, Knapp advises, evaluate and tweak what a workweek looks like and when employees should be on-site—the same way it experiments with its products.

Experimenting doesn't always mean reducing, either. Sometimes trial (and error) reveals that you actually (sorry, employees) need to work more hours. That's what Kitsap Lumber & Hardware, also in Washington State, learned by listening to its customers' needs. It used to close for holidays; now its all-year schedule is part of its identity. Employees answer the phone by saying, "Thank you for calling Kitsap Lumber & Hardware, where we're open 365 days a year." Even on Thanksgiving and Christmas, says Shane Hickey, the store's manager, people need a place to buy a plunger if someone clogs the toilet.

But over at Peninsula, the shorter workweek continues to create new benefits. Dionas says it has simplified employee scheduling, saved on utilities, and aided with employee retention. In commission-based businesses like car dealerships, salespeople notoriously work on their days off when they aren't hitting their numbers. That can lead to burnout, which isn't good for anyone. Now there are no days off to work. □


The productive team of Peninsula Auto Group.



Follow Tom Morgan at your own risk.

travel

Inspiration Anywhere!

TRAVELING CAN SPARK UNEXPECTED BUSINESSES—AND TOM MORGAN STARTED HIS AFTER A FAILED TRIP TO MONGOLIA.

As told to Ashlea Halpern

I WAS STUDYING ABROAD in the Czech Republic in 2001, majoring in art, which is a degree in how to be unemployed. I had a lot of free time. My buddy Jewels and I bought an old car and tried to think of the stupidest place we could drive to, which was Mongolia. We set off without spare clothes or preparation, kind of deliberately. I think we had a packet of cheese, some smokes, and a hunting knife. We never reached Mongolia; the Iranians thought we were smelly and wouldn't let us in. But we had a lot of fun, and the trip inspired my idea for the Mongol Rally.

It's a 10,000-kilometer race from England to Mongolia that you can do only in a small, shit car (or motorcycle under 125cc). I set up a website in 2003 and pretended everything was more organized than it was. Sixteen people showed up for the first rally in 2004. The following year saw 40 teams, and then 200, and I had to start hiring. In 2005, I set up an events company—now called The Adventurists—and made the decision to make it work. Now we have **15 full-time employees, 200 seasonal workers, and seven "adventures" on offer,** including The Ice Run [a Ural motorcycle trek across Siberia in winter] and The Icarus Trophy [considered the world's toughest powered paragliding event, held in the Western U.S.]. And we insist that every participant commit to raising money for charity.

If you go to any other travel agent, they'll say, "Come on an adventure with us; we'll look after you and keep you safe." They're setting themselves up to be responsible for that person, to guide them. Our pitch is: We want participants to be responsible for their own decisions—where their choices have a real, genuine impact on their adventure and even their health. We work hard to stage everything but usually stay as far away from the event as we can.

At the start, our biggest financial challenge was massive incompetence. The first time we did the Rickshaw Run [a 3,500-kilometer tuk-tuk dash across India], in December 2005, I think we charged £97 a rickshaw, 30 teams entered, I collected money from only about half of them, and the whole event cost us £30,000. I had to get a loan to cover our debt, which is when it hit me: What we were doing was high-risk. So as I worked to pay off the debt, I also started talking to lawyers.

We've spent a lot of money on law firms, but not on defending ourselves; it's all preemptive. We've never been taken to court. People taking part in our events have to sign a 30-page agreement. Breaks, cuts, and bruises are common. [Two participants have died, in 2010 and 2012.] It's awful when anything like that happens. But then I see people's faces at the end of an adventure, or meet with the charities that received some of the £7 million our events have raised, and I believe we should carry on.

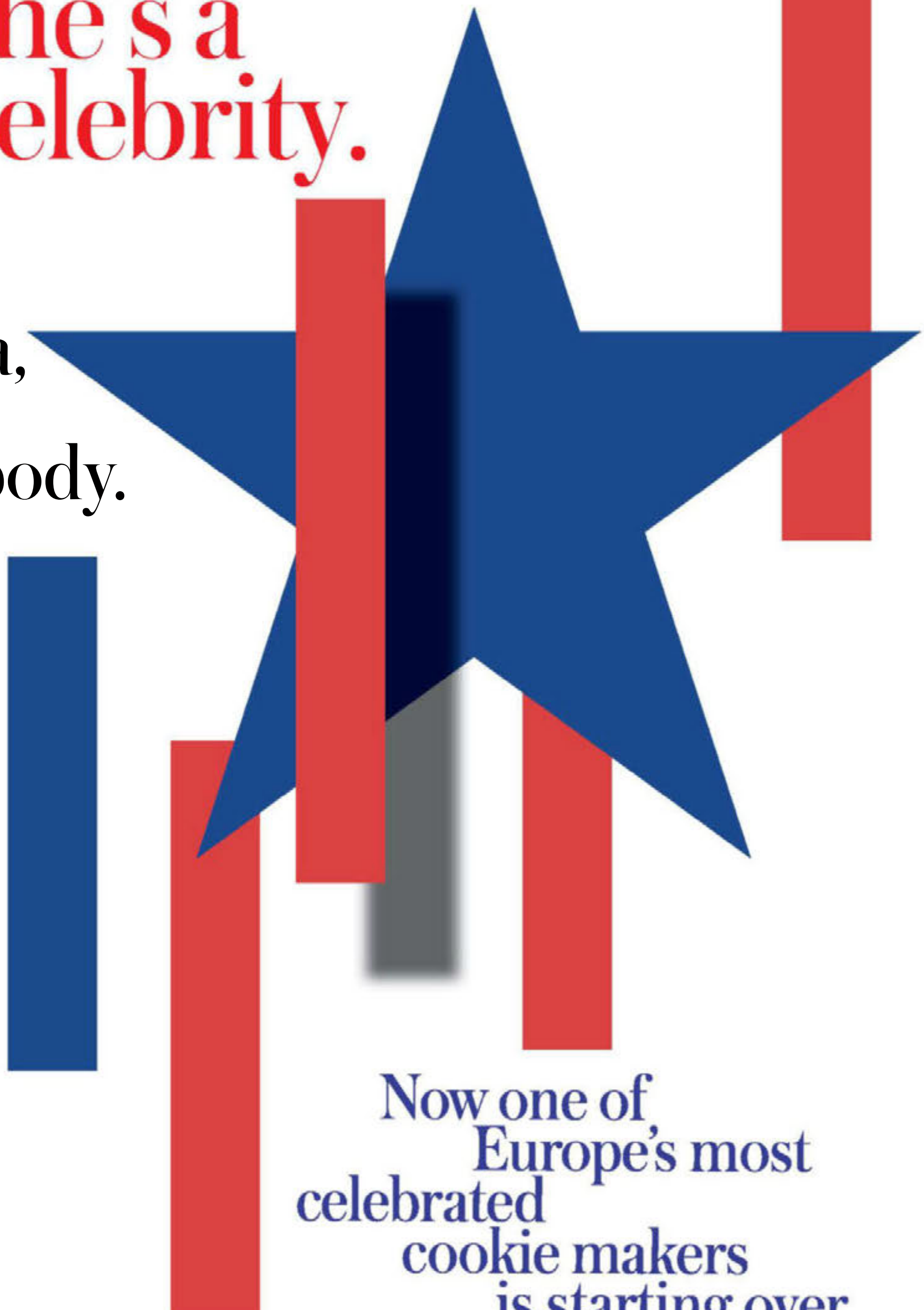
Today, we're actually quite cash-rich, because event participants pay in advance. That enables us to expand. In 2008, we launched our own visa agency, which now operates in Australia, New Zealand, Europe, and the U.S. We also do production for companies. For example, a gin brand wanted a new flavor, so we went deep into the Venezuelan rainforest and stayed with a tribe of Indians, built a distillery, and went around with a shaman to find bark and plants to make nice jungle-based gin. We filmed it and produced the brand's content.

Our own marketing philosophy is simple: Letting the teams tell their story is way more powerful than advertising. You can see the enthusiasm vibrating out of people when they reach the finish line. We see massive growth in regions where we'd had a team participate the previous year. And I still personally test every adventure before we launch it; it's the main reason I love this job. Our culture is so risk-averse. People get nervous if their children leave the house without their phone, and you've got to take a course just to use a ladder. It's a bit farcical. We just say, "Start here, we hope you don't make it, it'll be awful, probably you'll get lost, and hopefully you'll break an arm." It's that experience—setting out without knowing where you're going and planning everything to the end—that I like. It's what humans need. □

Photograph by Donald Milne

In France, he's a celebrity.

In America, he's nobody.



Now one of Europe's most celebrated cookie makers is starting over at the bottom.

BY JEFF CHU
PHOTOGRAPHS BY DONALD MILNE

Augustin Paluel-Marmont,
CEO, Michel et Augustin.

in

January 2015, the French cookie sensation Michel et Augustin dispatched a scout to New York. His mission: to begin to replicate the company's considerable Gallic success in the United States. "We wanted trendsetting stores, where we know buyers, important people, go to get the future," says the one-man, English-isn't-his-first-language advance team, Antoine Chauvel, now VP of sales in the U.S. His biggest score, it turned out, was at Manhattan's Bedford Cheese Shop. There, in the springtime, someone from Starbucks purchased a small packet of the cookies. And on a Thursday afternoon in June of that year, Starbucks CEO Howard Schultz's assistant placed a call to Michel et Augustin's Brooklyn HQ: Could they send samples in time for a tasting on Monday?

A caper rapidly unfolded. The requested cookies weren't stocked in Brooklyn, and weren't guaranteed to arrive in one piece or on time if they were shipped, so two Paris staffers were lined up to hand-deliver the samples. Then Augustin Paluel-Marmont, the company's CEO, cofounder, and partial namesake, concocted a social media plan. In the States, Michel et Augustin meant nothing—yet—but in France, it's a household name with an active tribe. It enlisted its followers to tweet and Instagram photos of themselves enjoying Michel et Augustin products with Starbucks coffee, using the hashtag #allezhowarduncafe. (Loose translation: "Howard, let's go have a coffee.") Hundreds did so while the brand's Seattle-bound ambassadors live-chronicled their journey. Schultz's wife somehow came across the campaign and alerted her husband. A week later, the cookies made their debut in 26 Starbucks outlets in Manhattan. Within six months, they had gone nationwide.

Bonjour, America.

This combination of strategy, stunt, and speed is exactly how Michel et Augustin conquered the high end of the French market, where the biscuits-and-cakes category posts total sales of just over $3 billion annually. The 11-year-old company, which will record about $50 million in revenues this year, has attracted significant investment from the influential Pinault family and the food giant Danone. While Paluel-Marmont could certainly be content with that—along with his status as an entrepreneurial celebrity in France—he is thinking bigger. That's why he's chasing success in what he frequently calls "the homeland of the cookie," where that same biscuits-and-cakes category is worth more than $20 billion. Even a crumb of the U.S. market would represent massive growth.

This is a natural path for the ambitious entrepreneur: Gain your footing in a smaller market, and then walk confidently into a larger one. Paluel-Marmont says he has budgeted $10 million for the U.S. launch—a sizable sum for his company. He is also investing himself: To oversee the effort, in August 2015, he and his wife packed up their belongings, left their Paris home, and, with their five children, moved to Brooklyn. "The opportunity is so, so big," says Michel de Rovira, his cofounder and the company's other partial namesake, who remains in France and is in charge of everything except the U.S. business, recipes, and communications. "Augustin has a lot of empathy, and he's good at making connections. He's good at choosing the people with whom we would like to work. It's a good asset to develop the company in the U.S."

The subsequent months have been a season of extremes for the CEO, his family, and his company. "We thought we knew the U.S.," says Paluel-Marmont. To start, Brooklyn real estate was far more expensive than he'd thought; his home costs $10,000 a month. And although he anticipated some degree of cultural adjustment, he wasn't totally prepared for the reality. "In France, when people are enthusiastic, it's deeply real," he says. "Here, it's so welcoming and friendly. 'These are the best cookies of my life!' And then they don't buy them. They go, 'Wow! Wow! Wow!' And then you say, 'So, cool, we're going to work together?' And it's, 'No! No! No!'"

When Augustin Paluel-Marmont and Michel de Rovira were 16, they wanted to change the world. The plan was to go to Africa for the summer on a humanitarian mission. They would build a medical clinic. They'd save lives. "We were going to solve the problems!" he recalls, laughing. "I was crazy." They held fund-raisers, managed to earn 35,000 French francs—about $6,000—and, with eight friends, flew to Burkina Faso, where they were instantly liberated from their naïveté. "I think we dug two holes and laid three bricks. We didn't know how to do it, and it was a big mess. Then I said, 'Is it my talent to manually build a hospital?' Of course not. I have no muscles," he says. Even today he maintains the lanky build of a long-distance runner. But the experience highlighted his actual talent: "It was being an entrepreneur."

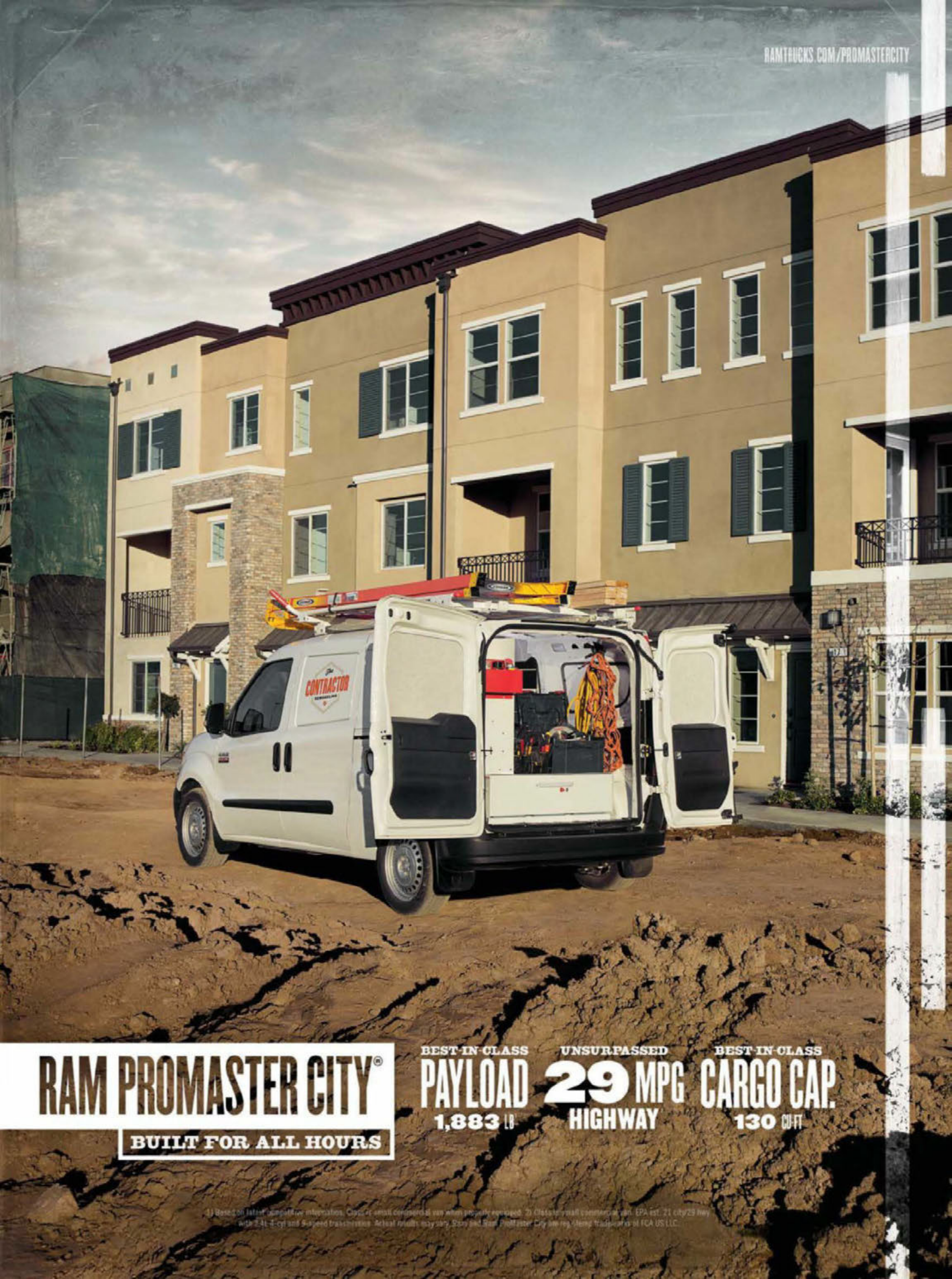
He went on to business school but came away uninspired. Then he recalled the childhood joy of baking with his grandmother, so he went to pastry school. With de Rovira, also a trained pastry chef, he began making cookies in his Paris apartment as well as tasting baguettes and pains au chocolat around town. (By their count, they tried 1,432 of the former and 432 of the latter in a year—and that, too, became an entrepreneurial venture: The pair published a guide to the best.) From this, Michel et Augustin was born.

Their first product was a butter cookie. They quickly expanded into other categories, introducing kefir-like drinkable yogurt to France. Targeting mainly affluent consumers in France's cities, Michel et Augustin now also has a line of lemonades as well as fresh chocolate mousse and rice pudding, plus pita chips and savory biscuits that pair exceptionally with cheese.

The expansion has been so successful that sweet cookies now account

Even a crumb of success in "the homeland of the cookie" would represent massive growth.


THE
FUTURE
ISN'T BUILT
IN 8-HOUR
STRETCHES.
RAM
COMMERCIAL



RAMTRUCKS.COM/PROMASTERCITY
The CONTRACTOR
RAM PROMASTER CITY®
BUILT FOR ALL HOURS
BEST-IN-CLASS
PAYLOAD
1,883 LB
UNSURPASSED
29 MPG
HIGHWAY
BEST-IN-CLASS
CARGO CAP.
130 CU FT

for just under 40 percent of Michel et Augustin's revenues in France. But they remain the company's heart and passion, and all employees must, within two years of being hired, earn a certificate in pastry.

Michel et Augustin's cookies play on one of three themes. The stereotypically Frenchest are buttery, puff-pastry rectangles flecked with chocolate or dotted with raspberry. Shortbread comes in chocolate-covered sticks or squares with various toppings—lemon "meringue" (super popular in France); raspberry and pistachio; dark chocolate and sea salt. Several best-sellers are Gallic interpretations of the all-American chocolate chip cookie—when Paluel-Marmont refers to the "homeland of the cookie," he's right on this one count. Michel et Augustin's large, slightly chewy ones have what the company calls a "melty middle," while the quarter-size mini-cookies are crunchier and easy to eat by the decadent dozen.

The company's French tagline is *"Les trublions du goût"*—literally, "the troublemakers of taste." It quickly also became the troublemaker of marketing. De Rovira and Paluel-Marmont wandered Metro stations dressed in little more than body paint meant to make them look like cows, handing out free samples of their cookies and yogurt; photos of the two young entrepreneurs made their way into newspapers. In 2007, when Bill Gates was doing an onstage, televised interview at an entrepreneurs' gathering in Paris, Paluel-Marmont barged his way into the venue, telling security he was catering the event. Before Gates appeared, Paluel-Marmont went onstage, placing bottles of drinkable yogurt on the podiums. Gates's entire Q&A became free product placement.

As the brand's audience grew, it began hosting events. It started monthly, free open houses at its Paris headquarters. Guest speakers such as former French president Nicolas Sarkozy, Michelin-starred chef Yannick Alléno, and mathematician Cédric Villani addressed the masses. In May, the speaker was former prime minister François Fillon, who is running for president of France. And each June, Michel et Augustin hosts

Margaux Dauce describes her job as "the kooky club's penwoman" (she's brand content manager).

> The company's French tagline is *"Les trublions du goût"*—literally, "the troublemakers of taste."

the Night Under the Stars, a campout in a Paris park boasting balloon artists and giant bubbles, musical performances, and, of course, lots and lots of free cookies. One hundred thousand people entered the lottery for the 3,000 free tickets to this year's campout.

All this is meant to reinforce Paluel-Marmont's growing conviction that, as a brand, Michel et Augustin must represent more than mere consumption. "It's friendship. It's conviviality," he says. "The brand is about sharing happiness and joy."

Likewise, as the company has evolved, Paluel-Marmont's philosophy on business has, too. "To be a successful entrepreneur—and I want to be modest, because we are still on the way—is not that much about having a great idea," he says. "It's more about having common sense. You have a dream. But what makes it work is more logical and basic. It's common sense, energy, passion. And it's listening to others." These are the lessons he'd planned to take to America.

The decision to focus first on the New York City area was largely practical: It's the country's largest metro area as well as a culinary trendsetter. The team hypothesized that what they learned in the number-one market would prepare them well for the rest of America. So, as in Paris, Michel et Augustin led with hospitality and generosity. It has two dozen "brand ambassadors," whom you might call salespeople, except they don't sell anything—they just stand on Manhattan streets, wearing the company's orange aprons and giving away cookies. In one springtime push, they gave away one million cookies—always full-size packages, so people have something to share when they get home—as well as tens of thousands of pink-edged tote bags with the company's branding. By year's end, the company wants to have 100,000 bags out there—little mobile billboards for the brand.

The U.S. team has also replicated the company's open houses in Paris. All comers are welcome to Michel et Augustin's American HQ, called the Banana Farm (for its zany ideas), on the ground floor of a converted industrial building in the Brooklyn neighborhood of Gowanus. During one open house this summer, at least a dozen types of cookies were available to taste, served with milk and orange juice—"the Americans always take the milk," an employee said, "and the French, the juice." The crowd was diverse: black, white, Hispanic, Asian, with chatter in English, French, and Spanish. (This being Gowanus, with its disproportionately high hipster quotient, two men were wearing fedoras.) A few attendees knew


PROGRESSIVE
COMMERCIAL
1-800-PROGRESSIVE
PROGRESSIVE.COM
BAKERY
FLO
DEFENDER OF SMALL BUSINESSES EVERYWHERE!
FEATURING OVER 30 COVERAGE OPTIONS!
GENERAL LIABILITY
WORKERS' COMP
COMMERCIAL AUTO
COLLECT THEM ALL!
FOR USE WITH ALL MIDSIZED COMMERCIAL VEHICLES!
PROGRESSIVE

ADVERTISEMENT

FROM CLICKS TO CUSTOMERS: 5 WAYS TO IMPROVE YOUR WEBSITE

Whether you're selling a product or service, your website is an important revenue-driving tool for your business. Design it with conversion in mind using strategic tips from web design experts Andy Crestodina, co-founder and strategic director of Orbit Media, and Dalip Jaggi, principal at Devise Interactive. These and more insights are shared in the final event from the four-part Entrepreneur webinar series presented by Comcast Business.

1. CRAFT WRITING WITH THE WEB IN MIND

"Great website copy provides clear information for customers," says Jaggi. It's important to use language that is concise and jargon free, making it easy for visitors to scan and grasp information quickly. Lengthy, dense paragraphs aren't best suited for web reading. Always keep in mind that web readers skim information and are likely to miss points that don't immediately stand out.

2. CHOOSE IMAGES THAT DRIVE ACTION

Viewers read an average of 20% of the actual text content on most sites, making the images you use paramount. Choose images that evoke emotion, drive action, and focus your visitor on the desired result. "If you can't write a caption for it, it's a stock photo," says Crestodina, who emphasizes the importance of using humans in images with their eyes looking at where you want your website viewer to click.

3. FORMAT FOR THE USER EXPERIENCE

There are also a number of subtle but important ways you can impact your conversion rate in the way content is formatted and displayed on your site. For example, you can use headlines and subheads, multiple calls to the same action, contrasting colors, and single-column layouts to drive more business from your site.

4. CREATE PRICING ANCHORS AND URGENCY

"Your website is the start of your digital sales funnel," says Jaggi. One way to influence visitors to take action is to use a technique called priming. This is where you create context for your preferred anchor price by placing a similar product with a higher price on the same page.

Behavioral science also teaches us that people do not want to miss out on an opportunity. Countdown clocks, limited time offers, and inventory counters can be some of the most effective tools for driving consumer action.

5. INTEGRATE SOCIAL PROOF

High-performing websites feature logos, testimonials, and images from people outside the business. Why? Because having someone or something else share your expertise creates social proof. "When you say it, it's marketing. When they say it, it's social proof," says Crestodina. The more visual evidence you have that others trust you, the more visitors will trust you.

Michel et Augustin from traveling and living in Europe, but most became fans after receiving free samples on the street.

Paluel-Marmont is well aware the brand's reputation did not make the journey across the Atlantic with him. "You have to demonstrate from zero what you've done and how you can bring value," he says. "What you've done outside the U.S. is completely irrelevant."

Building brand awareness is not just for consumers, though. It serves to help get the product on more and more store shelves. This is especially true in New York, where, unlike in France, sales growth is not a matter of getting into the good graces of a few powerful distributors. From a grocery standpoint, "New York is the world's most advanced Third World city," says Paluel-Marmont. He was shocked to discover that most product orders aren't automated or computerized. Instead, salespeople must assiduously track down each store's grocery manager, and everything is done by hand and handshake. That's why Michel et Augustin now has a team that canvases the city daily, walking from store to store, selling, checking stock, and fixing messes.

One July morning, Erik Lucas, VP of sales in the greater New York area, prepares to do the rounds in Queens with one of his salespeople, Aurélie Lorthiois. "I was in coconut water for three years," he says cheerily by way of introduction. It's a searingly hot day, and Lucas is wearing a suburban dad's summer uniform—UnderArmour polo, khakis—while Lorthiois, in her cream sundress and Stan Smiths, could be heading for the tennis courts, if not for the granny cart full of cookie samples she pulls behind her.

The work involves not just sales but also guerrilla shelf rearrangement; in one store, Lucas and Lorthiois grumble at their cookies' haphazard placement—none of the five kinds of cookies are next to each other, and some are nearest to Manischewitz matzo, which makes no sense. So they proceed to rearrange three shelves of cookies and crackers, creating a mini Michel et Augustin section next to other premium, imported biscuits.

The stores they visit range from ginormous and well-kept to small and ramshackle. It's difficult to predict which will do well: There's an apparent lack of correlation between physical condition and sales. In another, messy store, Lucas says, "This place doesn't look premium, but you never know. You have to look closely. If all they have is Kraft and Nabisco, our products are probably not going to sell. But do they have Tate's cookies?" They do. "Do they have Evian?" Yes. "Also, they have Kind bars, so I'm thinking, maybe."

Further into the store, he notices a Godiva display with no Godiva products but several packages of Michel et Augustin cookies. It's by a cash register, at eye level—and the product has been selling. Lorthiois tracks down a man who says he's not the manager but is in charge. "It's not our rack," she tells him, in her lightly French-accented English. "For me, it's fine," he says, smiling and shrugging. He agrees to take more product.

Three-story "squadruplets," with milk chocolate and "melty caramel."

PHOTOGRAPH COURTESY OF MICHEL ET AUGUSTIN (COOKIE)

The cookie crew are still learning American tastes. Few are familiar with the French top-seller: Beaufort cheese.

"This is a great spot," Lucas says after the non-manager walks away. "I don't know if they think we're Godiva? But it's selling." He shakes his head as we look around. The aisles are narrow, the displays completely disorganized, products piled higgledy-piggledy. "Sometimes you just don't know. It doesn't look like a great location, but it just sells."

Paluel-Marmont's mode of entrepreneurship is constant. He draws no lines between his personal and professional lives, says he is never really on vacation, insists that he is always both entrepreneur and husband, businessman and dad, and admits to having no "off" switch for any of these roles. He credits his fourth child, Sarah, 8, with reminding him, constantly and implicitly, of his priorities on all these fronts. "We discovered at the birth that she had Down syndrome. We were lucky not to know before. I would think it's a nightmare to have to choose—we didn't have to," he says, his voice full of tenderness. Parenting Sarah has been "*un bonheur,*" he shares, slipping into French. The word can mean both "privilege" and "happiness." "It's a happiness that I wish nobody else to live. It's hard work."

Sarah reminds him what's important and what's not. "We spend so much energy on questions that, in fact, do not matter," he says. She also inspires him to be transparent. "Normal people, we have all these filters—social filters, emotional controls. With these kids, they just say what they think. It's like, boom!" he says. "Being true is very helpful. It's important to be true."

Paluel-Marmont is unusually blunt and open. On his company's initial decision to operate out of a Manhattan coworking space, he says: "Very shit." Its early efforts to move into the U.S. market: "Very slow. We were not ready, from the packaging to the nutrition facts." His new office's tech setup: "Very poor internet connection. Cellphone is shit. We lose a lot of time." His feelings on gluten-free cookies: "Don't give a shit. It's not my sensibility."

By extension, Michel et Augustin's corporate culture is equally open. It keeps a working list of U.S. accounts, as well as targets, on full display on a wall at the Banana Farm—even during open houses. Paluel-Marmont separates accounts into two parts, which in conversation he calls the Cake and the Cherry on Top. The Cake is distribution in specialty-foods stores and supermarkets across New York City and other major urban centers—stores such as Fairway, Gelson's in California, Central Market in Texas, Mid-Atlantic Whole Foods Markets and Stop & Shops (but not yet in other desirable high-end outlets like Citarella and Dean & DeLuca). The Cherry on Top is large short- to mid-term accounts with big clients such as Starbucks and Delta Airlines.

For dessert purists, Paluel-Marmont's metaphor may raise questions about France's consumption of cherry-topped cakes. But when he says "we need to focus on the Cake," his point is clear: Accounts are not all equally valuable.

This distinction isn't always immediately obvious. Starbucks is an


WELLS
FARGO

important client, as is Delta Airlines, which, beginning in the fourth quarter of 2016, will serve Michel et Augustin milk-chocolate-and-caramel cookies in first class on all domestic flights. This kind of visibility can presage success nationwide. And yet, the team considers them Cherry. They're really about exposure, and come with uncertainty. Starbucks, for instance, regularly swaps in new products. It won't be a "forever" account. And deals like these make the company's sales targets difficult to forecast with precision; it's why targets for 2016 in the U.S. have been loosely guesstimated at between $2 million and $3 million, significantly higher than the $800,000 it recorded last year.

Meanwhile, the decidedly less sexy category of New York corporate cafeterias is Cake. In France, 5 percent of revenue comes from them. In New York, Michel et Augustin sells to Sodexo and Aramark, which operate many cafeterias. In an effort to expand in this arena, Michel et Augustin has done demos in the Manhattan lunchrooms of Goldman Sachs and MasterCard, and is angling for WeWork spaces. The revenue isn't even the main point: The company wants to make sure it becomes part of people's routine.

"Most French people who fuck it up in America, they try to do it too fast, and at the first major hard stuff, they fly back to France," Paluel-Marmont says. "We're not going to stop." The company knows that its New York lessons won't necessarily apply beyond. For as confounding as this place has been, the city is structured in a way Parisians are familiar with. "In France, we have very old cities," says Chauvel, that first French employee the company sent here, "and the rich people still live in the heart of the city." But that's not all of America. "Take Houston—you don't have the same retail profile, with a dense city center. The stores are suburban." The company has little experience in such settings.

And there have been notable failures. For instance, the milk-chocolate-and-hazelnut "super cookie with melty middle" is the company's best-selling cookie in France but has disappointed on this side of the Atlantic. Why? "We don't know," Chauvel confesses. "Is it the price? Is it the packaging? Is it the competition?" Paluel-Marmont considered this his own failing and ordered a quick redesign of the packaging in April. Three months later, he sent a staffer onto the subway with both the old and new packages, for informal polling. Eighty percent of those baited with free cookies picked the new packaging, which is now beginning to make its way onto store shelves.

Paluel-Marmont often repeats the same description of himself: "I am not clever." At first, it seems like false modesty. But he insists. "I'm not clever," he says yet again. "I just have the capacity to interact with others' experiences and bring them into my own heart." His mode of entrepreneurship seems to be more hunter-gatherer than visionary. Others have done all the elements of what Michel et Augustin has done, but Paluel-Marmont and his team have put them together in a unique way.

The cookie crew freely acknowledge that they are still learning about American tastes; meanwhile, they're observing, adapting, and experimenting. When they launched their savory shortbreads and crackers in July, they quickly learned that few Americans are familiar with Beaufort cheese, the top-selling flavor in France. ("It comes from the Alps!" huffed multiple incredulous M et A employees.) They also learned that chocolate sells better than fruit. (Shocker.) The company's raspberry-and-pistachio shortbread cookie squares sold so poorly that the company ditched them.

Yet the move to the U.S. has also provided something unexpected: Inspiration. About a 10-minute walk from the Banana Farm, there's a branch of the third-wave coffee purveyor Blue Bottle, which has gone national with its version of iced coffee, flavored with cane sugar and chicory. Next year, Michel et Augustin plans to introduce iced coffee to France. "We will adapt the recipe to French tastes," Paluel-Marmont says. "Smooth, and not too sweet."

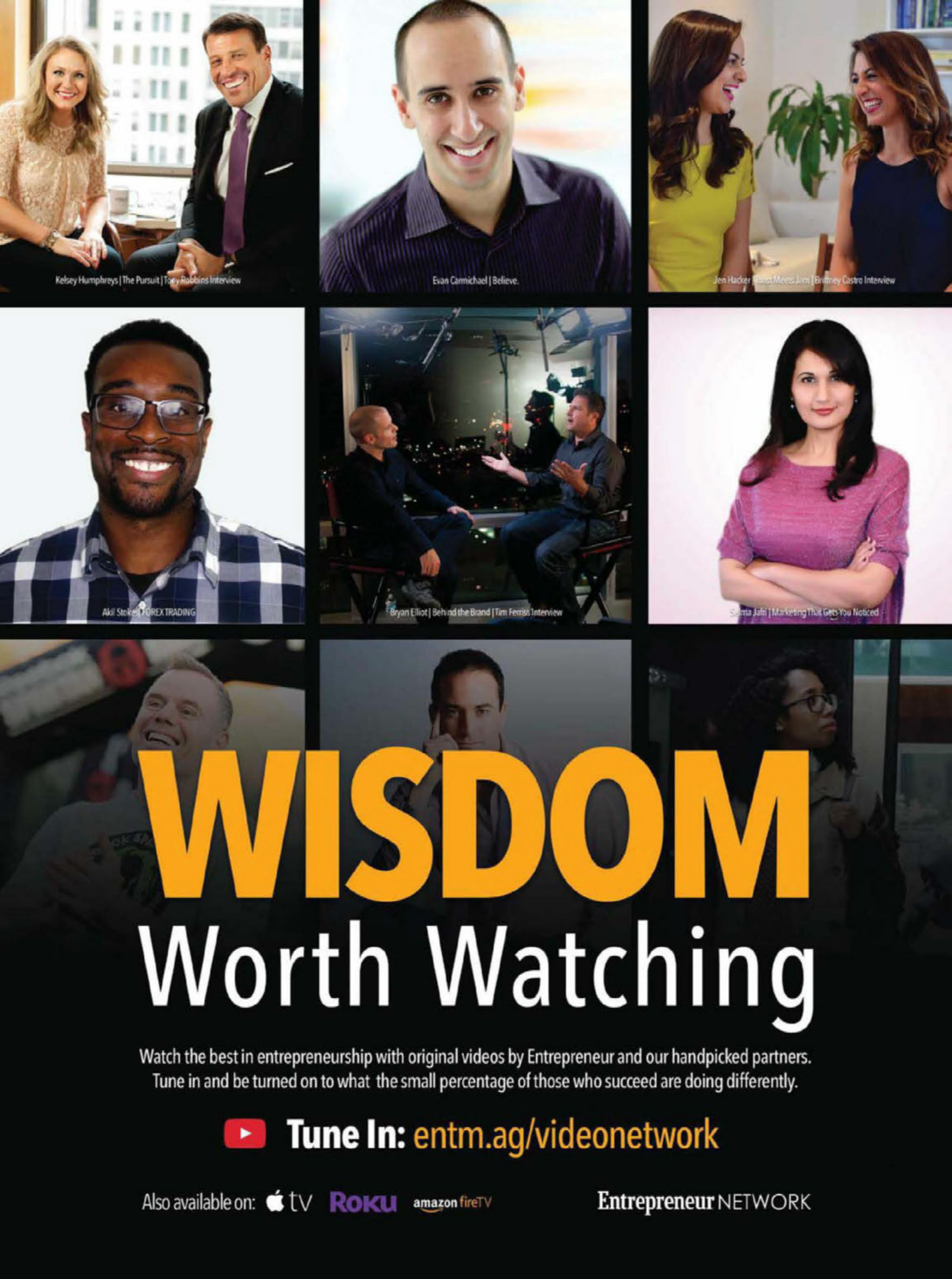
Also unexpected: His wife has fallen in love with the city. Midsummer, during a vacation back in France, his kids started asking when they will return to New York—and whether they're really only staying for two years. He doesn't know. The French economy minister Emmanuel Macron, a good friend, is running for president; if he wins, Paluel-Marmont might be tempted to return home to serve in some capacity. And truthfully, he's eager for Paris: He finds New York dirty and is frustrated by its public transportation. But the kids? "They really love it."

Paluel-Marmont relays this news by telephone, while in the Alps. And if surrender sounds like anything, it is his little exhale on the other end of the line. "We don't always choose our life, but we can choose the way we live—happiness is mostly a decision," he says. "Every day, it's a decision when you wake up. And this is a very authentic adventure."

He hopes his cookies will find a home here. Maybe he will, too. □

Paris HQ is tasty: Michel and Augustin make strawberry shortcake while staffers prep vanilla éclairs days before their mandated pastry exam.

PHOTOGRAPHS COURTESY OF MICHEL ET AUGUSTIN


Kelsey Humphreys | The Pursuit | Tony Robbins Interview
Evan Carmichael | Believe.
Bryan Elliot | Behind the Brand | Tim Ferriss Interview
WISDOM
Worth Watching
Watch the best in entrepreneurship with original videos by Entrepreneur and our handpicked partners.
Tune in and be turned on to what the small percentage of those who succeed are doing differently.
Tune In: entm.ag/videonetwork
Also available on: tv Roku amazon fireTV
Entrepreneur NETWORK

Pythagoras Pizza's
Evan Kuo, and a car
he doesn't own.

THE COMPANY CAR IS ABOUT TO CHANGE

It might steer itself. It might fly. It might, well, not be a thing you own anymore. But if the experts are right, one prediction will definitely hold true: **The future of fleets is awesome.**

PHOTOGRAPHS BY CODY PICKENS

THE END OF OWNERSHIP?

Ride-sharing services changed the way we travel. Now they're changing the way we do business.

YOU CAN'T EAT AT San Francisco's Pythagoras Pizza: Each $20 pie is available for delivery only. The model keeps costs down, but when the shop's popularity skyrocketed in 2015, founder Evan Kuo had a problem. "How do you staff to endure waves of two- to three-times-demand spikes?" he says. After all, he needs way more drivers (and cars) for lunch and dinner, but he can't afford to own a huge fleet that goes unused during most hours.

His solution: Uber.

In 2015, the car giant launched UberRush, which is essentially a messenger service that uses Uber drivers. It partnered with e-commerce platform Shopify and is available in San Francisco, New York, and Chicago, and has become a favorite tool of businesses that deliver. Today, half of Kuo's pizzas arrive via UberRush. "Even if your forecasting model is 80 percent accurate, you're still either overstaffing by 20 percent or underserving by 20 percent," Kuo says. "That volatility can be frustrating and really costly."

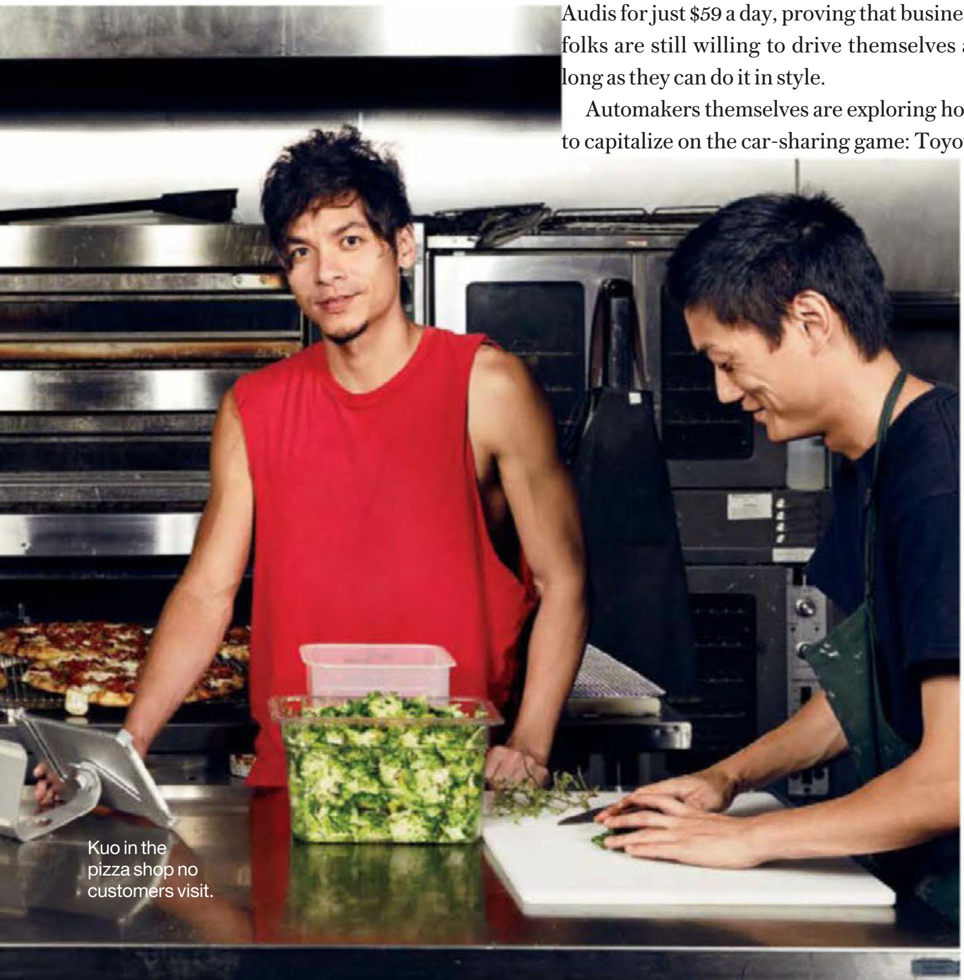
In using Uber this way, Kuo is joining an entrepreneurial crowd: Like cord cutters who stop buying cable, a movement of car cutters are exploring life without auto ownership. Many services are helping this along. ReachNow is in beta testing in the Seattle area; it's like Zipcar, in that members can rent cars in small chunks of time rather than being forced to pay for the whole day. (Bonus: ReachNow loans only BMWs and Minis, so your makeshift fleet has a built-in air of success.) Similarly, Silvercar rents on-demand Audis for just $59 a day, proving that business folks are still willing to drive themselves as long as they can do it in style.

Automakers themselves are exploring how to capitalize on the car-sharing game: Toyota recently invested in Uber and made a deal to offer drivers special lease rates on their cars; Volkswagen sunk $300 million into Gett, a New York City–focused Uber rival; and GM bought a $500 million chunk of Lyft and will pilot test autonomous-driving Chevy Bolt taxis in 2017. Not to be outdone, FCA inked a deal with Google parent Alphabet to be a supplier of vehicles to Google's well-publicized driverless system.

In the face of this competition, Uber is doubling down. In September, the brand launched UberCentral, which allows businesses to act as dispatchers, scheduling car services for clients and ordering multiple rides days in advance to multiple pickup locations at once. Entrepreneurs can even build UberRush into their own software, so they can allow vendors to access delivery services themselves. "It just takes a couple of lines of code and then you have access to Uber's logistics network, and that's the same whether it's a person or a delivery," says Uber spokesman Sarah Maxwell.

All of this is changing the way some businesses operate, encouraging them to add services they previously couldn't afford. San Francisco–based Dijital Fix Design + Electronics, for example, sells everything from audiophile-level speakers to floor lamps and candles, and now it can get products to customers within an hour via UberRush. Shopify merchants can have the system up and running in three minutes, according to Niko Downie, partnerships lead at Shopify. He says that 1,500 of their customers (including Dijital Fix) use UberRush, and can choose how much of the cost of delivery they want to pass along to customers.

The end of ownership may mean potential big bucks for car-sharing services, but the real benefit seems to fall to small-business owners. "One of the toughest things about having a real-time delivery business is anticipating demand," says Pythagoras' Kuo. "But now we can basically understaff by 20 percent for downside protection and still meet our demand fully, at almost no extra cost." —*Michael Frank*



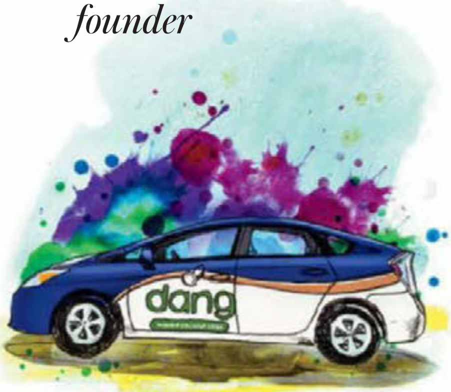
Kuo in the pizza shop no customers visit.

How We Chose Our Fleet

Three food startups on their company rides.

Dang Foods (Berkeley, Calif.)
Toyota Prius

"We make all-natural foods like coconut chips and onion chips, and want to mirror that ethos in sustainable practices across the company. So we use solar panels and green cleaning products at HQ and recyclable shipping, and we chose the Toyota Prius for our company cars. As hybrids, they save us money on gas and reduce emissions. It's a bonus that the car is modern, unique, and fun, which fits with our brand palette." *—Vincent Kitirattragarn, founder*



Vital Farms (Austin, Tex.)
Subaru Outback

"Our founder made his early egg deliveries with his Outback. When it came time to purchase a fleet, we followed industry recommendations and bought seven pickup trucks, but we were struck by how pricey those gas-guzzlers were. Almost out of a sense of nostalgia, we considered switching to the Outback. It ticked every box: great gas mileage, all-wheel drive, remarkable reliability. Today we have a fleet of 13 that we use to service our farms. We chose white to portray a sense of transparency and honesty: We aren't trying to hide any dirt with a white car." ***—Russell Diez-Canseco, president and COO***

Pancheros Mexican Grill (Coralville, Iowa)
Jeep Renegade

"We're a fast-casual burrito franchise across the Midwest, and our fleet is made up of five new Renegades. They act as great billboards wrapped in our branding, but they're also functional: We can efficiently transport equipment—like the 100-plus-pound tortilla press we use, or the 2,000 burritos we recently brought to a local dance marathon. Our brand needs cars that are meant to go to work." *—Barry Nelson, VP of operations*

A SEMI-SCIENTIFIC RANKING OF SEMI-AUTONOMOUS FEATURES

Manufacturers are racing to arm their vehicles with enough cameras, radars, sensors, and tech to properly outthink man.

1 Automatic parking
Admit it: You suck at parallel parking. But when you activate automatic parking on some Fords and Nissans, you never again worry about lining up your wheels. Tesla takes it one step further: Stop the car within 33 feet of the space, get out, hit a button on the key fob, and watch the car park itself.

2 Adaptive cruise control
Laser or radar systems monitor surrounding vehicles and adjust speed accordingly. Back in 2010, Audi's A8 was the first to incorporate GPS data, which allowed the car to detect vehicles headed for exit ramps and slow down if necessary. Now traffic-jam functions are the norm: Cars can fully stop and accelerate again if the pause is less than three seconds.

CONTINUED

Illustrations by Scott Chambers

The Mercedes-Benz Future Truck 2025.

BIG RIGS, INVISIBLE DRIVERS

Can a line of trucks rumble down the highway by themselves? That's the plan.

PICTURE THIS: You're driving down a highway, behind a pack of tractor-trailers. As you pass the truck in the back, you notice that its driver's seat is empty. Next one, same thing. And again. All these trucks are being driven by themselves. Finally, when you reach the lead truck, you're relieved to see a human behind the wheel. Except then you realize that the driver is reclined in his seat, flipping through a magazine.

This could be the future of long hauling, led by autonomous trucking platoons. It's not just a hypothetical; it's something the world's largest auto companies are developing right now.

Automotive giant Daimler is currently testing its autonomous trucking system with Freightliner Inspiration trucks in Nevada and Mercedes Highway Pilot trucks in Germany. Cameras and radar mounted in the lead truck scan the road ahead in various lengths and widths, gathering data on lane markings, distant traffic patterns, and even peripheral vehicles that could cut off the truck. That info is fed into computers that handle steering, acceleration, and braking for the entire line. If the system can be mastered, teams of self-driving big rigs could eventually wind their way across our interstates, safely and efficiently transporting products.

That future is still at least 10 years away. "Large variations in lane markings, the behavior of other road users, and changing weather conditions mean significant testing is still needed," says Derek Rotz, director of advanced engineering for Daimler Trucks North America. "This takes time."

Still, lessons are pouring in, leading to advancements that will improve trucks long before they go driverless. Daimler says its motivation is to improve road safety; after all, most vehicle accidents are caused by human error. It also wants to smooth traffic flow. But its automated system could also mitigate a looming problem in the industry: a lack of labor.

"We're experiencing a driver shortage in the U.S.," says Amelia Regan, professor of computer science and transportation systems engineering at the University of California, Irvine. "With long hours and low wages, it's not an attractive job anymore. Autonomous trucks will make long hauling more alluring." They're also expected to save business owners a nice chunk of change, thanks to lower fuel and repair costs: Synced-up, autonomous trucks should be able to follow each other with just 50 feet between vehicles, instead of the industry-standard 165 feet. Narrower gaps mean less aerodynamic drag, increasing gas mileage and reducing wear and tear on the vehicles themselves.

But there is a potential downside: slower deliveries. "Human truckers are paid by the mile, so they inherently drive more quickly than is efficient in terms of fuel economy," Regan says. "Autonomous platoons may drive more slowly because they're looking to lower gas usage." But the bragging rights that come with delivering your goods via phantom drivers? That may just make up for it. *—Sean Evans*

PHOTOGRAPH COURTESY OF DAIMLER TRUCKS

CONTINUED

3 Blind-spot assist

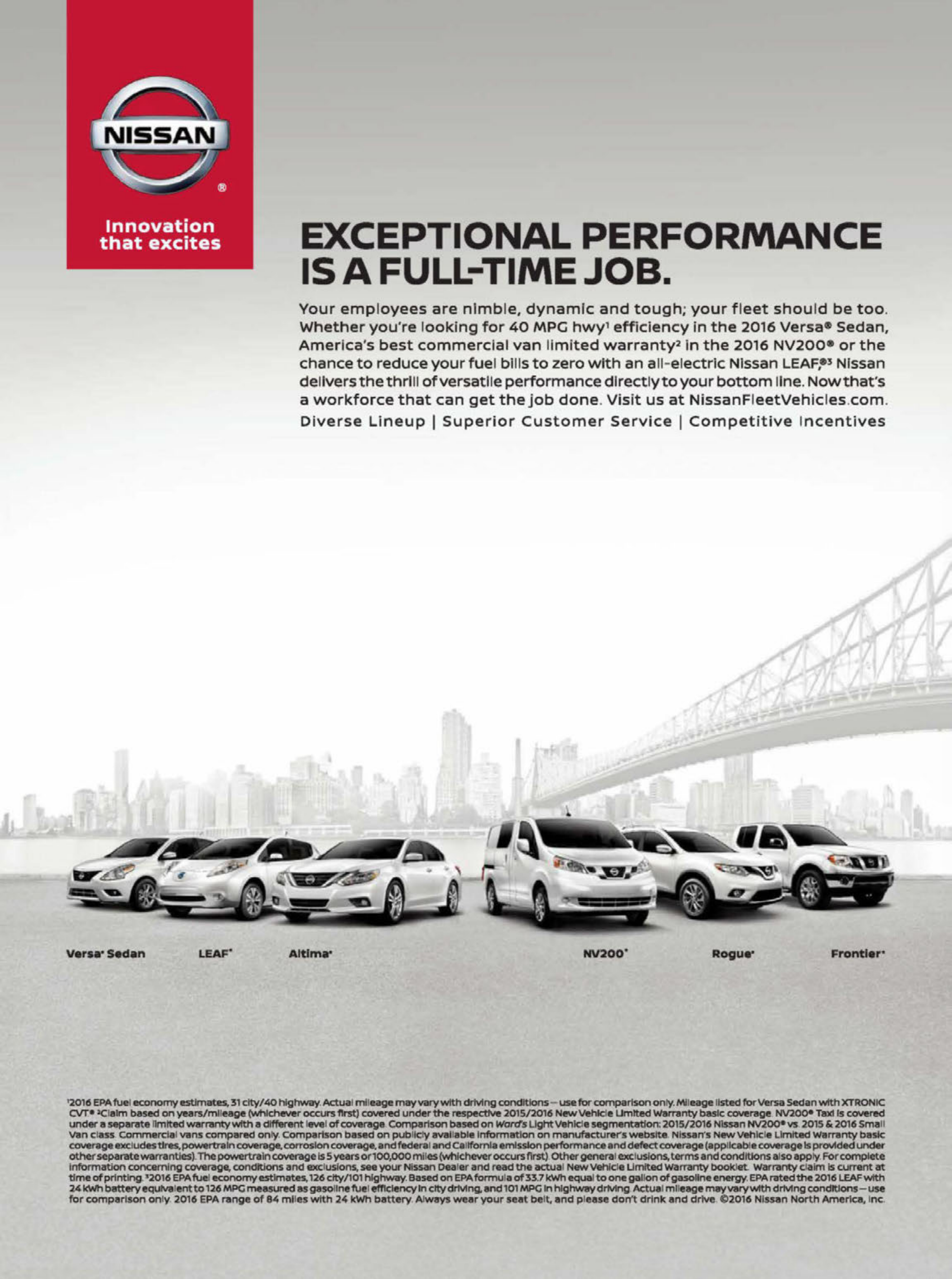
Sensors in body panels can detect vehicles lurking in your blind spot. Early forms of the tech were first introduced in the Volvo S80 in 2007, and now nearly every manufacturer offers a range of them—from an alarm bell to an indicator light to an actual braking correction in the Infiniti Q70. The catch: Most don't start looking until you've put on your blinker.

4 Lane departure

In 2004, the Infiniti FX was the first U.S. vehicle to alert drivers when they started drifting out of their lane. Today, Bentley's new Bentayga will gently guide the wheel back to center, while Mercedes-Benz's E-Class and Infiniti's QX30 have wheels that vibrate to give the driver a heads up—though poorly marked roads can cause the systems to fail.

5 Hands-free driving

Tesla's Model S comes with an "autopilot" mode—the most advanced hands-free system on the road, which employs radar, cameras, ultrasonic sensor, and GPS to steer the car. But is it too advanced? In May, a man using autopilot died in a crash; Tesla reportedly blamed its braking system, but the incident caused concern throughout the industry.
—S.E.


NISSAN
Innovation that excites
EXCEPTIONAL PERFORMANCE IS A FULL-TIME JOB.
Your employees are nimble, dynamic and tough; your fleet should be too. Whether you're looking for 40 MPG hwy[1] efficiency in the 2016 Versa® Sedan, America's best commercial van limited warranty[2] in the 2016 NV200® or the chance to reduce your fuel bills to zero with an all-electric Nissan LEAF,®[3] Nissan delivers the thrill of versatile performance directly to your bottom line. Now that's a workforce that can get the job done. Visit us at NissanFleetVehicles.com.
Diverse Lineup | Superior Customer Service | Competitive Incentives
Versa® Sedan
LEAF®
Altima®
NV200®
Rogue®
Frontier®
[1]2016 EPA fuel economy estimates, 31 city/40 highway. Actual mileage may vary with driving conditions – use for comparison only. Mileage listed for Versa Sedan with XTRONIC CVT® [2]Claim based on years/mileage (whichever occurs first) covered under the respective 2015/2016 New Vehicle Limited Warranty basic coverage. NV200® Taxi is covered under a separate limited warranty with a different level of coverage. Comparison based on *Ward's* Light Vehicle segmentation: 2015/2016 Nissan NV200® vs. 2015 & 2016 Small Van class. Commercial vans compared only. Comparison based on publicly available information on manufacturer's website. Nissan's New Vehicle Limited Warranty basic coverage excludes tires, powertrain coverage, corrosion coverage, and federal and California emission performance and defect coverage (applicable coverage is provided under other separate warranties). The powertrain coverage is 5 years or 100,000 miles (whichever occurs first). Other general exclusions, terms and conditions also apply. For complete information concerning coverage, conditions and exclusions, see your Nissan Dealer and read the actual New Vehicle Limited Warranty booklet. Warranty claim is current at time of printing. [3]2016 EPA fuel economy estimates, 126 city/101 highway. Based on EPA formula of 33.7 kWh equal to one gallon of gasoline energy. EPA rated the 2016 LEAF with 24 kWh battery equivalent to 126 MPG measured as gasoline fuel efficiency in city driving, and 101 MPG in highway driving. Actual mileage may vary with driving conditions – use for comparison only. 2016 EPA range of 84 miles with 24 kWh battery. Always wear your seat belt, and please don't drink and drive. ©2016 Nissan North America, Inc.

Preparing for Takeoff

Time to meet the Jetsons?

We've been promised flying cars for, oh, about as long as we've been promised jetpacks. But Woburn, Mass.–based Terrafugia is ready to finally fulfill one of those dreams: It has spent a decade developing the Transition, a car with airplane wings whose first prototype took flight in 2009. President and cofounder **Carl Dietrich** says he could get this baby on the road in just two years, assuming he raises another round of financing to cover production. *—Jonathan Welsh*

Private aircraft have been small-business tools for decades. Are today's entrepreneurs in your target market?
DIETRICH: Absolutely. The Transition has the potential to help businesspeople do more in a day. Not only can you land closer to your final destination compared to airline travel, but you can drive straight from the airport instead of arranging another ride.

Other than saving travel time, though, how does this stand to benefit businesspeople?
For example, real estate developers with properties spread across a region could visit more sites more quickly, and regional salespeople could cover more territory. And a flying car also gives you freedom to spend more time with clients.

Combining a car with a plane must have presented pretty unique regulatory challenges. How do you address those?
To be road legal, the Transition required certain exemptions. For example, we use an aircraft-type polycarbonate windshield instead of automotive safety glass, to preserve visibility if the screen is broken by a bird strike. We were also allowed to use slightly less advanced airbags than those in the latest cars, mainly to reduce costs—our small company simply cannot afford the newest smart versions. But the vehicle still offers automotive safety technology not previously found in aviation.

Your next-generation version, the TF-X, is largely autonomous. Is that the future of the future?
The TF-X, which looks far into the future, would allow the owner to prepare for meetings while the vehicle flies itself at up to 200 miles per hour—roughly twice as fast as the Transition.

THE RULES OF THE ROAD

A modern passenger's guide to good manners, according to two business-etiquette experts.

When driving the company car, is it tacky to belt out my best Katy Perry impression?
Jeanette Martin, management professor emeritus at the University of Mississippi and author of The Essential Guide to Business Etiquette*:* "Depends on how passionately you're singing! Remember that you're representing the company, so you need to be on your best behavior: no road rage, no giving people the finger, no texting or eating an elaborate lunch at the wheel. Most companies will also give you guidelines on whether you can use the car for personal errands or lend it to a family member. But if they don't, ask. You don't want to find out after your teen gets a ticket that she shouldn't have been driving."

I'd usually chip in for gas when carpooling with a coworker, but she has an electric car. Should I offer to foot part of her electricity bill instead?
Patricia Rossi, business-etiquette coach and author of Everyday Etiquette*:* "You always want to show some gratitude—beyond a verbal thank-you—when someone spends their time, effort, and, yes, electricity driving you around. If the coworker doesn't mention sharing costs up front, offer. If they wave you off, thank them with Starbucks or a gift card."

Can I catnap in a driverless car, even if I'm still on the clock?
Martin: "Most people who travel for work are putting in long hours later—a convention trip, client dinners in the evening. So if you want to take a nap, that's fine. Just make sure your phone ringer is on."

Is it kosher to take a work call while driving?
Rossi: "For a big, important client call, never do that. For a smaller call or for something internal, it's sometimes necessary. No one enjoys hearing traffic or sirens in the background, but if you give people a heads up that you're in the car, it shows that you've at least thought of them and how it's not ideal. That goes a long way."

Do I have to make small talk with my Uber driver?
Martin: "Only if you want to. There's no reason to feel guilty for working on your phone—part of the reason you might take an Uber is so you can keep working. But keep in mind that the driver might be doing this on the side, and their day job might very well be in your industry or even at a competitor. So while texting is fine, be wary of talking on your phone about sensitive or confidential info." *—Kate Rockwood*

Illustration by Scott Chambers


Entrepreneur

"IT'S A WHOLE NETWORK OF ADVISERS"

By Jenna Schnuer / Photographs by Michael Friberg

Need help with your business but have nobody to ask? Many entrepreneurs are tapping into a curated group of mentors—**by signing up for online MBAs.**

Business owner and online MBA student Kristin Carpenter-Ogden.

AT FIRST, KRISTIN CARPENTER-OGDEN'S CAREER CHANGE FELT MANAGEABLE. SHE HAD BEEN A REPORTER, AND IN 2002 SHE FOUNDED A PUBLIC RELATIONS FIRM CALLED VERDE BRAND COMMUNICATIONS—ESSENTIALLY BECOMING THE KIND OF PERSON WHO REACHES OUT TO REPORTERS.

But a few years in, she hit a wall: "As my business was growing, it was becoming more challenging for me to research and seek out mentorship and help," she says. Pursuing an MBA would have provided her with ample guidance, but that seemed impossible: She lived in Durango, Colo., and was raising two kids.

"There is no way I would attend an on-site program," she says. And then, in 2006, she found a way to plug in from home: The Poultney, Vt.–based Green Mountain College offered a sustainability-focused MBA online. "It was a miracle for me," says Carpenter-Ogden.

An MBA had long been something aspiring entrepreneurs got before launching their businesses, or during pauses in their careers. But in signing up for an MBA this way, Carpenter-Ogden joined a growing group of small-business people who no longer see education as simply preparation: It is now more of a booster, to be applied when someone's business needs it. Stephen Taylor, assistant dean of graduate programs at Arizona State University's W.P. Carey School of Business, says online MBA programs are full of these students—and he regularly sees them using class lessons directly in their work.

"These programs are a relatively safe place for entrepreneurs to learn about how they can manage a business long-term or explore a business opportunity with help from the entire university's research faculty and other students," he says. "It's a whole network of advisers that stays with you for your whole life."

MBA programs first stepped out of the classroom and onto the internet in 1994, when Athabasca University, in Alberta, Canada, launched its online executive MBA. More recognizable business schools followed, from the University of Florida to Rochester Institute of Technology. (See pg. 52 for a ranking of the top 25 programs.) The degrees were initially met with skepticism, and sometimes hostility, from schools and graduates who believed that in-person classes and meetings were critical to the experience.

In the many years since, online MBAs have evolved: Rather than just digital versions of a school's syllabus, they're now complex programs offering a range of specialties—and coursework that's tailor-made for busy students. "There's an increase in diversity of formats, to serve different audiences and be as responsive as possible to the demands of the students," says Robert C. McNamee, managing director of the Innovation & Entrepreneurship Institute at Temple University's Fox School of Business. Many schools are now even offering one-and-a-half-credit classes—as opposed to traditional three-credit ones—which he says "let us really focus on a topic."

Getting into online MBA programs is still similar to on-campus admission: Applicants are judged on their GMAT scores, essays, and interviews. But once students are in, the experience is totally different. Classes can be taken on any personal computer with internet access. In-class lectures are filmed and can be watched live or later. Office hours, student collaboration, and other face-to-face time are handled live on software platforms ranging from Google Hangouts to proprietary videoconferencing programs—a major upgrade from the clunky online classes of even a decade ago.

"The technology is so good now that your class experience is just short of a hologram," says Laurie Weingart, senior associate dean at the Tepper School of Business at Carnegie Mellon University. And the tools themselves also become part of the education: Students become pros at using video and presentation software, and then end up using it in their businesses as well.

Another benefit to entrepreneurs seeking an online MBA today: They can take (almost) as long as they like to graduate. Most programs allow students six or more years to finish the degree, which is particularly helpful

11 YEARS: THE AVERAGE WORK EXPERIENCE OF ONLINE MBA STUDENTS, VS. FIVE YEARS FOR CAMPUS-BASED MBA STUDENTS.

Photograph by David Yellen (McNamee)

$88,000 *to* $145,000

AVERAGE SALARY RANGE AFTER EARNING AN MBA ONLINE.

when an entrepreneur is balancing their growing business with their studies. "We give the students a great deal of flexibility to take as many courses or as few as they would like," says Temple's McNamee. "We see this as a lifelong learning approach."

Still, not every business school has come around to online education. Some of the most prestigious MBA programs in the country—such as those at Harvard, Stanford, and MIT—are available only through full-time, on-campus studies. "We view our degree program as a holistic education experience," says Yossi Feinberg, senior associate dean of academic affairs for Stanford's MBA program. "It's a two-year program, and being here leads to benefits in terms of not only how people grow in the information they learn but also their personal growth."

Stanford believes so deeply in this approach that the business school was moved to a new campus designed expressly to get people to bump into each other. "Those chance encounters," says Feinberg, "start a reaction."

The faculties at schools with online programs don't disagree. They just come at the problem differently, in order to create satisfying experiences for the kinds of students who simply can't make it to campus on a regular basis. Some experiment with limited in-person programs, in which students have to show up for a few days or a week per term. The University of Southern California's Marshall School of Business's online MBA program, for example, kicks off each year with a weeklong on-campus session. Students get to know their cohort (MBA-speak for the class you work with during your course of study) during an intense pitch competition, in which they're meeting with representatives from big brands.

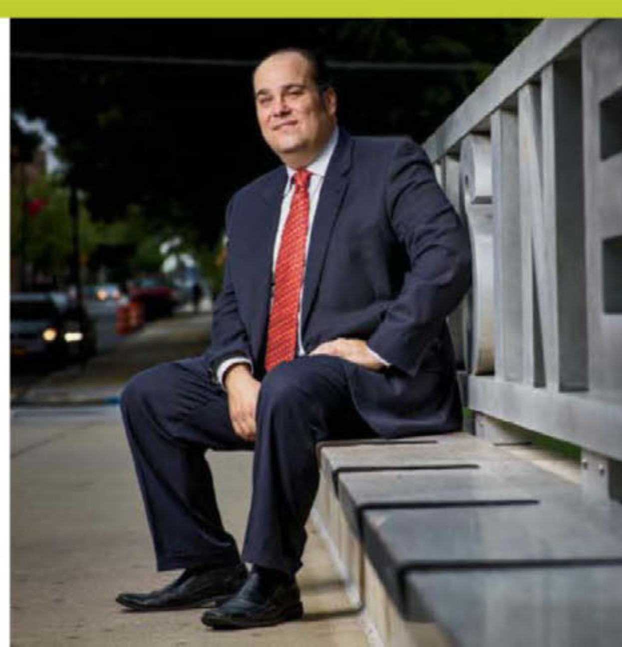
But after short stints like those, students head back home—where balancing an MBA and their other work isn't easy. Denise Campbell's experience is pretty typical: She earned her online MBA from the University of Florida, taking two to three classes each semester while working in New York City at an insurance firm. After a full day at the office, she'd do homework every night and over most of her weekends. Since graduating in May 2013, she moved to Denver and cofounded Sprightly Escapes; it's part of the exploding "escape room" industry, in which players are locked in a room and must solve puzzles in order to escape.

"I don't know how I could have started a business and done the program at the same time," she says. "But it would've been very powerful to start a business and apply what I was learning in real time to my business."

That's what Carpenter-Ogden is still doing—and she has paced her studies along with her growing business. She now hopes to graduate in 2017, more than 10 years after starting her degree. "Almost all the papers I submitted included real-world examples of how I was integrating my course-work into my business," she says. At one point, she was developing a social-responsi-bility program for her company, and so she turned to the network she'd come to trust: She asked her professor and class-mates. Then she took their advice. □

35

AVERAGE AGE OF AN ONLINE MBA STUDENT— SEVEN YEARS OLDER THAN THE AVERAGE CAMPUS-BASED STUDENT.



From left: University of Florida online MBA graduate Denise Campbell, cofounder of Sprightly Escapes in Denver; Robert McNamee, Fox School of Business at Temple University in Philadelphia.

THE PRINCETON REVIEW'S ANNUAL RANKING

Statistics from 2016 Princeton Review survey

Online MBAs

BEST IN CLASS

The Princeton Review's annual ranking of the top online MBA programs.

PHOTOGRAPH COURTESY OF KELLEY SCHOOL OF BUSINESS AT INDIANA UNIVERSITY

2016 RANK	BUSINESS SCHOOL	PUBLIC/ PRIVATE	TOTAL DEGREE COST	% OF PROGRAM TAUGHT ONLINE	AVG. STUDENT AGE	AVG. YEARS' WORK EXPERIENCE	AVG. GMAT SCORES	TOTAL APPLICANTS EACH YEAR/ % ACCEPTED	NO. OF STUDENTS ENROLLED IN ONLINE MBA PROGRAM
1	**University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, Kenan-Flagler Business School** Chapel Hill, N.C.	Public	$104,664	97	34	10	668	1,104/43	742
2	**Indiana University, Kelley School of Business** Bloomington, Ind.	Public	$61,200	94	30	7	635	469/76	737
3	**Temple University, Fox School of Business and Management** Philadelphia	Public	$59,760	100	35	11	600	420/42	273
4	**IE University IE Business School** Madrid, Spain	Private	$49,600	80	30	6	680	552/41	175
5	**University of Florida, Hough Graduate School of Business** Gainesville, Fla.	Public	$56,672	83	29	5	569	500/55	352
6	**Arizona State University, W. P. Carey School of Business** Tempe, Ariz.	Public	$56,800	100	32	7	592	396/64	329
7	**Rochester Institute of Technology, Saunders College of Business** Rochester, N.Y.	Private	$70,000	94	40	16	N/A	25/100	29
8	**Babson College, F.W. Olin Graduate School of Business** Babson Park, Mass.	Private	$82,000	72	31	9	594	187/89	305
9	**North Carolina State University, Jenkins Graduate School of Management** Raleigh, N.C.	Public	$42,195 (in-state) $66,995 (out-of-state)	92	35	11	616	238/72	222
10	**James Madison University Information Security MBA** Harrisonburg, Va.	Public	$37,800	80	35	12	510	44/93	53
11	**University of Texas at Dallas, Naveen Jindal School of Management** Richardson, Tex.	Public	$45,898 (in-state) $74,465 (out-of-state)	100	34	12	582	206/50	272
12	**University of South Dakota, Beacom School of Business** Vermillion, S.D.	Public	$14,231	95	33	6	560	50/90	276
13	**University of Utah, David Eccles School of Business** Salt Lake City	Public	$57,600	97	33	8	553	88/65	78
14	**Auburn University, Raymond J. Harbert College of Business** Auburn, Ala.	Public	$28,980	98	36	8	569	237/72	408
15	**Hofstra University, Frank G. Zarb School of Business** Hempstead, N.Y.	Private	$72,800	96	36	12	N/A	66/55	46
16	**University of Nebraska-Lincoln, College of Business Administration** Lincoln, Neb.	Public	$25,538	100	31	6	606	185/89	321
17	**Northeastern University, D'Amore-McKim School of Business** Boston	Private	$73,800	100	34	11	N/A	452/88	1,016
18	**Pepperdine University, Graziadio School of Business and Management** Los Angeles	Private	$84,240	94	32	11	542	217/82	254
19	**University of Arizona, Eller College of Management** Tucson, Ariz.	Public	$45,000	100	32	7	585	84/95	122
20	**Syracuse University, Martin J. Whitman School of Management** Syracuse, N.Y.	Private	$74,592	94	35	N/A	580	935/77	700
21	**University of North Texas, College of Business** Denton, Tex.	Public	$16,002 (in-state) $33,169 (out-of-state)	90	30	7	542	68/75	98
22	**Strayer University, Jack Welch Management Institute** Herndon, Va.	Private	$39,400	100	40	15	N/A	1,855/58	1,137
23	**University of Massachusetts Amherst, Isenberg School of Management** Amherst, Mass.	Public	$32,535	100	38	13	577	609/85	1,292
24	**Ball State University, Miller College of Business** Muncie, Ind.	Public	$13,980 (in-state) $25,440 (out-of-state)	100	30	7	556	113/92	258
25	**University of Memphis, Fogelman College of Business and Economics** Memphis	Public	$18,900 (in-state) $22,400 (out-of-state)	100	29	8	578	58/81	105

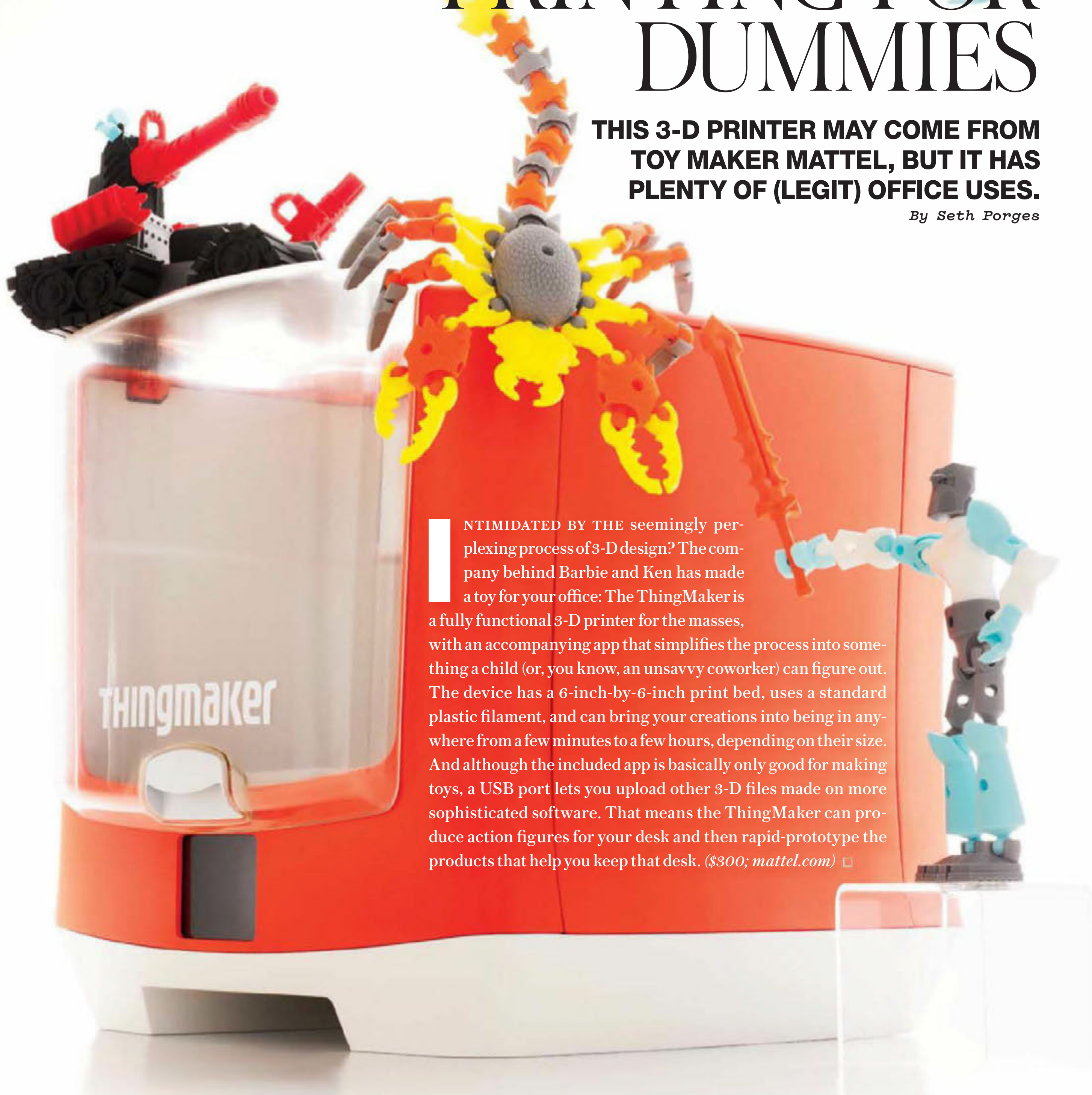
Methodology: The Princeton Review's ranking comes from a 2016 survey of more than 3,800 online MBA students from more than 90 schools.
**N/A indicates information not available or not applicable.*

shiny object

PRINTING FOR DUMMIES

THIS 3-D PRINTER MAY COME FROM TOY MAKER MATTEL, BUT IT HAS PLENTY OF (LEGIT) OFFICE USES.

By Seth Porges



INTIMIDATED BY THE seemingly perplexing process of 3-D design? The company behind Barbie and Ken has made a toy for your office: The ThingMaker is a fully functional 3-D printer for the masses, with an accompanying app that simplifies the process into something a child (or, you know, an unsavvy coworker) can figure out. The device has a 6-inch-by-6-inch print bed, uses a standard plastic filament, and can bring your creations into being in anywhere from a few minutes to a few hours, depending on their size. And although the included app is basically only good for making toys, a USB port lets you upload other 3-D files made on more sophisticated software. That means the ThingMaker can produce action figures for your desk and then rapid-prototype the products that help you keep that desk. *($300; mattel.com)*

Photograph by Carlton Davis

the fix

More Real Work, Less Paperwork

How this already hyperefficient floral company saved many trees—and hours of time.

By David Port

Farmgirl Flowers is designed for minimal fuss. It offers just one floral arrangement per day—as opposed to, say, selling single roses or carnations—which keeps flower waste at less than 1 percent, rather than the industry norm of 40 percent. And founder **Christina Stembel** handles, well, almost everything. "The C-suite—that's all me," she says. "I'm the CEO, the COO, and the CIO here, managing an $11 million operation, so time is precious." That's why, as she's been working to grow her 6-year-old San Francisco–based company, she wanted to escape time-consuming paperwork. Her 77 employees' benefits forms had to be filled out by hand, and vendor agreements were sent back and forth with messengers. Isn't there a better way?

Photograph by Melissa Kaseman

The Fix

In 2014, Stembel began using DocuSign, a cloud-based platform that makes online forms easier to use than paper. You can fill out and sign a contract without ever printing it out, and then send it to whoever needs it—making transactions so fast that 84 percent are completed within a day, and 62 percent wrap in less than an hour. The system saves and organizes your files, and works with software platforms from the likes of Salesforce, NetSuite, Google, Apple, and Microsoft. The vast majority of its users are small to medium-size businesses, says DocuSign founder Tom Gonser, because "there's no investment in software and very little setup involved."

The Results

"It is so worth it," Stembel says of DocuSign. She figures having a digital service for filling out and processing employee hiring and benefits forms, and for signing legal documents and executing transactions with vendors, saves her at least 10 hours a month, all for a fee of less than $50 a month. (Monthly fees start at $10.) Stembel has also eliminated hours spent "sifting through bank boxes full of paperwork," and now she doesn't have to worry about losing any of those important documents. And the DocuSign mobile app allows her to sign contracts "while on the farm" meeting with growers.

A Second Opinion

Some transactions still need to be done by paper, either by law or because you're dealing with an old-school partner. But digital signatures and PDF-only documents are now widely accepted in business, and companies that still print, sign, and scan (or fax!) are officially behind the times, says Andrew Hoang, managing director of Pivotal Consulting in Seattle. He prefers DocuSign to its main competitor, Adobe Sign, because the former has more robust features. The service "is secure, and it's not going to cost you a lot or require any new hardware or training. It's a no-brainer."

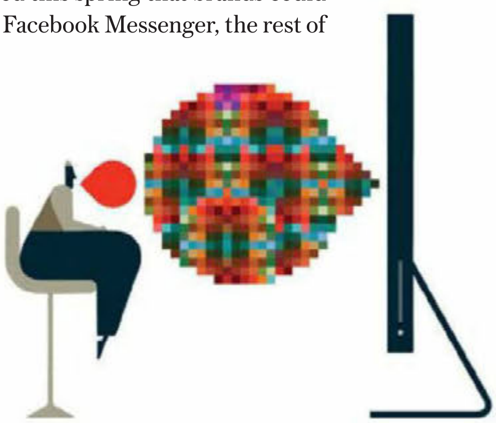
Illustration by Martin Leon Barreto

ask a geek

WHO WANTS TO CHAT WITH A CHATBOT?

More people than you'd think, says **Brian Heikes**, VP of product at 3Cinteractive, a Boca Raton, Fla.–based mobile marketing company.

Techies have long been talking about chatbots. And once Facebook announced this spring that brands could create their own bots for Facebook Messenger, the rest of the world caught on as well. A chatbot is software that simulates online conversations with humans—helping customers place orders, check in on deliveries, ask questions, and more. Thousands of businesses are now using them on Facebook, Twitter, and Slack, and for standard texts. And maybe, Heikes says, you should set one up, too. *–Mikal E. Belicove*



1 IMAGINE THE CUSTOMER

It's natural: You want your customer to love and interact with your brand. But you need to be realistic. Is a customer coming to chitchat all day with your bot? No. So what would they come for? Maybe to check product availability? Figure it out—hey, maybe ask your customers!—and then plan a bot that's simple, predictable, and useful. Don't forget: A poor bot interaction is worse than no bot at all.

2 PLOT YOUR BOT

Bots aren't all-knowing; they need your information. Want a chatbot for customer service? You'll need predetermined customer-service scripts (so if a customer asks about product shipping, say, the bot replies accordingly), a tool for accessing and logging customer data, and software that gives bots access to answers, like up-to-the-minute tracking info. For a sales-related bot, you'll need catalog and inventory data, product classifications (to ease navigation), and assets (pictures, descriptions, and pricing).

3 GIVE THE GREEN LIGHT

If you have a development team, they can set up a basic bot in a day. If not, you can hire someone to do it. Bots capable of handling simple interactions with fixed scripts and basic capabilities might run you a few thousand dollars to develop, while full-scale artificial intelligence will cost significantly more.

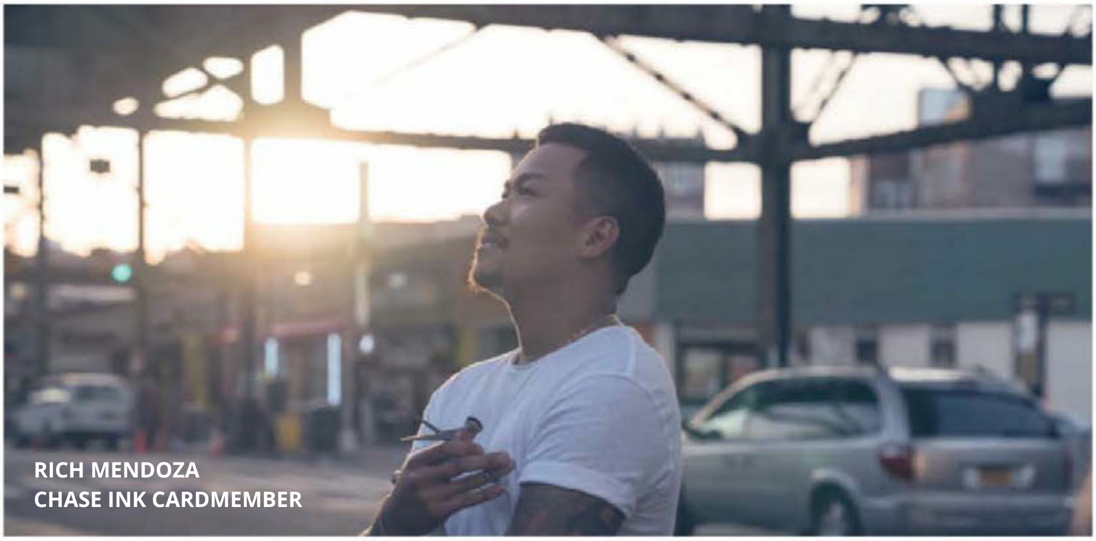
HOW FILTHY RICH BARBERSHOP
USED 60,000 POINTS TO

GIVE ITS SHOP A MUSTACHE.

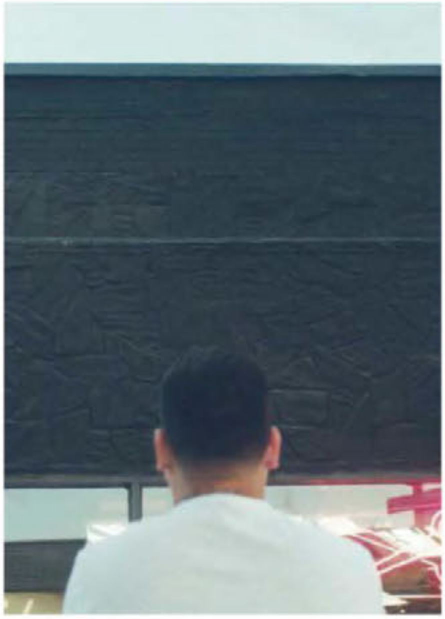
The points earned from a Chase Ink card can be an incredibly powerful tool for businesses, and they can be used for more than you'd think.

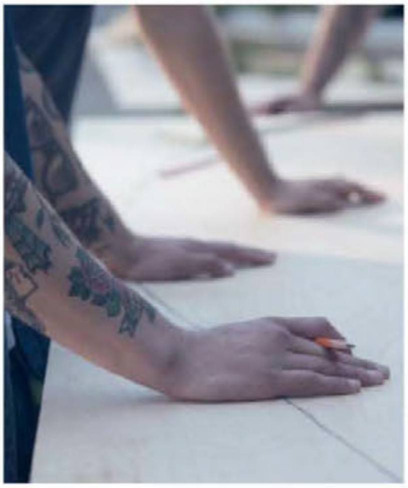
Rich Mendoza used his points to help solve a problem his business was facing. With train tracks running above his barbershop, getting passersby to notice his store wasn't easy.

So with the 60,000 points he earned from his Chase Ink card, Rich bought the materials he needed to give the front of his shop its own topiary mustache.


RICH MENDOZA
CHASE INK CARDMEMBER

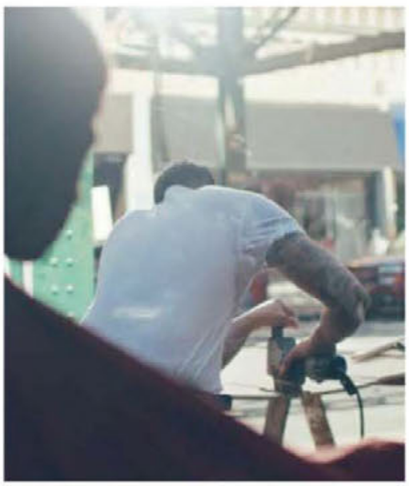
Since he founded Filthy Rich Barbershop in 2006, Rich has been known for adorning the front of his shop with new graffiti art each year. But this year, he wanted to try something different—something that would really stand out and let people know his shop is the place to go when you need a trim.





To create the mustache itself, he used 11,800 points for the framework, 3,200 points for wire and 45,000 points for plants, giving his shop a face no one would forget.

As Rich says, “We can shave our shop. You don’t think we can shave you?”



The No-Time-for-Lunch LUNCH TEST

A new wave of apps promises to make fast food even faster. But how good are they? We put four (all available for both iOS and Android) to the test. Bon app-étit!

By Seth Porges

DESK-MEAL WORTHINESS

Chick-fil-A One

THE PROMISE: Customize meals down to extra salt and "lite" mayonnaise, skip the line for pickup, and earn points toward free "treats."

THE REALITY: I felt all-powerful strutting into a crowded midtown Manhattan location and grabbing my bag of bird without a wait. And those free treats are a big deal: Chick-fil-A's loyalty program—which rewards frequent customers with items like soft-serve—had been invite-only and shrouded in mystery for years. The app finally grants anybody entrée.

Taco Bell Live Más

THE PROMISE: Make customized orders, get deals, and maybe even play a game.

THE REALITY: The app is eye-poppingly busy—lots of scenic landscapes and pics of millennials having fun overlaid by text like "Time to Recharge." At testing time, there were no special offers and the built-in game was "out of season." *Womp womp.* One plus, such as it is: I could choose additional ingredients or condiments for each food item.

Starbucks

THE PROMISE: Beat the line by preordering and prepaying for coffee and food. Cash in rewards for free beverages.

THE REALITY: If your local Starbucks has fear-inducing lines (like mine does), life is better when you can grab a joe to go. Although the automatic rewards system encourages me to stay: I'd get free in-store refills. (Also, I'd get a free drink on my birthday.) Maybe next time, I'll just grab a table to work at—and order from there.

Domino's Zero Click

THE PROMISE: Open an app and a pizza magically shows up at your door. No further tapping or typing required.

THE REALITY: This is nothing short of evil genius: I open the app, wait 10 seconds without clicking "cancel," and my favorite pizza (stored in my "pizza profile") shows up about 30 minutes later. Good news: The self-loathing associated with buying a MeatZZa Feast Pizza all for myself drops precipitously when I don't have to say the order out loud. □

Translate Lawyerspeak

CONTRACTUAL MUMBO JUMBO IS HARD TO FOLLOW. IS ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE THE SOLUTION?

SOMEONE NEEDS to read your business contracts. A lawyer can, for hundreds of dollars an hour. Or you can...but do you have a law degree? Now, a third option: Upload a contract and a Tel Aviv–based platform called **LawGeex** will scan it for anything amiss—first by automatically comparing it to 50,000-plus other contract samples, then generating a report that's reviewed by human lawyers for quality control. We asked to see it in action, so LawGeex scanned this document. Here, snippets. *–Mark Yarm*

NONDISCLOSURE AGREEMENT

The parties shall evaluate the Confidential Information received from the other party to determine whether they are interested in a further business arrangement ("Arrangement"). Each party shall advise the other of its interest.

Behold, an NDA between two businesses that are partnering. Once it's uploaded, LawGeex will issue a report **within 24 hours (and often within one hour).** Monthly subscriptions range from $79 to $899, depending on usage and contract complexity.

8. If, in the reasonable opinion of the recipient's counsel, any of the disclosing party's Confidential Information is required to be disclosed pursuant to law, regulation, or court order, the recipient shall give the disclosing party prompt, written notice (and in any case at least five (5) business days' notice) in order to allow the disclosing party to take whatever action it deems necessary to protect its Confidential Information.

This contract doesn't leave an employee properly protected against damage, should they get a court order. LawGeex's report **offers language to add** to the contract.

So much legalese! LawGeex **explains it in plain English:** "The recipient may disclose the confidential information when required to do so by law—for example, in response to a subpoena."

9. No-Competition. The Participant hereby agrees that he/she shall not compete with the business of the Company, or its successors or assigns during the term of this Agreement and for 24 months following its termination or expiration. The term "not compete" as used in this Agreement means that Participant shall not directly or indirectly, as an owner, officer, director, employee, consultant, or stockholder, engage in a business…

"Warning! This is not just an NDA," LawGeex says. **"This clause restricts your ability to compete."** The contract doesn't hide that, but someone might have missed it with a quick once-over.

Lawyers don't just review what's in a contract; **they also look for what's not.** In this case, LawGeex points out, the non-compete covers only one party—not both. Huge red flag! Fully "mutual" clauses are "found in 82 percent of [NDA] contracts" in LawGeex's database.

ILLUSTRATION BY GREG BECK/NOUN PROJECT (LUNCH BAGS)

your money

STOP BUYING YOUR TAX BREAKS

THE ANTIDOTE TO THE END-OF-THE-YEAR RUSH TO STOCK UP ON BUSINESS EXPENSES.

By Steph Wagner

ONCE I BECAME a business owner, I developed a curious obsession for paying as little in taxes as possible. Despite knowing better, I'd find myself scrambling toward the end of each year to buy a bunch of extra crap (even a new car!) that I didn't really need, all to maximize my business expenses and reduce my taxable income.

But buying a new MacBook, redecorating my office, or taking advantage of a loophole in the tax code by wasting $70,000 on an SUV is not a smart financial move—even if that SUV would save me $25,000 in taxes. It was all wasteful spending and, frankly, an embarrassment to my image as a self-proclaimed financial guru. So I came to my senses, stopped spending my way to lower taxes, and researched wiser ways to reduce what I owed Uncle Sam. I'm sharing this all now, just after you've filed your third-quarter taxes, so you have time to be proactive instead of reactive when

Photograph by David Rinella

reducing your tax hit in a few months. Here's what I found.

Easy: Do a January-December swap.

As you approach the end of the year, be strategic about your income and expenses. You may want to wait until January 2 to deposit earnings, or bump up paying January's bills during the last week in December. Why? If you're on the brink of moving into a higher tax bracket (or worse, the alternative minimum tax), some simple, smart decisions could keep you on the lower rung—or, in the case of being several thousand dollars over the threshold, push you back down.

Intermediate: Turn your LLC into a virtual S Corp.

If you operate your biz as an LLC, filing two simple forms could save you thousands. Let's say your business is on track to earn $200,000 this year. Given your current structure, be prepared to cough up an extra $30,600 on top of your state and federal income tax—because as an LLC, 100 percent of your earnings is subject to a 15.3 percent employment tax (a.k.a. FICA). But if you file IRS Forms 8832 and 2553, you can remain an LLC but be taxed as an S Corp. This means that only your salary (let's say it's $75,000) is subject to this employment tax. The remaining $125,000 will then be considered an owner's distribution or dividend, which isn't taxed for FICA. That just saved you $19,125.

Expert: Be creative with retirement plans.

Sure, SEP IRAs and solo 401(k)s are good retirement vehicles for the average entrepreneur, but if you really want to save big on taxes, consider setting up your own defined benefit and pension plan alongside a Safe Harbor 401(k). This helped a business owner I know reduce his tax bill on a million in earnings down to $400,000 in earnings. That other $600,000? More than $450,000 went into his personal retirement account. (His employees' retirement accounts got the rest.) Work with your tax accountant and wealth adviser to set up one for yourself. □

Steph Wagner is a private equity investor and a financial strategist.

startup finance

Help! They Won't Pay Me!

How to protect against stingy (or straight-up delinquent) customers.

By Margaret Littman

MITCHELL COMPTON II'S SUCCESS was starting to freak him out. He cofounded the San Diego–based Coconut Beach, which sells a line of coconut chips and drinks, and debuted the products at a natural-foods trade show in March 2015. Orders came in rapidly; he soon got up to $1 million in sales. But then he started wondering: *How reliable are some of these people?* "We had to figure out how to mitigate our worry over not getting paid in a timely manner, or at all," Compton says.

He decided to play it safe: He told many vendors that he simply couldn't sell to them at the time. And it went on like this for months, with Compton turning down business because he wasn't sure when he'd get paid.

Then he discovered a solution: trade credit insurance.

Photograph by Chris DeLorenzo

How does it work?

Trade credit insurance is also called accounts receivables insurance, and it's like a guaranteed credit check with benefits. You can buy it from specialty insurance companies or risk-management brokerage firms. And it works like this: When you're talking to a new customer, you can have your insurer check the customer's creditworthiness. Within hours to a few days, you'll learn if the customer is financially stable and how much credit they can afford. And if everything looks good, the insurer will insure the sale. That way, if the customer doesn't pay, your losses are covered by the policy (up to a specified maximum, of course).

Coconut Beach eventually purchased a policy for $20,000 per $5 million in orders; it covers a max of $750,000 in losses. That's an expensive premium, but it does come with a nice benefit: Claims are usually paid out in a matter of weeks, a boon to cash-starved startups that need all the incoming cash flow they can get.

Who needs it?

That's debatable. If you want to find out if U.S.–based companies pay promptly, you have many ways to do it: credit checks, contacting other vendors, and so on. But that research takes time. Do you have it to spare? There's less debate in industries with a high percentage of bankruptcies and closures, or ones that rely heavily on international customers. If that describes you, trade credit insurance could be critically valuable. To find a policy, contact your business insurance broker. Euler Hermes, Coface, AIG, and Marsh are a few of the main players writing policies.

What's the risk?

Euler Hermes, an insurer that offers trade credit policies for small companies with $1 million to $5 million in revenues, estimates that one in every 10 invoices is delinquent. Can your business afford to write off 10 percent of its accounts receivables?

So, was it worth it for Coconut Beach?

"I wish we had had trade credit insurance during the first five months we were in business," says Compton. "We said no to a bunch of potential domestic customers because we didn't know anything about them." Compton simply didn't have time or the manpower to conduct credit checks on every new customer—he was too busy managing his business. But now, with his insurance policy in place, he is able to say yes a lot more often. It's as simple as contacting his insurer: "A phone call and a couple of follow-up emails," he says, "and I'm done." □

ask the money guy

Compliance is a pain. Can I outsource it?

By Joe Worth

HOLD ON THERE. Let's back up and talk about what "compliance" is.

Industries can be divided into two categories: the heavily regulated and the less heavily regulated. We all know the ones buried under the most paperwork: healthcare, manufacturing, food, transportation, financial services, and energy. For those companies, compliance is core to their very survival. But even if you're not working in one of those industries, you still have a lot of laws and regulations to follow—submitting employee taxes, generating W-2s, staying on the right side of wage and health insurance rules, workplace safety, and more. That's all "compliance," too. Compliance covers nearly every aspect of your business.

You can't outsource all of it, because that would require outsourcing the very operation of your company. But you can do this: Ask your insurance broker or agent if their company has a certified risk-management specialist on staff, or if they know where to find one. Then pay for an assessment. You'll find out where your compliance structure is weakest—or at worst, nonexistent.

One area that deserves special attention is HR compliance. In my own experience as a CFO for hire, I've almost never arrived at a new client and *not* found many HR violations. (Employee classification—such as hourly versus salary, or wage and hour violations—are the most common.) When I do a deeper investigation, I usually find out that this is because HR is the very last function that every new business figures out and systematizes. And good news: HR is also a rare compliance issue that you can outsource. There's an entire ecosystem available to help businesses of all sizes manage HR at a reasonable cost. Some will even help you lower your health insurance premiums. Within your industry, look for professional employee organizations (PEOs), administrative service organizations (ASOs), and HR consultants who can get and keep you in HR compliance.

Whatever you do, don't dismiss compliance. What may seem trivial to you in terms of a regulation can come back to bite you in the form of costly fines and lawsuits from employees or customers. And it can happen in ways you'd have never anticipated. (Data theft of customer information? Guess what could have solved that?) Compliance is a pain, yes, but it's just another cost of doing business. □

Joe Worth is a partner of B2B CFO.

ADVERTISEMENT

Road Risks: What You Need to Know Before Your Business Gets Behind the Wheel

Don't let any of these all-too-common situations force your company off the road.

Picture this: You run a small business with 10 employees and have just ordered lunch. Someone in the office gets in his car to go pick up the order.

En route, your employee takes his eyes off the road and BAM—rear-ends the car in front of him.

Since it's a personal vehicle, you're in the clear, right? Wrong. You could be liable for the accident. And if it turns out your employee didn't have a valid driver's license or insurance, now your business could have a much larger problem on its hands.

That's just one of the many potential risks that Pete VanDyne, commercial auto safety consultant at Liberty Mutual Insurance, says exist for businesses. Having a safe-driving program can help keep your employees safe on the road while also ensuring that your business is covered in the case of an accident.

What goes into a safe-driving program?

Your policy should apply to all vehicles used for company business — including personal vehicles. Share your policy with new employees and require all employees—even those with infrequent driving responsibilities —to periodically review it. Your independent insurance agent and insurer can help identify your specific business exposures so that your policy addresses key areas, such as:

Vetting new drivers.
Establish minimum driving standards before you let employees get behind the wheel. "Just because someone drives to work every day doesn't necessarily mean he or she has a license or a good driving record," VanDyne says.

Get permission to obtain the person's motor vehicle driving history to check for traffic violations, accidents, or DUI/DWI convictions. Also check licenses to confirm they are current. And if an employee is driving a personal vehicle, make sure he or she carries insurance with adequate policy limits.

Conducting regular maintenance.
Employees should be responsible for daily visual checks of the tires and bodies of company cars. Require employees to immediately report and turn in vehicles for maintenance or repairs if they find problems (i.e., worn tire treads, broken lights, bodily damage, etc.).

Also require employees to comply with manufacturer recommendations in regards to oil changes and maintenance.

Banning distracted driving.
Phone usage, including texting and checking email, should be disallowed. No employer should knowingly force their employees into contradicting policy.

"Management can create those situations by calling employees they know are driving," VanDyne says.

Documenting everything.
Right after a vehicle accident, an employee should call 911 (if not injured and able). The employee should also take photos of any damage to both vehicles and the surrounding area. It's important to document everything even when there seems to be a "gentleman's agreement" over the damage, or when the damage is nonexistent.

Something as small as skid marks captured on a phone camera could make the difference when it comes time to assess liability.

Visit **libertymutualgroup.com/details**

Liberty Mutual.
INSURANCE

vc viewpoint

HUNTING SEASON STARTS NOW

The success of your company's pitch could depend on the calendar. **By Sam Hogg**

IT'S AS PREDICTABLE as the seasons themselves: As the year moves from fall into winter, I see hot deals start to lose steam. Company founders suddenly discover that scheduling a phone call with a VC becomes hard. Trying for an actual meeting? Uh-uh. It's December in VC land, the month where deals go to die. The same thing happens every August.

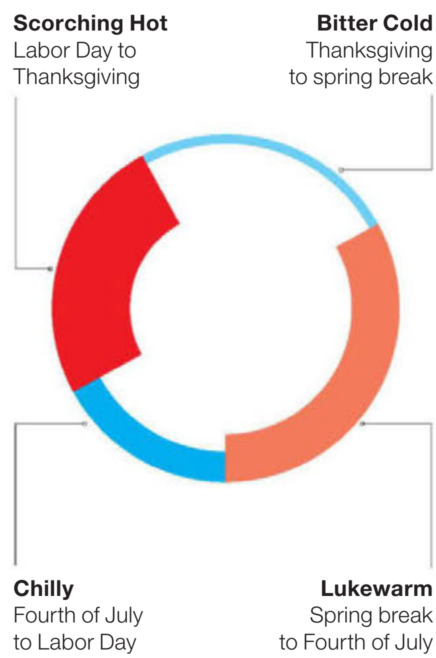
I'm not sure why the VC industry adopted Wall Street's seasonality, but it has. The main vacation months of March (spring break), August (summer break), and Thanksgiving through New Year's (holidays) bring the industry to a standstill. This may confuse a lot of newcomers; after all, CrunchBase data shows that more deals close in December than in any other month. But that's only because the lion's share of the work occurred in the previous three to four months. The legal work alone of closing the deal takes at least a month.

So when is the best time to start raising money? The data points to the spring and the fall. And of those two, the fall—after Labor Day but before Thanksgiving break—is the better option. That's right now! VCs are in the business of deploying capital; if their year starts slow, they're inclined to catch up before the end of the year by doing more or slightly larger deals and spending more money. During these months, you can string together a lot of VCs' undivided attention. Even better, these are hot conference seasons, when investors are prowling around the country looking for great new companies to fund. Do your future a favor and attend one. Don't be afraid to try to book side meetings with any VCs in attendance. Investors are there to be seen and make deals, just like you.

If you're reading this and you're in the middle of a deal, good for you. If you're not, you'd better get moving. The window to line up a good one shuts down in less than two months, and it won't reopen until after March. Happy hunting. □

Sam Hogg is a partner at Open Prairie Ventures and Huron River Ventures.

Funding Seasons



How I Saved $450,000

Scott Slater, founder, Slater's 50/50, Orange County, Calif.

"We're a restaurant, and our core is burgers, bacon, and beer. We wanted to speed up our kitchen by simplifying our menu, so we went item by item, looking at sales and prep time and whether an ingredient only appeared on one dish. If it did, it was cut. The process took about three months, and in the first year after, we increased earnings by 7.5 percent." *—As told to Margaret Littman*

ILLUSTRATION BY SHUTTERSTOCK/D.R. 3D

Tiana Kubik is never the only Kubik on set.

THE NEW FAMILY BUSINESS

STAY AT HOME WITH THE KIDS, OR RETURN TO THE WORKFORCE? A NEW CROP OF ENTREPRENEURS IS BRAVELY DOING BOTH.

By Kate Rockwood

GRIFFIN "GRIFF" KUBIK is holding a dog leash, his 3-year-old fingers wrapped around the vinyl cord as a terrier sniffs the grass near his feet. It might not look like it to passersby in the park, but the duo are on the clock: They're on a photo shoot, the dog is about to be in *Chicago Parent* magazine, and Griff is playing unofficial dog wrangler. Nearby, Griff's parents are setting up the next shot.

"Hold tight to the leash, Griff," calls his mother. He's used to taking instruction. His parents are cofounders of TK Photography, which, with

Photographs by Jesse Chehak

more than 1,200 sessions a year, is one of Chicago's biggest family photography companies. Dad (Thomas) is the principal photographer; Mom (Tiana) is the management whiz. They have a team of three other photographers, as well as cullers, editors, and admin support. And through it all, Griff has been a constant presence: The business is one endless Take Your Kid to Work Day. "We're not taking Griff along because we can't find a babysitter," Thomas says after the shoot. "We want him involved, and being entrepreneurs means we have the flexibility to spend that time together."

The Kubiks are part of a growing class of business owners who refuse to choose between full-time parenting and work, instead merging the two worlds into one big family operation. But that brings a fresh series of hurdles in addition to the usual startup stresses: making sure the business and the kids are getting enough attention, explaining the kids' presence to clients and staff, and finding some kind of work/life balance when work and life are intertwined. But like the Kubiks, many think the benefits outweigh the extra challenges—and they're getting creative about finding solutions.

For Kelly Schneider, split shifts are the answer. Based in Bloomfield Hills, Mich., she spends most of the day with her 3-, 4-, and 5-year-old children, and the bulk of her afternoons and evenings running a company called At Home Tutoring. But when those shifts overlap, it means bringing the kids to a client meeting or taking a call while they're playing in the background. "Most people are understanding," she says. "But if I have to do a Skype tutoring session for a full hour, that's really stressful. I'll set the kids up with a TV show and explain to them that if they can't be quiet for an hour, I'm going to lose this job. One started saying, 'Mom's going to lose the house if we're not good.'"

Even with the added stress, Schneider says entrepreneurship has kept her sane amid the chaos of parenting. And while she's eager to grow beyond her current stable of 10 tutors, she wants to be thoughtful about expansions. "I've been growing in a way that I don't have to sacrifice my whole week," she says. "There are things I could have done to grow faster, but then I'd have had to dedicate every waking minute to the business. And I don't want that."


Tiana Kubik and Griff, on the job.

Neither do most parents. When Margaret Hardigan launched a local Chicago group for work-from-home moms last year, nearly 500 members signed up in the first nine months. "People want to be present parents but also do something with that magical degree they spent all that time getting," says Hardigan, who runs a marketing and events agency while home with her two kids. "Having your own business gives you the flexibility to do both—but it's also really, really difficult."

The group, RocketMamas, hosts monthly incubator meetings for business owners and weekly working dates at local play spaces, so parents can pound their laptops while kids run amok in the background. RocketMamas' online forum has become a safe place to troubleshoot problems particular to this realm: *How do you organize your home office amid the kid clutter?* (Threaten to throw away any toys that wind up in your space.) *Does anyone want to set up a childcare swap next week?* (Oh, yes.) *What activities keep your kids entertained for more than 10 minutes?* (Washable markers!) "If you want to be running a successful company, you have to have some structure in place," Hardigan says. "That starts with building a village of like-minded parents who understand."

Connections like these can also grow beyond networking. "Our circle of friends changed," Tiana Kubik says. "We're now naturally closer to other families trying to do this, too—but that's been a huge source of support." It has also given them enough confidence to go through it all again: The Kubiks are expecting their second child this month. "With Griff, there was no maternity leave," Tiana says. "I was answering emails on my phone from my hospital bed. But now we've built a team—I won't be doing nothing, but I won't have to be on the front lines the entire time." □

TOUGHER THAN EVER

How do you get past a setback? Take a cue from one of the entrepreneurs profiled in the new book *In the Company of Women: Inspiration and Advice from Over 100 Makers, Artists and Entrepreneurs,* by Grace Bonney.

Rethink the goal line.

"We felt a lot of pressure to operate like a startup, not a small business—which meant going after investment and crazy-fast, hockey-stick growth. We tried to scale in ways that didn't totally make sense, and spent time, energy, and money chasing this dream we felt societal pressure to pursue. Once we let go of that, we felt more confident in the things we are really good at—and our ability to build on those things in meaningful ways."

—Erica Cerulo, cofounder, Of a Kind

Make team decisions.

"I try to share my feelings with everyone in the studio and work through hardships together so we can collectively strategize and move forward. Anything that can affect our livelihoods is open to discussion and suggestions."

—Tanya Aguiniga, founder, Aguiniga Designs

Attack assumptions.

"I thought I knew how to [build this business] because I had bootstrapped a company before and succeeded. But after going back to the drawing board [a few times], I learned it is easier to create something with no preconceived notions. In being flexible and changing our strategy, we now have Amazon and Verizon as investors and are closing major distribution deals."

—Gauri Nanda, cofounder, Toymail

Quotes edited for space.

INVEST IN THE FRANCHISE THAT'S RIGHT FOR YOU

WATER

14,000 AMERICANS experience a water damage emergency at work or home each day.

[NFPA, Home Structure Fires, 2015]

37% OF U.S. HOMEOWNERS claim to have suffered losses from water damage.

[Snell Experts, Mold Facts and Statistics, 2011]

98% OF BASEMENTS IN THE U.S. will experience some type of water damage during their lifespan.

[Water Damage Defense, Water Damage By The Numbers, 2015]

FIRE

From 2009-2013, approximately one out of 335 households per year reported a home fire.

[Water Damage Defense, Water Damage By The Numbers, 2015]

MOLD

There has been a 1,100% increase in mold-related insurance claims over the past decade.

[Water Damage Defense, Water Damage By The Numbers, 2015]

GOING GREEN

The restoration industry offers environmentally-friendly products and practices.

[Industry IQ, Fire and Water Damage Restoration, 2007]

HOW WE'RE DIFFERENT:

- Average Gross Annual Sales: $1,048,293
  Reflects the average collected revenue of the 12 franchised business in operation for the full calendar year 2015
- Recession-Proof Business
- Low Start-Up / Low Overhead
- Home-based Franchise
- Over 80 Locations & Expanding Rapidly
- Financing Available

Restoration 1
WATER DAMAGE EXPERTS

GET STARTED NOW!

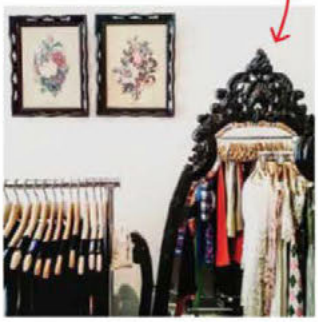
Visit us at restoration1franchise.com
or contact our CEO, **Gary Findley**, at
800.993.0803 or gary@restoration1.com

So, you want to open a **vintage shop?**

It's a good time: Sales at consignment and thrift shops are growing every year. But be prepared for a life of nonstop scavenger hunting. *By Ashlea Halpern*

TYA TIEMPETCH
OWNER
THE RABBIT HOLE
MIAMI

"The smaller your niche, the easier it is to connect with a core customer base. Plus, your social media presence will be more impactful."



Tiempetch's shop has 15,000 Instagram followers, but not just because of her wares. She takes photography seriously, down to composition, lighting, and styling. If that doesn't come naturally, she says, pay a pro for pointers. Then use your best shots everywhere—from Twitter to Yelp.

CHRISTOPHE LOIRON
OWNER
MISTER FREEDOM
LOS ANGELES

"The entire business of antiques, clothing or otherwise, is based on who has the most knowledge and the better contacts to resell at a profit."

HIT THE ROAD. "Buying trips are rarely glamorous, but they're requisite for keeping fresh inventory," Loiron says. Go often.

MAKE FRIENDS. Buddy up with—and tip!—your local dealers and rag houses (warehouses that sort discarded clothing). They'll call you with hot finds.

ANTICIPATE TRENDS. "The price of a vintage item is based on hype," Loiron says. If you can predict what's next, you'll buy low, wait a bit, then sell high.

KATHRYNE WISEMAN
CO-OWNER
STREET SCENE VINTAGE
LEXINGTON, KY

"Always think of the reason something vintage would be needed today. If it doesn't have a practical or modern function, why would a customer buy it?"

Start small. "When my partner and I first opened, we had a booth in an antiques mall," Wiseman says. Smart move. It's cheaper than a store, provides more time to scout inventory, and lets you commune with like-minded vendors. Biggest downside: the slice of your sales you owe to the mall. Negotiate your terms upfront.

Going in...

Gems are often found at estate sales, but don't barge in. "It is a real honor to be allowed into someone's home to look through their loved one's things," Wiseman says. "Be patient and kind and pay the most you feel comfortable with. Vultures earn a reputation, but compassion will earn you respect in your field."

...and coming out

The average American donates 12 pounds of clothing per year, according to the Council for Textile Recycling. Much of that will end up at rag houses. The best is divvied up to resale and consignment shops; the rest is shipped overseas (so teenagers in Bolivia can enjoy someone's dad's old polyester shirt) or recycled.

NEXT MONTH So, you want to open a **wine store?**

PHOTOGRAPH COURTESY OF THE RABBIT HOLE (TIEMPETCH); PHOTOGRAPH COURTESY OF MISTER FREEDOM (LOIRON); PHOTOGRAPH BY MADISON RAYE WATHEN (WISEMAN); ILLUSTRATIONS BY AKAISER/SHUTTERSTOCK; ILLUSTRATION BY HEIN NOUWENS/SHUTTERSTOCK (HOUSE)

READY TO GO GLOBAL?

IT HAS BECOME A SYMBOL OF SUCCESS—WHEN YOUR STARTUP OPENS ITS FIRST OFFICE ACROSS AN OCEAN. BUT THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN CRUSHING IT AND GETTING CRUSHED ABROAD IS KNOWING WHEN YOU'RE READY TO MAKE THE LEAP.

By Kate Rockwood • Illustration by Brian Stauffer

HARRY KARGMAN is bracing himself for the busiest part of his day. It's 3:30 in the afternoon, and the founder and CEO of the mobile advertising firm Kargo is sitting in a small conference room in London, where the company just opened its first international outpost. For the next few hours—as Kargo's three U.S. offices wake up and come to life—his schedule is slammed with back-to-back calls with the teams at home.

"Scheduling a phone call sounds so mundane," says Kargman, who is camped out in the U.K. for the next three weeks to make sure the new operation is running smoothly. (Yes, we're one of the many calls in today's tight window.) "But we're learning that having the right level of communication is one of the biggest challenges of expanding globally. I wake up and there's not a single person on the management team I can reach for five hours. At midnight, I'm still having calls with the West Coast. I don't want to drop off the map, so we had to find a time slot that would work everywhere."

In addition to time zones, there are plenty of potholes on the entrepreneurial path to global domination: Consider the legal paperwork to register the business abroad and review the company's contracts for compliance. The hoops and hassle of setting up a foreign bank account to pay local employees. The stress of scouting talent in a new market. The startup costs of renting a space and hiring employees and traveling between countries. Not to mention finding customers in a place where your brand has no name recognition.

So why go global at all? Well, imagining the payoff is as simple as spinning a globe. "The siren song of being in another market that's twice the size of your current market can be really strong," says Greg Schott, CEO of MuleSoft, which provides application networks for enterprise companies. MuleSoft earned its "unicorn" $1.5 billion valuation in part by making the leap abroad early on: Today the 10-year-old company has eight international offices, stretching from Hong Kong to Amsterdam to Buenos Aires.

But quickly lobbing across the pond wasn't an option for Kargo. Kargman had bootstrapped the now 13-year-old business, which only recently started seeing explosive growth: It hit $100 million in revenue in 2015, an increase of 100 percent over the year before and an eye-popping 5,500 percent growth rate over the past five years. Kargo now has the cash flow to think internationally, but there's no guarantee that the company will find success abroad. "It's like starting from scratch—and while it's kind of exciting to start over, it's also a challenge," Kargman says. "You've been knocked off the top rung of the ladder, and now you have to climb back up from the ground floor again."

"It's like starting from scratch—and while it's kind of exciting, IT'S ALSO A CHALLENGE."

Committing to the culture

For MuleSoft, Schott says that opening the second global office was certainly easier than the first, but "you can't think you're going to walk in and sell the same way," he stresses. "In France and Germany, you can't get meetings without native speakers. In Japan, it's all about showcasing the partners you have."

A local office in a foreign market doesn't just make it easier to *do* business—it's also a signal to those customers that you *mean* business. "Opening an office is a demonstration of commitment to a market, and that can really help culturally," says Ed Marsh, a principal at Consilium Global Business Advisors and a small-business export adviser for American Express. "But the biggest mistake companies make is not being persistent enough. There will be mistakes and lessons learned and discouraging days, but you can't look at those with the same parameters for success you might use in the domestic market."

Nor can you apply one universal yardstick for all global offices. Schott quickly saw that the company's approach and patience would have to be tailored to each region. Markets with nascent cloud deployment meant fewer competitors but more time spent educating customers and encouraging the tech's adoption. Others, like Japan, had higher costs for getting off the ground but held greater long-term potential.

"We have gone into some markets where we realized that the payback period was too long, and we exited," says Schott, who declined to specify which markets he left. "But we do intend to go back there when the environment has shifted." And when they do, it will likely be with the same all-in mentality that Schott encourages for every entrepreneur. "You might start with one person, but within a reasonably short time you want to have a small office and begin adding people," he says. To make an impression on clients and grab a chunk of the local market, you can't have one employee working out of a home office for long.

Choosing your team—and new markets—wisely

Schott has one other vital piece of advice for the early days of expansion: "Don't hire fighter pilots," he says. "Those global hires have to sync up with your culture early on, or you'll have a remote rogue situation." To seed synchronicity between the offices, Schott hosts a monthly all-hands video meeting, and once a year MuleSoft foots the bill to fly all employees to San Diego for a weeklong team-building retreat. That's 900 people this year. "The dollars are staggering," Schott admits. "But then you think, if you're taking them away from their jobs for a week, that's 2 percent of their total time you just ate, added to the 2 percent you're spending in cost to travel. Are they going to be 4 percent better the rest of the year because we got together and got on


Kargo CEO Harry Kargman

Enroll in a Tax Course with Liberty Tax Service and see where it can lead.

- Get insight into the tax business.
- See why tax preparation is reliable.
- Learn how you can take advantage of Liberty Tax's low-cost franchise opportunity.

Entrepreneur FRANCHISE 500 BEST OF THE BEST 2016

For more information about Liberty's Tax Course visit LibertyTax.com/Tax-Education or call 800-658-1042.

CA: Liberty Tax Service has been approved by the California Tax Education Council to offer Liberty Tax School (CTEC Course #2097-QE-0001), which fulfills the 60-hour "qualifying education" requirement imposed by the State of California to become a tax preparer. A listing of additional requirements to register as a tax preparer may be obtained by contacting CTEC at P.O. Box 2890, Sacramento, CA 95812-2890, toll-free by phone at (877) 850-2883, or on the Internet at www.ctec.org **MD, NY:** Additional instruction and requirements are necessary to prepare an individual for employment as a Registered Tax Return Preparer. **OR:** Licensed by Oregon Higher Education Coordinating Commission (OAR) 715-045-0033(6). Students must pass the Tax Preparer examination given by Oregon Board of Tax Practitioners before preparing tax returns for others. **TN:** Students will be offered employment per satisfactory completion. **AR**: Licensed by SBPCE.

Enrollment in, or completion of, the Liberty Tax Course is neither an offer nor a guarantee of employment, except as may be required by the state. Additional qualifications may be required. Enrollment restrictions apply. State restrictions may apply and additional training may be required. Valid at participating locations only. Void where prohibited. Liberty is an equal opportunity employer.

Many states offer tax courses free of charge, with a small fee for books and supplies.

LIBERTY TAX SERVICE®

libtaxfranchise libertytaxfranchise

MuleSoft CEO Greg Schott

“The siren song of being in another market that’s TWICE THE SIZE OF YOUR CURRENT MARKET can be really strong.”

the same page? We believe yes.”

Of course, long before you’re flying 900 people around the world for a staff retreat, you have to start by picking your first spot. If you’re already selling internationally through an e-commerce site, Marsh recommends studying those metrics to gauge geographic interest. But don’t stop sleuthing there. “Industry-specific trade associations do a lot of research and can help companies tap into huge databases to see where demand is growing and falling,” he says. “And you can also look at global trends beyond your industry, like the surge in middle-class wealth and consumerism in some markets, like China.”

That’s where Indiegogo is now toying with the idea of opening its next office. The crowdfunding platform, launched in 2008, is used in 223 countries, in four languages, and in five currencies. “We started noticing more and more campaigns from China in Q3 of last year, but we saw that the videos and stories Chinese entrepreneurs were sharing weren’t as compelling as they could be,” says CEO David Mandelbrot. So in late 2015, Indiegogo started sending an employee to China for extended, weeks-long trips to meet with creative agencies and entrepreneurs. A few months later, they dedicated a second staff member.

“In the past, we’ve had full-time people in Canada

PHOTOGRAPH BY MICHAEL HINDMAN

and the U.K., but we found we could do that work from here," he says. "China has proven to be a very different beast—and it's helped that we've had a very specific idea at the outset, not just to move into China but to provide a particular solution for customers there."

Still, more than six months after first considering a Chinese expansion, Mandelbrot seems genuinely undecided on whether opening an office is the next step. "Before we invest in an office space and infrastructure, we want to make sure we're really testing our hypothesis about what's possible in that market in a fairly low-cost way," he says.

Being brave enough to pump the brakes

That pull and hesitation to go global is something most entrepreneurs will grapple with. And some will conclude that it's just not worth it.

Jessica Mah, cofounder and CEO of inDinero, is somewhere in the middle. Her VC-backed, full-service accounting startup opened an office in the Philippines just four years after its 2009 launch. But the expansion wasn't designed to attract new customers. It was a strategic talent grab—snatching star tech and financial hires at a fraction of its San Francisco HQ's payroll. The next step, it would seem, is to appeal to new clients in and around the Philippines—but Mah is still dragging her feet.

"Every week I field the question from an investor or employee or even customer: 'When are you going to go global?' There's immense pressure to do it," she says. "But the conversation comes up a lot with my CEO friends, too, and the vast majority of them who have expanded globally say they regret it. Even if you're successful, going global can distract you from untapped domestic growth."

So while Mah has some of the hassle of managing a global workforce already worked out—she has appointed a president to oversee the Philippines office and invested in robust videoconferencing and regular travel for employees to help gel a unified company culture—she is still not sure global customers are a rising priority.

InDinero would have to double down on its marketing and sales budget, and train employees on the ins and outs of a new country's tax code and compliance requirements—while still trying to nurture its U.S. market share. "Going global is sexy and it sounds good, but is it necessary?" she asks. "We could build a $1 billion business in the U.S., and I don't want to distract us from that goal. So every quarter so far, I'm saying, 'Not right now.'" □

John Abercrombie comes from a land down under.

franchisee

NOT YOUR STANDARD IMMIGRANT STORY

WHY ONE AUSTRALIAN FAMILY TREKKED TO AMERICA FOR HYDRAULIC HOSES.

By Jason Daley

Photographs by Michael Friberg

Immigrants have long sought America's bounties. The Pilgrims came for religious freedom. Countless others came for work. And John and Alison Abercrombie came for the abundance of hydraulic hoses. In fact, they sold their home, packed up their two children, and moved from Wollongong, Australia, to Houston because of those hoses. It's a story that begins at the Abercrombie family hydraulics-services company in southern Australia. John's father sold the business, and then John and Alison continued to work there while looking for a shot at controlling their own destiny. John was attracted to Pirtek, an Aussie-based mobile franchise that fixes hydraulic hoses on equipment like excavators at work or construction sites, but it turned out that the brand was already well-established throughout Oz. And yet! The company was eager to expand into the U.S., and John was game to help, so off the family went. Last January he opened a Pirtek unit in Houston.

Is Pirtek that good of an opportunity that you'd move halfway around the world?

We knew we wanted to own a franchise business. That was clear. We wondered what we could do in Australia, and it came down to running a chicken-wings shop or something like that. But from my [former] career, I was very comfortable with Pirtek and saw the potential it has in the U.S. And to be honest, having an adventure and resetting our life was appealing. We compared it to wiping a whiteboard clean and designing things anew.

Was it difficult to get a visa to move to the United States?

It's a terrifying process. From start to finish it was five or six months, and it all depended on walking up to a counter at the U.S. consulate and praying that the gentleman behind it accepted our application. If he didn't, we had no plan B; we had already quit our jobs [at the hydraulics-services business] and sold the house. It was extremely stressful.

Why Houston? How's it going?

We looked at Charlotte and Las Vegas. But our family felt most comfortable in Houston. It's just a massive opportunity; there are an incredible number of hydraulic hose users. So far, we feel we're fitting in well. We came from a city of 300,000. Houston has seven million. It was quite a shock to see the freeways and get used to traffic.

What's been the biggest difference?

It's the small things that drive you nuts—like paper checks. In Australia, I hadn't used a check in 15 years. Here they are standard, and people still use fax machines quite a bit. But the biggest difference is employee skills. Australia has a very strong technical training system where technicians would have done three to four years of college and had an apprenticeship. Not so here. We really have to watch to spot people who are technically competent versus people just saying they are to get a job. □

franchisor

Odd Mom Out

A personal trainer seeking postpartum classes winds up creating her own empire.

By Jason Daley

PHOTOGRAPHS COURTESY OF BABY BOOT CAMP

SO MUCH CHANGES when you have a baby. Sometimes the experience can even inspire a new career. That's what happened to **Kristen Horler, a personal trainer and Pilates instructor in the San Francisco Bay Area.** In 2001, after the birth of her first child, she became interested in postpartum fitness. But although she found a bounty of contradictory articles online (of course), there was little in the way of actual fitness classes. So she developed her own range of 60-minute classes for pregnant women, new moms, and mothers with toddlers—a mix of strength and cardio exercises that allow moms to engage with their children as they sweat. Word spread, and soon Horler was getting requests from playgroups all over to teach her branded Baby Boot Camp classes. Her hobby grew into a business, and in 2005, she began franchising.

> “Most are young moms making a career change—they want something for themselves.”
> —Kristen Horler

Is this just a California thing?
The prenatal and postpartum market is underserved all across the country. In fact, our first franchisee was a personal trainer in Dallas who saw all these new moms wandering the malls with their strollers. They didn’t have anyplace to go. As word of mouth spread, we started getting interest from Oklahoma, Florida, and New York. Now we have 100 units across the country, with eight more to open by the end of 2016.

Is Baby Boot Camp only about integrating strollers and fitness, or are there other kinds of workouts?
We do have running programs and nutrition support. And we recently rolled out our Core9 Birth Recovery Program. Women are not cleared to do physical activity until six to eight weeks postpartum, so we aid them through effective movements and stretches, nutrition, and the support of our amazing community of moms. We also have a program that focuses on healing diastasis recti, a common postpartum condition in which the stomach muscles separate. It can cause problems with incontinence and back pain and go on for decades.

Your franchise is cheap—just $4,000 to buy a unit. How?
All you need is a car, a cellphone, and a computer. Classes take place with permission in public spaces like parks during spring, and indoors at places such as local churches in the summer and winter.

Who are your franchisees?
Most are young moms making a career change—they want something for themselves that is flexible and provides additional income. Many were in real estate or were teachers or in corporations, working more than 40 hours a week. They teach their classes, manage the business, and have the flexibility to be there when their family needs them. □


THE GRAVITY VAULT
INDOOR ROCK GYMS
WALLTOPIA

AND NOW FOR SOMETHING COMPLETELY DIFFERENT

Meet some of today's most innovative franchisors, who are finding success by daring to think fresh.

By Jason Daley

The Gravity Vault wants to take climbing gyms mainstream.

T

Tim Walsh learned to love rock climbing in the Shawangunk Mountains, a bedrock ridge outside the town of New Paltz, 80 miles north of New York City. **Lucas Kovalcik,** his high school friend, developed his own passion for the sport indoors, as a grad school student at UCLA. When their paths met again at a friend's birthday party, they hatched a plan to open a climbing gym. "Tim and I were touched so much by climbing," says Kovalcik. "We enjoyed it and what it had done for us mentally and physically, and we wanted to bring it to other people."

So they did. In 2005, they opened The Gravity Vault, an indoor rock gym, in Upper Saddle River, N.J. The timing was perfect: Climbing was catching on with the suburban set, powered by an under-the-radar national craze. The number of climbing gyms in the U.S. has increased fivefold in the past two decades, to 450, and is still rising. And Walsh and Kovalcik have risen with it: In 2009, they opened a second Gravity Vault 40 miles south of the original. They were eager to keep expanding, but climbing gyms are expensive to open—$875,000 to $1.7 million a pop. So, in 2013, they began franchising. Now they say they'll have six to seven units—three or four of them franchises—open across the Northeast by the end of the year.

A decade or two ago, people like Walsh and Kovalcik may never have gotten into the franchise game: The industry was known mostly for safe, common concepts like burger joints and oil change shops, and there was little room for out-of-the-box thinking. But that's been changing as franchisors and brands are willing to take a chance on unique and innovative ideas—whether they're sports like climbing walls or once seemingly niche areas like life coaching, group therapy, paralysis recovery, mobile video gaming parlors, and even dog hotels.

"I see unique concepts out there all the time. There are some crazy things that take to the market very well," says Steve Beagelman, CEO of SMB Franchise Advisors, which counts The Gravity Vault among its clients. "But it's got to be something other people can operate. If you can't teach someone else to make your product or perform your service, it won't work."

That's exactly what Joe Whaley faced with his brand Chocolate Works. He had to distill a lifetime's worth of chocolate know-how into a system so simple that even 5-year-old kids could be chocolatiers. Whaley grew up working at his parents' chocolate shop in New York City and took it over in 1999. In 2008, the economy was tanking, and so were the corporate clients who bought

PHOTOGRAPHS COURTESY OF GRAVITY VAULT

most of his product. That led him to try some new ideas. The most successful: He added a retail shop and party space to his factory in Valley Stream, N.Y. "What we did was take the Hershey theme park and shrunk it down to fit in a retail store," he says.

At children's birthday parties, kids can work the machines that cloak Oreos or marshmallows in chocolate, decorate their own creations, and dip candy in a chocolate fountain. "The party piece revolutionized our business," says Whaley. Two businessmen approached him about expanding this concept, so he licensed two locations in the surrounding area. Then, in 2012, he hired franchise attorneys and a consultant to get Chocolate Works ready for a bigger rollout—and, he says, sold 35 units in 20 months, mostly in the Northeast. Now Whaley is ready to take his concept national, and has lined up an international candy distributor to get his chocolate and ingredients anywhere in the country.

Chocolate Works' unusual premise is its appeal. Whaley says potential franchisees understand this instinctively. "For the most part, they love the fact that we are extremely unique," he says. "We have leads from people all around the world who think this is a new and exciting space."

Success can't just be measured in interest, of course. As any franchisor knows, most people who say, "I'd love to run that business!" can't actually do it. Chocolate Works and other innovative brands must target and pick the right candidates. And who's that? According to Dan Rowe, CEO of franchise development firm Fransmart, it's a specific breed of franchisee that's as uncommon as the uncommon business itself. "Franchisees have to agree not only to come into emerging concepts early," he says, "but also to follow the founders' lead as the concept changes."

Comfort with change has been critical for franchisees of Montreal-based Spray-Net, which focuses on painting the kind of home surfaces that most people don't consider "paintable" (like aluminum or vinyl siding and stucco). Using a proprietary spray system, technicians can adjust the paint's consistency for heat and humidity on-site, ensuring the optimum drying time for the paint. While this core concept has not changed dramatically since it launched, the specifics have. "We've been franchising for two years, and our system has evolved tremendously," says founder Carmelo Marsala. "We've developed custom software, figured out how to paint new surfaces, and introduced a great training system." And of course, those changes then have to be adopted by the franchisees—meaning Marsala succeeds only if he picks franchisees who can evolve with the business.

THE NUMBER OF CLIMBING GYMS IN THE U.S. HAS INCREASED FIVEFOLD IN THE PAST TWO DECADES, TO 450, AND IS STILL RISING.

The numbers tell a good story: Since 2013, Spray-Net has opened 36 units in Canada. Another 14 are slated to open next year. The brand also has plans to move into the U.S. market.

For many franchisors with nontraditional concepts, the U.S. market is the ultimate goal. But that doesn't mean it's the only path.

It was actually the Chinese market that helped Michael and Babz Barnett. In 2004, they opened Romp n' Roll stateside, in Virginia. Their concept is like a club with varied programs—art, dance, music, and play—for children up to the age of 5. It proved so popular, they opened a second unit 10 months later and began to franchise in 2008. When the U.S. recession hit, they pulled back, and wound up franchising with a company in China instead. They opened 85 units there between 2010 and 2015.

This twist had an unexpected benefit: It helped them refine their model and gave them the experience they needed to push ahead back in the U.S. in 2014. Now they have eight units in America, with another four under construction. While the market for children's franchises is booming, Michael Barnett says their club model helps them stand out as a selling point. Parents can drop in for hour-long sessions any day of the week without having enrolled in any particular class. Romp n' Roll is there for whatever works for their schedule. "Being different is a big point of pride," he says. "We didn't invent the category, but we improved it greatly."

Tara Gilad is specifically banking on being different. Her restaurant, Vitality Bowls, offers a variety of dishes based on the trendy superfruit açai, but it's really the focus on allergies that sets her concept apart from almost any other franchise brand. Her daughter has severe food allergies, so Gilad knows personally how difficult it is to take someone like her out to eat. That's why Vitality Bowls is as allergy-friendly and as accommodating to dietary sensitivities as possible. It offers vegan, vegetarian, gluten-free, wheat-free, and nut-free options and will try to work with any request a customer may have. "People come in all the time and tell us they're thankful we're here," says Gilad. "We have a whole customer base of people with preferences and allergies that we can cater to."

The brand has hit a nerve in the Bay Area, where it has 20 units currently open. That's good business for Gilad, although Rowe, the franchise development CEO, says it could be a cause for concern for some brands: "A concept should show broad geographic appeal," he says. "A concept that is too unique may not catch on, or it might last only a short while, like a fad." (Gilad isn't worried: She has a few units in Texas, Florida, and Indiana, and expectations of national expansion. "I am 100 percent convinced this is not a health trend," she says. "Good food is the future.")

And that's what innovation in franchising is currently all about—recognizing an emerging trend and figuring out how to bring it to as many people as possible. "There are a lot of unique concepts out there that may not have done well five or six years ago," says Beagelman, of SMB Franchise Advisors. "Back then franchisees wanted a safe bet. Today they want to take more of a chance, and want something different from the sandwich shop across the street." □

GET A HEAD START TO SUCCESS

WITH ONE OF THESE OPPORTUNITIES

- **PuroClean**
  Property Restoration
- **iLoveKickboxing.com**
  Fitness
- **Cruise Planners**
  Travel
- **Pinot's Palette**
  Paint-and-Sip Studios
- **Pillar to Post**
  Home Inspection
- **Pirtek**
  Hydraulic Hose Services
- **Wild Birds Unlimited**
  Nature Shop

PINOT'S PALETTE: PAIRING WINE & PAINTING

Innovating Paint and Sip
Research shows that 13.8 million Americans enjoy painting, and 2.4 million enjoy it every week. As amateur art has become a lucrative investment, Pinot's Palette has built a system that capitalizes on this activity, making it interactive, social and fun. By elevating the customer experience and transitioning the traditional art class to entertainment, first-timers and experienced artists alike can become inspired while spending quality time with friends and connecting with new ones. Since franchising in 2010, Pinot's Palette has served more than 1 million guests across the country.

A New Kind of Night Out
The Pinot's Palette concept is simple: Guests bring their friends (and, if BYO format, their wine) to a Pinot's Palette studio for a group painting event they've registered for online. Pinot's Palette provides the canvases, paint and wine glasses. During the two- or three-hour class, a trained artist guides guests step-by-step in creating their very own masterpieces. Some locations have a BYOB arrangement, while other studios offer wine bars in accordance with state laws or as a convenience to customers. This expertly curated and rewarding experience is like no other form of entertainment.

Diverse Revenue Streams
From private parties, to corporate team-building, to mobile Pinot's Palette events, the company is well-versed in tailoring the paint-and-sip concept to nearly any event: companies looking for an inventive way to unite their team can do so through a collaborative painting. Pinot's Palette is also a hot-spot for birthday and bachelorette parties, as well as singles mixers. Also, under the company's new "Little Brushes" brand name, kids ages seven to thirteen work with a trained art instructor to create their masterpiece in a family friendly atmosphere.

Business Automation
The Pinot Technology Suite (PTS) makes it easy for franchisees to manage their studios from their computer or mobile device, allowing for a flexible schedule and more free time. This proprietary software, developed specifically for Pinot's Palette business systems, allows franchisees to focus on strategically growing their studios. The latest enhancement to PTS has been the Pinot Perks Rewards Program: customers love returning to us because they can enjoy the Perks each time they visit. Internal surveys have shown that PTS frees up more than 20 hours per week for our owners.

ABOUT PINOT'S PALETTE

At Pinot's Palette guests enjoy an unforgettable evening with friends, fine art and cocktails in an entertaining, upscale atmosphere. It's the perfect business for the fun-loving, social entrepreneur who loves to entertain.

PINOT'S PALETTE FAST FACTS

- #1 paint and sip in franchisee satisfaction according to the Franchise Business Review
- 180+ locations in 35 states
- BYOB, wine bar and mobile formats available
- No art experience required

A Palatable Investment
It doesn't take much to open a Pinot's Palette—candidates should have a passion for art and entertainment, and no art experience is required. Franchisees can expect to spend between $76,600 and $196,600 total investment to open their studios, which includes the $27,500 franchise fee, retail build-out, grand opening marketing, initial inventory, hiring staff, three months of operating capital, and ongoing operational support.

Pinot's Palette has been recognized as #1 in franchisee satisfaction in its category by the Franchise Business Review and is the first and only international paint and sip franchise. If you love art, wine and entertaining, contact Pinot's Palette today to learn more and to secure your interest in an area.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Pinot's Palette

P: (844) 287-4668

E: Franchise@PinotsPalette.com

W: PinotsPalette.com/500ranked

FROM NASA TRAINER TO INSURANCE ADJUSTOR, TO NEWEST PILLAR TO POST FRANCHISE PARTNER

As a former insurance adjuster, Todd Goodwin witnessed the devastation and loss that can occur in people's lives. In the aftermath of tornadoes, hurricanes, floods, he helped families find temporary housing, provided funds for food and clothing, and helped coordinate with building contractors to replace or repair the homes.

Goodwin now draws upon his adjuster experience as the owner of local Pillar To Post Home Inspection of greater Houston area. With over 500 existing franchises through the 48 states and Canada, Pillar To Post has been offering stellar home inspection services for more than 20 years.

"I felt that the transition to home inspection would go very smoothly with the skills I was utilizing as an insurance adjustor," said Goodwin, 49, who also worked for NASA for five years teaching astronauts to work in zero gravity underwater.

Pillar To Post Home Inspectors recently ranked as the number one franchise in the Home Inspection category by *Entrepreneur* Magazine (*January 2016 issue*). Understandable since they represent the evolution in home inspection companies. With the help and support of the franchisor, there is ease of booking, same day reports, and most importantly ongoing training and the latest tools and data available in the industry. "I didn't want to go this alone", says Goodwin, "a good franchise is the best way to go into business. This is the answer for me."

The company is currently North America's leading home inspection franchise, whose professional inspectors work with both the real estate community and the buyer or seller of a home to provide on-the-spot inspection reports that allow for rational thinking about an emotional purchase.

What excites Goodwin about the home inspection business is "watching the progress and technology that is now incorporated in new construction." He also thoroughly enjoys continually learning about the history of older homes and the progress that is made in home construction and safety today. "My main goal is to educate and assure home buyers that their families will be happy and safe in the home they choose."

PILLARTOPOST
HOME INSPECTORS

ABOUT PILLAR TO POST

Pillar To Post Home Inspectors is the largest home inspection company in North America with over 500 franchisees, located in 48 states and 8 Canadian provinces.

PILLAR TO POST FAST FACTS

- **Franchise Fee: $18,900**
- **Provides flexibility and financial security**
- **Helps your work/life balance**
- **Allows you to take control of your financial future**

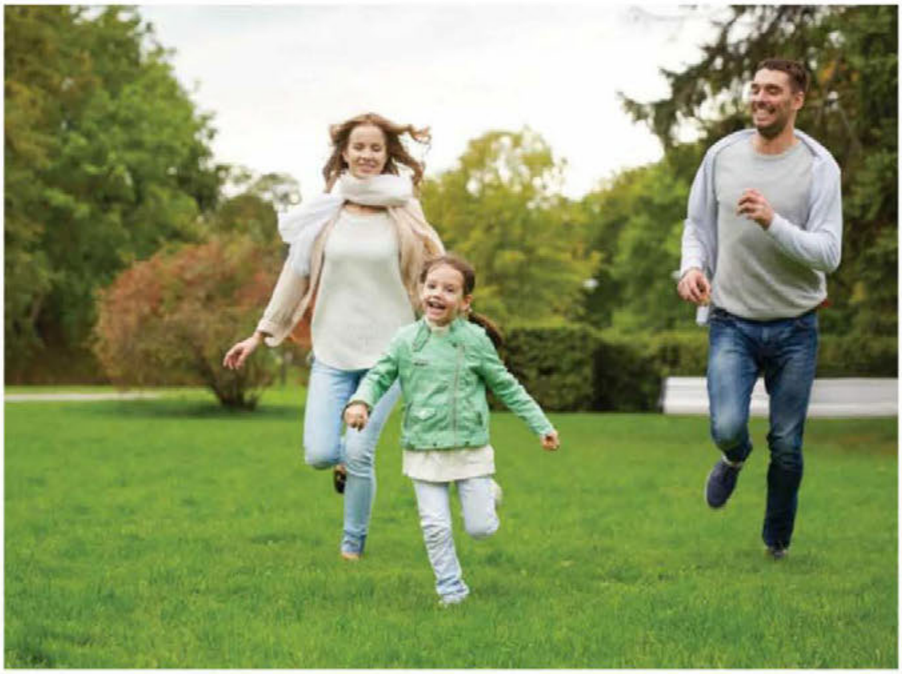
FOR MORE INFORMATION

Pillar To Post Home Inspectors

P: **(877) 963-3129**

E: **franchise@pillartopost.com**

W: **www.pillartopostfranchise.com**



BECOME A SUPERHERO IN YOUR COMMUNITY

Imagine yourself in a career with unlimited potential for personal, professional and financial growth – a career where you make a significant difference in people's lives. As a PuroClean Franchise Owner, you have the opportunity to enjoy attractive profit margins. With PuroClean, you will also feel a fantastic sense of satisfaction as you make a tremendous impact on the communities you serve by offering essential services that help property owners in their time of need.

"It's what the business is about – helping people get through extremely difficult times and hardships due to property damage. Who doesn't want to come home each day and feel they made a positive difference in the lives of people in their community?" – Adam Miller, PuroClean of Corvallis, Oregon.

Nationally, 1 out of 250 homes has a property damage claim caused by fire, and 1 in 55 has a claim for water damage. When property owners file claims with insurance companies, those companies refer and pay a professional restoration company they trust, such as PuroClean, to restore and clean up damage.

As one of the leading property restoration companies in North America, PuroClean offers unlimited potential for personal, professional and financial growth, along with the ability to make a difference in people's lives. The opportunity to enjoy attractive profit margins is ever present.

PuroClean franchises follow a proven business-to-business sales model that paves a pathway to success in a recession-proof, $188 billion industry. Supported by a national business training support center, PuroClean franchisees have become the property restoration provider of choice for insurance professionals and property owners throughout the United States and Canada.

Benefits of owning a PuroClean franchise include:

- Solid network of 230+ locations in North America
- $188 billion recession-proof industry
- Access to national revenue and account opportunities
- National brand identity and recognition
- Operational flexibility allowing franchise owners to start from home
- Comprehensive 3-week initial classroom training program
- Ongoing field training and 24/7 technical support
- Proprietary claims management and operating system
- Open territory model that enables unlimited growth opportunities
- Personal fulfillment from assisting and servicing communities in times of need

Founded in 1991, PuroClean offers a unique restoration business opportunity to entrepreneurs with excellent interpersonal skills and business experience. PuroClean offers a low risk/high reward franchise opportunity with an incredible level of personal satisfaction to qualified candidates.

PuroClean™
The Paramedics of Property Damage

ABOUT PUROCLEAN

When property damage occurs, PuroClean is driven to provide an unmatched service experience quickly, professionally, ethically, and compassionately.

PUROCLEAN FAST FACTS

- **Professional business-to-business model with standardized industry pricing allowing for attractive profit margins.**
- **Franchise owners rescue property owners everyday creating a positive difference in their community.**
- **Startup costs range from $45,650 to $182,780.**
- ***"What we love most about our franchise is the ability to help others in need."* — Jerral Ingle, PuroClean of Fort Payne, AL**

FOR MORE INFORMATION

PuroClean

P: (855) 978-1776

E: Info@PuroClean.com

W: PuroCleanOpportunity.com

TOP REASONS TO JOIN CRUISE PLANNERS

Cruise Planners is a full-service travel provider that is a constantly innovating leader in technology, marketing, and travel franchise ownership. Here are 8 reasons why.

1. Most-Awarded: Cruise Planners is the highest ranked travel company to take home three top awards from *Entrepreneur* magazine.

#1 in travel on Entrepreneur's 500 franchise rankings—13 years in a row

#3 Home-based franchises to own

#6 Fastest-Growing franchise

2. Survey Says: For five consecutive years, Cruise Planners ranks #1 in the travel category, based on a *Franchise Business Review* survey that measures training and business support, marketing, core values, leadership, management style, and financial strength.

3. Cha-Ching: Because of Cruise Planners' large footprint and industry prowess, its agents have access to the **highest commissions** offered in the travel industry.

4. Little Blue Box; Big Selling Power: Agents gain instant credibility and buying power from the Home Office affiliation with American Express Travel.

5. No Experience Necessary: New franchise owners blossom into travel experts in no time with Cruise Planners' award-winning training program that includes in-person and virtual training, seminars at sea, inaugural cruises, and familiarization trips on both land and sea. Grow your business with the support of Cruise Planners' in-house Business Development Team and regional coaches who are dedicated to helping you through every stage of your business growth.

6. Get Techy with It: Cruise Planners' cutting-edge technology and proprietary tools include mobile apps, allowing you to seamlessly run your business from the palm of your hand.

7. Aim, Target, Sell: Stay top of mind with Cruise Planners' award-winning marketing support, including customized and automated marketing campaigns designed to target the right clients at the right time. Cruise Planners is the go-to travel marketing partner for many top travel suppliers, garnering some of the hottest offers and exclusive sales.

8. Feel the Cruisitude®: You already have a passion for travel. Turn that into apassion for entrepreneurship. All of Cruise Planners' innovative approaches to marketing, sales, technology, and business support are at your fingertips, along with the credibility and exclusive programs that come with an American Express Travel affiliation. Are you ready to move the needle and become more profitable?

Visit **www.cruiseplannersfranchise.com** or call 888-582-2150 to learn more.

CRUISE PLANNERS | TRAVEL

ABOUT CRUISE PLANNERS

Cruise Planners, an American Express Travel Representative, is a low-cost home-based franchise opportunity that yields high returns even without travel agent experience.

CRUISE PLANNERS FAST FACTS

- No previous travel experience necessary
- Startup Costs - $695 to $15,000
- 6-day training in Florida focused on travel, technology, and marketing
- Highest travel commissions with multiple revenue streams
- Turn-key, award winning marketing and advertising programs
- Custom technology and mobile tools to run your business from home, or from anywhere
- One-on-one coaching and development

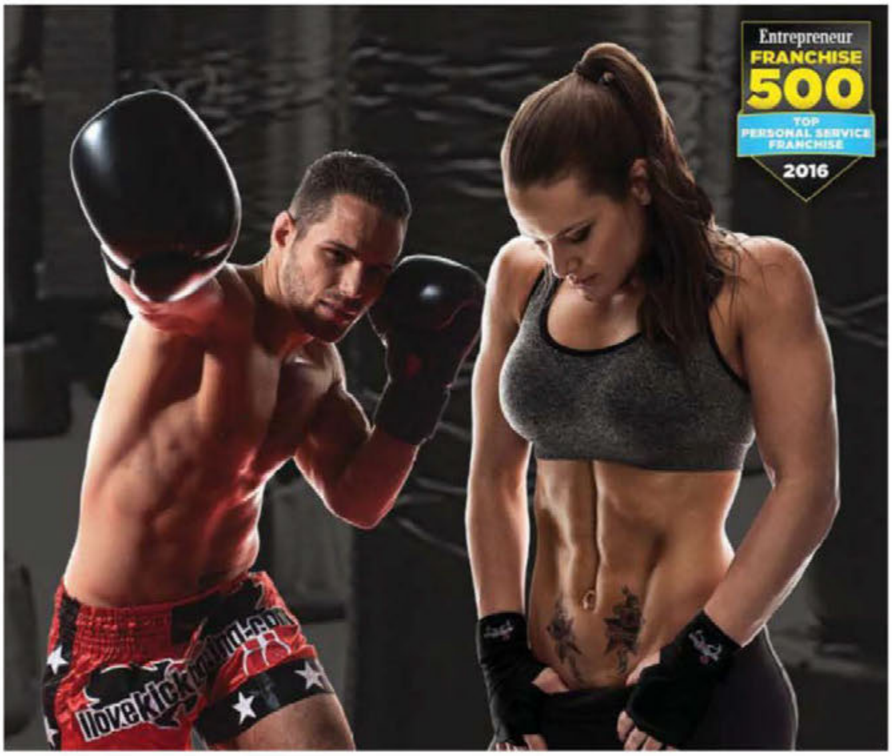
FOR MORE INFORMATION

Cruise Planners

P: (888) 582-2150

E: franchising@cruiseplanners.com

W: CruisePlannersFranchise.com



ILOVEKICKBOXING: THE "SECRET" FASTEST-GROWING FITNESS FRANCHISE

They don't buy up big ad space. They've had minimal publicity. Yet iLoveKickboxing, a boutique fitness kickboxing concept, is currently the fastest-growing fitness franchise in the nation, selling about **600** units in the past **24** months with no signs of slowing down. This number can change on a weekly basis. How is this possible? What about this franchise is so appealing to entrepreneurs nationwide - including those who never even considered a fitness franchise prior to iLoveKickboxing?

"The answer to that is two-folds I think," stated founder and CEO, Michael Parrella. "In short: We researched what entrepreneurs really want in a franchise, and we created it.

"That led to a few key points. The first: great unit economics with a low initial investment. You don't need to buy treadmills or any expensive machinery like that. Kickboxing is simple: mats on the floor and heavy bags are the only 'equipment' you need. Next, we solved the biggest problem businesses face: getting new customers.

"We pioneered a multi-layered online and offline marketing funnel that drives memberships right to our locations' doors, and they never have to lift a finger. You don't have to suddenly become a marketing expert to own our franchise as you do with many others. We handle about 95% of all marketing for every franchise, so they can focus on having fun.

"And finally, we have systems in place for semi-absentee and absentee ownership. That way, if you so desire, your franchise can run itself without you ever needing to be there. That's why no fitness experience is required."

Another factor contributing to the growth is current owner validations. When prospective franchise candidates do their due diligence and call around, they hear nothing but glowing praise for the concept. The individuals making these validation calls are attorneys, CPAs, and corporate executives with backgrounds in research as well. Yet despite their more-than-thorough efforts, they just can't seem to "poke holes" in iLoveKickboxing.

"We researched many other franchises, and every third or fourth call you'd make, you'd get someone who regretted purchasing that franchise. With iLoveKickboxing, we never ran into that. Not a single person said they regretted it. They said they wished they'd found it sooner," stated one franchisee.

"Territories are disappearing every day," stated Director of Franchise Development, Scott Ferrari. "Now is the time to reach out and get on board while they're still available."

iLoveKickboxing.com

ABOUT ILOVEKICKBOXING

ILKB is a boutique fitness concept that takes the bag-hitting, calorie-busting workouts of pro fighters & makes them fun & accessible to anyone.

ILOVEKICKBOXING FAST FACTS

- Fastest growing fitness franchise in the USA (500+ licenses awarded)
- No unit closures.
  Not a single iLoveKickboxing has ever closed to date
- Current owners love us.
  Call as many as you'd like to validate.
- $50k liquidity minimum & amazing unit economics

FOR MORE INFORMATION

iLoveKickboxing

P: (516) 882-7182

E: FranchiseInfo@iLoveKickboxing.com

W: www.myilovekickboxing.com

Carl Prince, *owner of PIRTEK, New Orleans*

PIRTEK FRANCHISEE SETS UP SHOP IN THE BIG EASY

After a long, successful career with an inventory supply company in New Orleans, Carl Prince decided the time was right for a life change – he was ready to become an entrepreneur. So he started scouring the internet to see what might be a suitable fit for him.

"I saw restaurants, pizza places featured in the magazines," said Prince, owner of PIRTEK Elmwood, which opened in July. "None of that struck a chord with me."

What he really wanted was a B2B franchise he could run. After all, his longtime background in the industrial distribution sector had given him an in-depth familiarity with the business community. Prince had worked extensively with businesses all around the metro area. He also helped area companies get their businesses and inventories up and running again in the aftermaths of Hurricane Katrina and the BP Oil Spill.

When he considered a PIRTEK franchise, it seemed like an excellent fit. "I know the industry, where the services can be used," Prince said. "I worked in the New Orleans market for well over 25 years. In some cases, I know the players. The idea of owning a PIRTEK just clicked."

A Global Reach

The only franchise of its kind in the United States, PIRTEK provides hydraulic and industrial hose replacement sales and services. There are 58 PIRTEK Service & Supply Centers and a fleet of Mobile Service Vehicles throughout the United States. Globally, PIRTEK has more than 400 locations and 2,000 Mobile Service Vehicles in 23 countries around the world.

Recently, the company has introduced a new Tier 2 program that offers a quicker path to prospective franchise owners or to those wishing to expand a PIRTEK business.

Prince's new Service & Supply Center is at 5229 River Road, in Harahan, LA, a 10-minute drive to New Orleans in southeast Louisiana's largest industrial park, situated on the rolling Mississippi River. From that location, PIRTEK is poised to handle the hydraulic hose replacement and maintenance work for the area's marine and industrial sectors.

Reducing Downtime in New Orleans

The new center is starting out with two vans and a staff of five, with plans to add a third van early on. When a customer calls PIRTEK, one of the Mobile Service Vehicles is dispatched to the location, where the technician custom-fits hydraulic and pneumatic hoses and gets operations running again.

Prince moved to the New Orleans area 30 years ago from Pompano Beach, FL, to attend Loyola University. He got a local job right after graduation and ended up making the Big Easy his home – a move that turned out to be an outstanding decision.

"It's a great community," he said. "It's a friendly environment. People in New Orleans are very approachable, they'll talk to you – they love to talk."

A Diverse Business Community

And as Prince promotes his new PIRTEK location, he will be talking to lots of locals. Among his targets are the oil market, which is strong in the New Orleans area, and the marine businesses working in the community's thriving ports. Prince also plans to tap the petrochemical plants and the manufacturing sector.

"As someone who worked in the New Orleans market for 25 years, this just seemed like an easy transition for me," Prince said. "It's a very appealing opportunity."

PIRTEK
fluid transfer solutions

ABOUT PIRTEK USA

PIRTEK is the leader in fluid transfer solutions in sales and service, the only brand of its kind in franchising in the United States.

PIRTEK USA FAST FACTS

- More than 400 locations in 23 countries
- B2B franchise
- Turnkey with exclusive territories
- Service & Supply Centers with Mobile Service Vehicles
- Tier 1 franchise fee - $50,000
  Tier 2 franchise fee - $20,000

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Steve Morris
Franchise Director
PIRTEK USA

P: (321) 504-4422
E: smorris@pirtekusa.com
W: www.pirtekusa.com

WILD BIRDS UNLIMITED: BRINGING PEOPLE AND NATURE TOGETHER WITH EXCELLENCE

Who are our owners?
Wild Birds Unlimited franchise store owners are enthusiastic about the hobby of bird feeding and about helping their community enjoy birds and nature in their own backyards. They're also passionate about self-employment and building a business enterprise that will be a joy to operate.

WBU owners love their business!
Wild Birds Unlimited has been ranked #1 in Owner Satisfaction in the Retail category by Franchise Business Review for the past three years. This is not by chance. Our staff at the WBU Franchise Support Center provides dedicated, personalized coaching to train and equip our owners to execute a system of proven Best Practices. Helping our franchisees reach their business goals is our top priority.

What our owners are saying:
At the start of my day, I am happy to go to work and at the end of my day, I get to go home just as happy. This business is one that's full of joy! I get to serve happy customers who are so thankful that we are here for them. I get to be a productive member of my community and help educate the community on the benefits of engaging with nature. And, I've built a strong business enterprise to leave to my kids. Dan Sweigard, Lexington, KY- Florence, KY and Cincinnati, OH

You must embrace being a part of the franchise, follow the proven system, and use the resources that are available. Being part of a strong franchise is great, but you also have to remember that it is your business and you are responsible for getting the results you want. Ed Valentine, Lancaster, PA

Wild Birds Unlimited® Nature Shop

ABOUT WILD BIRDS UNLIMITED

With over 300 operational stores, Wild Birds Unlimited is the largest franchise system of backyard bird feeding retail stores in North America. With a full offering of private label and proprietary products, we are dedicated to helping our customers attract and enjoy birds and nature in their own backyards.

WBU FAST FACTS

- $6.9 Billion per year industry – Bird feeding and Wildlife watching
- Ranked #1 in Franchisee Satisfaction – 2014, 2015, 2016
- Under $200K investment
  $25K Franchise Fee - 4% Royalty, 0.5% National Ad Fund
- 2014 Average Owner's Discretionary Cash Flow $84,809*
- 2015 Average Gross Sales $534,140*

*Per 2016 FDD Item on file at Wild Birds Unlimited, Inc. company headquarters

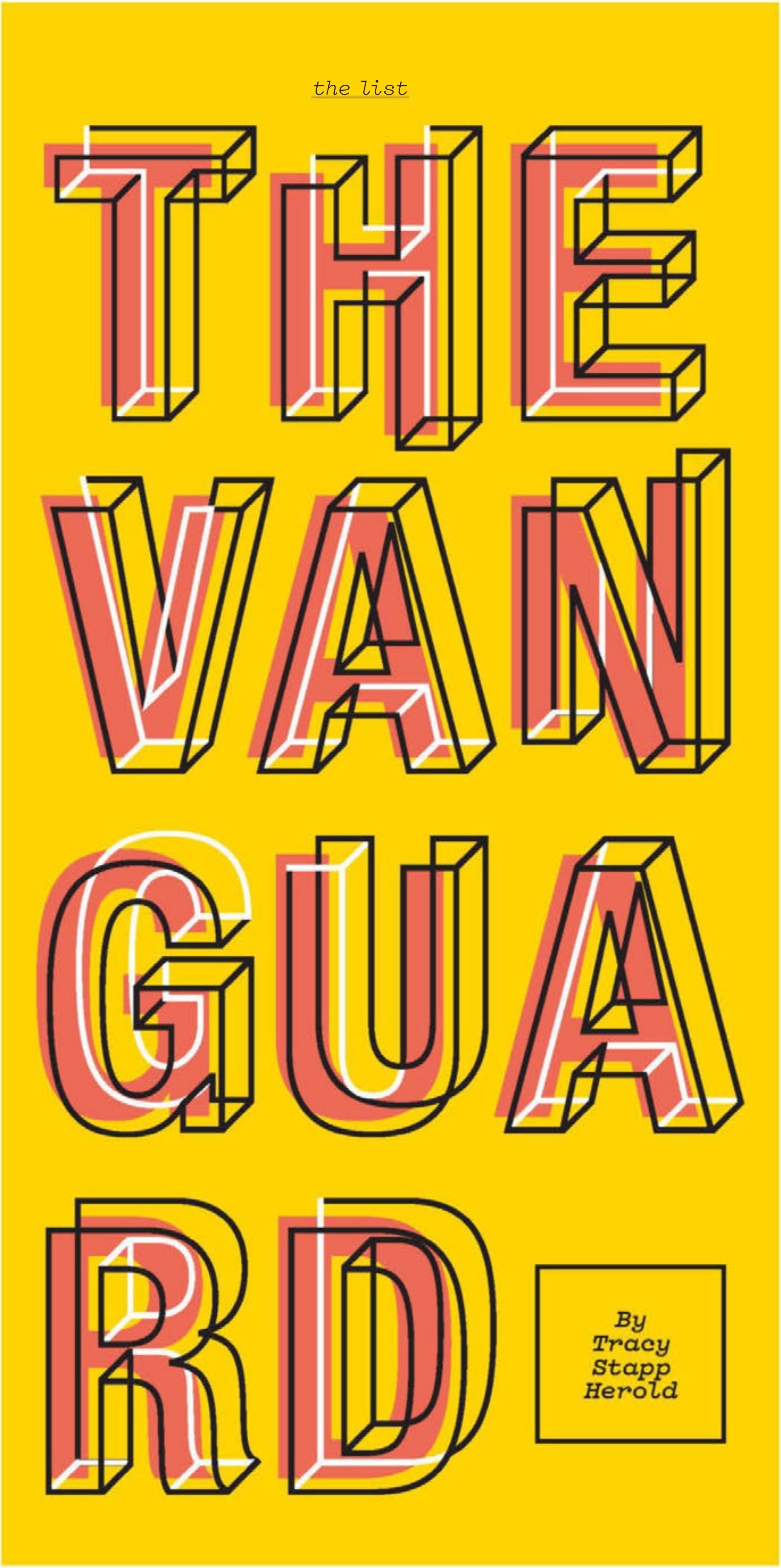
FOR MORE INFORMATION

Paul Pickett,
Chief Development Officer

P: 888-730-7108

E: pickettp@wbu.com

W: www.wbufranchise.com



Today's freshest business opportunities are on their way to becoming tomorrow's next big thing.

For many people, franchising's appeal lies in the ability to tread a tested path to business ownership that tens, hundreds, or even thousands of others have traveled before. But what if you're more of the trailblazing type? There still might be a franchise for you. In fact, you might find it here, in our list of 172 companies that have started franchising in just the past three years.

Like anything new, the risks can be higher when buying into an untested franchise—but so can the rewards. The systems and support structure of a new franchise may still need refining, for instance, but as one of the first franchisees, you'll likely get to help mold those processes and operations. You'll also have more opportunity to help shape the products, services, and even the brand and company culture when working with a new franchisor rather than one that's already established. If that appeals to you, then read on.

But keep in mind, inclusion on this list is not intended as a recommendation or endorsement of any particular franchise. Whether you're considering a new franchise or one that's been around for decades, it's always vital that you do your research. Carefully read the company's legal documents, consult with an attorney and an accountant, and—if there are any—talk to as many existing and former franchisees as you can.

Illustration by Sandie Burke

TABLE OF CONTENTS

AUTOMOTIVE

CAP Solutions
Auto detailing, reconditioning, and cleaning
Founded: 2008
Began franchising: 2015
Startup cost: $57.7K–$96.6K
Total franchises/ co.-owned: 0/1

Lifetime Transmissions
Transmission repair and services
Founded: 2004
Began franchising: 2014
Startup cost: $111.8K–$150.6K
Total franchises/ co.-owned: 0/1

Trundle
Wheel repair
Founded: 2001
Began franchising: 2015
Startup cost: $19.7K–$39.3K
Total franchises/ co.-owned: 0/2

BUSINESS SERVICES

Better Deal Printing
Printing, promotional products, apparel
Founded: 2001
Began franchising: 2015
Startup cost: $5K–$79K
Total franchises/ co.-owned: 3/0

The Local Door Coupons
Coupons, marketing services
Founded: 2014
Began franchising: 2015
Startup cost: $26.1K–$35.4K
Total franchises/ co.-owned: 3/1

Locals Love Us
Local online advertising
Founded: 2005
Began franchising: 2014
Startup cost: $71.5K–$107.6K
Total franchises/ co.-owned: 9/0

CLIMBZONE FRANCHISING
Climbing-wall family entertainment centers
Founded: 2014
Began franchising: 2016
Startup cost: $1.9M–$2.98M
Total franchises/co.-owned: 0/1

ClimbZone's flagship location in Laurel, Md., turns climbing into a kid-friendly adventure (and a visual treat) with more than 70 creatively themed climbing walls. Visitors as young as 2 years old can scale walls that look like Mount Rushmore, a pirate ship, and Jack's beanstalk. As the company expands, it plans to design walls that are unique to each new location. A hydraulic auto-belay system also makes it easy for kids to get down after reaching the peak of a dinosaur skeleton or the Eiffel Tower.

Venture X
Coworking spaces
Founded: 2012
Began franchising: 2016
Startup cost: $683.6K–$1.3M
Total franchises/ co.-owned: 0/1

CHILDCARE

Building Kidz School
Preschool/educational childcare
Founded: 2002
Began franchising: 2015
Startup cost: $158.1K–$431.5K
Total franchises/ co.-owned: 0/10

London Day School Franchising
Early childhood education
Founded: 2008
Began franchising: 2015
Startup cost: $253.9K–$363.98K
Total franchises/ co.-owned: 0/1

Pinnacle Montessori
Educational childcare
Founded: 2009
Began franchising: 2015
Startup cost: $2.2M–$4.2M
Total franchises/ co.-owned: 0/5

Sitting Made Simple
Babysitting-referral service
Founded: 2008
Began franchising: 2015
Startup cost: $48.5K–$63.1K
Total franchises/ co.-owned: 4/0

CHILDREN'S ENRICHMENT

Bricks Bots & Beakers
Science, technology, engineering and math camps, classes, parties
Founded: 2012
Began franchising: 2014
Startup cost: $17.6K–$27.5K
Total franchises/ co.-owned: 13/2

TheCoderSchool
Coding classes for ages 8 to 18
Founded: 2014
Began franchising: 2015
Startup cost: $77.3K–$139.1K
Total franchises/ co.-owned: 0/3

iCode School
Computer programming, app and web development, robotics, video and audio classes
Founded: 2015
Began franchising: 2016
Startup cost: $211K–$296K
Total franchises/ co.-owned: 0/1

Kids In Sports Franchising
Children's sports classes, camps, parties
Founded: 1999
Began franchising: 2014
Startup cost: $202.8K–$331.3K
Total franchises/ co.-owned: 3/1

Little Medical School
Healthcare-themed after-school and summer-camp programs
Founded: 2010
Began franchising: 2014
Startup cost: $27.4K–$45.8K
Total franchises/ co.-owned: 19/3

No Limits Martial Arts
Martial arts classes
Founded: 2011
Began franchising: 2016
Startup cost: $139.8K–$331.95K
Total franchises/ co.-owned: 0/2

Parker-Anderson Enrichment
Enrichment programs
Founded: 2005
Began franchising: 2014
Startup cost: $37.4K–$109.5K
Total franchises/ co.-owned: 5/1

SafeSplash Swim School
Child and adult swimming lessons, parties, summer camps
Founded: 2005
Began franchising: 2014
Startup cost: $42.5K–$881K
Total franchises/ co.-owned: 70/22

Snapology
Building, robotics, and animation programs
Founded: 2010
Began franchising: 2015
Startup cost: $35K–$175K
Total franchises/ co.-owned: 14/1

STEM For Kids
Engineering, computer programming, and robotics programs for ages 4 to 14
Founded: 2011
Began franchising: 2014
Startup cost: $36K–$82.6K
Total franchises/ co.-owned: 5/5

PHOTOGRAPH BY ROB CAR

CHILDREN'S ENTERTAINMENT

The Coop Franchise Group
Play and party space
Founded: 2008
Began franchising: 2015
Startup cost: $150.5K–$336.5K
Total franchises/ co.-owned: 1/1

Funtopia
Indoor playgrounds
Founded: 2013
Began franchising: 2015
Startup cost: $494.3K–$1.9M
Total franchises/ co.-owned: 2/6

ELECTRONICS REPAIRS

Experimac
Electronics resales and repairs
Founded: 2009
Began franchising: 2014
Startup cost: $136.8K–$275.1K
Total franchises/ co.-owned: 38/2

iCare Repair
Electronics repairs, resales, and accessories
Founded: 2012
Began franchising: 2015
Startup cost: $55.9K–$120.99K
Total franchises/ co.-owned: 3/5

iDropped
Electronics repairs
Founded: 2012
Began franchising: 2014
Startup cost: $60.1K–$119.1K
Total franchises/ co.-owned: 4/5

FINANCIAL SERVICES

Happy Tax Franchising
Tax preparation
Founded: 2014
Began franchising: 2014
Startup cost: $23.4K–$31.5K
Total franchises/ co.-owned: 35/1

The Interface Financial Group–IFG 50/50
Invoice discounting
Founded: 1972
Began franchising: 2014
Startup cost: $86.8K–$137.8K
Total franchises/ co.-owned: 73/0

One Stop Tax Services
Tax preparation
Founded: 2009
Began franchising: 2014
Startup cost: $42.1K–$60.5K
Total franchises/ co.-owned: 24/11

SiempreTax+
Tax preparation
Founded: 2014
Began franchising: 2014
Startup cost: $43.7K–$71.9K
Total franchises/ co.-owned: 124/20

Succentrix Business Advisors
Accounting, payroll, tax, and advisory services
Founded: 2014
Began franchising: 2015
Startup cost: $35.6K–$48.3K
Total franchises/ co.-owned: 9/1

Tax Pros
Tax preparation
Founded: 2009
Began franchising: 2015
Startup cost: $107.2K–$156.9K
Total franchises/ co.-owned: 1/6

TaxLeaf.com
Tax preparation and accounting services
Founded: 1976
Began franchising: 2014
Startup cost: $69.1K–$148.3K
Total franchises/ co.-owned: 2/2

FOOD: FULL-SERVICE RESTAURANTS

Acropolis Greek Taverna
Greek/Mediterranean restaurant
Founded: 2001
Began franchising: 2015
Startup cost: $580K–$842K
Total franchises/ co.-owned: 1/4

Growler USA–America's Microbrew Pub
Craft beer, wine, kombucha, food
Founded: 2013
Began franchising: 2014
Startup cost: $396.4K–$591.3K
Total franchises/ co.-owned: 2/1

Shots
Bar
Founded: 2012
Began franchising: 2015
Startup cost: $808.4K–$1.5M
Total franchises/ co.-owned: 0/2

Virgola–Oysters & Italian Wine Bar
Oysters, crudo, meats, cheeses, Italian wines
Founded: 2013
Began franchising: 2015
Startup cost: $154.6K–$241.5K
Total franchises/ co.-owned: 2/2

FOOD: QUICK-SERVICE RESTAURANTS

Blocks Pizza
Pizza
Founded: 2013
Began franchising: 2015
Startup cost: $222.1K–$326.6K
Total franchises/ co.-owned: 0/1

Built Custom Burgers
Build-your-own burgers
Founded: 2013
Began franchising: 2014
Startup cost: $368K–$982K
Total franchises/ co.-owned: 5/0

The Chickery
Chicken, sandwiches, salads
Founded: 2012
Began franchising: 2014
Startup cost: $250K–$512.5K
Total franchises/ co.-owned: 2/2

Cinnaholic
Cinnamon rolls, coffee
Founded: 2010
Began franchising: 2014
Startup cost: $170K–$273.5K
Total franchises/ co.-owned: 3/0

Clean Juice
Organic juices, smoothies, acai bowls
Founded: 2015
Began franchising: 2016
Startup cost: $180.3K–$375.8K
Total franchises/ co.-owned: 0/3

BONMI, VIETNAMESE SANDWICHES & BOWLS

Vietnamese food
Founded: 2011
Began franchising: 2016
Startup cost: $271.2K–$557.4K
Total franchises/co.-owned: 0/3

BonMi takes the flavors of Vietnamese banh mi sandwiches—cilantro, cucumbers, pickled carrots, and more—and gives them a fast-casual customization spin. Customers can get their choice of filling (meat, tofu, or veggies), toppings, and one of six sauces served on the traditional baguette. Or they can opt for a salad, noodle bowl, or rice and quinoa bowl. The concept has proven so popular, it was voted New York City's Best Vietnamese Restaurant at the Taste Asia food festival in 2015.

Cousins Maine Lobster
Lobster food truck
Founded: 2011
Began franchising: 2014
Startup cost: $210.9K–$342.2K
Total franchises/ co.-owned: 12/1

Dave's the Doghouse
Hot dogs
Founded: 2002
Began franchising: 2014
Startup cost: $25K–$245.7K
Total franchises/ co.-owned: 4/1

Drnk coffee + tea and Qwench juice bar
Espresso, coffee, tea, smoothies, juices
Founded: 2013
Began franchising: 2015
Startup cost: $264.1K–$536.8K
Total franchises/ co.-owned: 9/3

Flame & Skewers
Mediterranean food
Founded: 2008
Began franchising: 2014
Startup cost: $295.3K–$459.6K
Total franchises/ co.-owned: 0/3

Flatbread Grill
Mediterranean food
Founded: 2008
Began franchising: 2016
Startup cost: $293K–$772.5K
Total franchises/ co.-owned: 0/1

Fuel Recharge Yourself
Healthful food
Founded: 2009
Began franchising: 2016
Startup cost: $214.7K–$380.5K
Total franchises/ co.-owned: 0/3

Good Stuff Eatery
Burgers, fries, shakes
Founded: 2008
Began franchising: 2014
Startup cost: $1M–$1.3M
Total franchises/ co.-owned: 5/1

Grabbagreen
Healthful food, juices, smoothies
Founded: 2013
Began franchising: 2015
Startup cost: $222.9K–$396.7K
Total franchises/ co.-owned: 0/3

The Gyro Shack
Gyros
Founded: 2009
Began franchising: 2016
Startup cost: $168.6K–$309.5K
Total franchises/ co.-owned: 0/2

The Halal Guys
Arabic street food
Founded: 1990
Began franchising: 2014
Startup cost: $233.6K–$844K
Total franchises/ co.-owned: 10/2

Happy Cow Frozen Yogurt
Frozen yogurt
Founded: 2013
Began franchising: 2015
Startup cost: $210.4K–$392.5K
Total franchises/ co.-owned: 0/2

Kwench Juice Cafe
Smoothies, juices
Founded: 2015
Began franchising: 2015
Startup cost: $73.9K–$114.4K
Total franchises/ co.-owned: 1/0

Liberty Burger
Burgers, sides, shakes, alcohol
Founded: 2011
Began franchising: 2014
Startup cost: $540K–$789K
Total franchises/ co.-owned: 2/4

PHOTOGRAPH BY JAKE SHAULI

MidiCi The Neapolitan Pizza Company
Neapolitan pizza, appetizers, salads, desserts, beverages
Founded: 2015
Began franchising: 2015
Startup cost: $612.6K–$774.95K
Total franchises/co.-owned: 0/1

Milani Gelateria
Gelato
Founded: 2010
Began franchising: 2014
Startup cost: $176.4K–$242.6K
Total franchises/co.-owned: 0/1

Morano Gelato
Gelato, espresso, granita
Founded: 2010
Began franchising: 2016
Startup cost: $344.1K–$577.2K
Total franchises/co.-owned: 0/1

1000 Degrees Neapolitan Pizzeria
Assembly-line pizza and salads
Founded: 2014
Began franchising: 2014
Startup cost: $218.2K–$764.3K
Total franchises/co.-owned: 14/1

Pedro's Tacos
Fish tacos, Mexican food
Founded: 1986
Began franchising: 2015
Startup cost: $376.7K–$542.5K
Total franchises/co.-owned: 3/2

Persona Wood Fired Pizzeria
Assembly-line pizza and salads
Founded: 2013
Began franchising: 2014
Startup cost: $361.95K–$648.5K
Total franchises/co.-owned: 2/1

The Pizza Press
Assembly-line pizza
Founded: 2012
Began franchising: 2014
Startup cost: $311K–$650.5K
Total franchises/co.-owned: 4/2

Rise Biscuits & Donuts
Biscuits and doughnuts
Founded: 2012
Began franchising: 2014
Startup cost: $393.6K–$676K
Total franchises/co.-owned: 5/2

Taco Rico Tex-Mex Cafe
Mexican food
Founded: 1991
Began franchising: 2014
Startup cost: $129.8K–$285.8K
Total franchises/co.-owned: 2/5

Top Burger
Burgers, hot dogs, chicken, fries
Founded: 2012
Began franchising: 2015
Startup cost: $200.9K–$302.9K
Total franchises/co.-owned: 0/1

2Good2B
Gluten-, corn-, and soy-free bakery and café
Founded: 2011
Began franchising: 2014
Startup cost: $278K–$968.5K
Total franchises/co.-owned: 0/1

Umai Savory Hot Dogs
Gourmet hot dogs
Founded: 1993
Began franchising: 2015
Startup cost: $118.2K–$226.8K
Total franchises/co.-owned: 2/1

Vitality Bowls
Acai bowls, smoothies, juices, panini, salads
Founded: 2011
Began franchising: 2014
Startup cost: $152.6K–$513.5K
Total franchises/co.-owned: 20/5

Wanna Chill?
Shaved ice, desserts
Founded: 2011
Began franchising: 2015
Startup cost: $50.9K–$186K
Total franchises/co.-owned: 0/1

Xavier Artisan
Sandwiches, wraps, soups, salads, ice cream, coffee
Founded: 2015
Began franchising: 2015
Startup cost: $165.7K–$322.5K
Total franchises/co.-owned: 0/1

FOOD: RETAIL

Farm Stores
Drive-thru grocery stores
Founded: 1957
Began franchising: 2015
Startup cost: $235.1K–$549.9K
Total franchises/co.-owned: 14/4

Island of Treats
Candy kiosks
Founded: 2013
Began franchising: 2014
Startup cost: $72.7K–$148.3K
Total franchises/co.-owned: 3/3

Middleway Foods
Healthful-meal delivery/catering
Founded: 2009
Began franchising: 2015
Startup cost: $92.7K–$173K
Total franchises/co.-owned: 8/4

River Street Sweets/Savannah's Candy Kitchen
Candy, ice cream, fudge
Founded: 1973
Began franchising: 2015
Startup cost: $396.8K–$776K
Total franchises/co.-owned: 1/14

HEALTH PRODUCTS/SERVICES

Eyeworks
Eye care, eyewear, and contact lenses
Founded: 2006
Began franchising: 2015
Startup cost: $124.3K–$315.3K
Total franchises/co.-owned: 1/3

Jaguar Therapeutics
Physical therapy/chiropractic services
Founded: 2012
Began franchising: 2015
Startup cost: $157.7K–$380.5K
Total franchises/co.-owned: 1/3

100% Chiropractic
Chiropractic services, nutritional supplements
Founded: 2004
Began franchising: 2015
Startup cost: $310.6K–$536.4K
Total franchises/co.-owned: 24/2

Physical Therapy Now
Physical therapy
Founded: 2011
Began franchising: 2015
Startup cost: $101.6K–$174.9K
Total franchises/co.-owned: 9/4

Profile by Sanford
Weight-loss services
Founded: 2012
Began franchising: 2014
Startup cost: $362.2K–$609K
Total franchises/co.-owned: 2/24

Vida-Flo: The Hydration Station
Hydration therapy
Founded: 2012
Began franchising: 2014
Startup cost: $170.1K–$320.3K
Total franchises/co.-owned: 1/2

Z Med Clinic
Outpatient medical services
Founded: 2008
Began franchising: 2014
Startup cost: $112.6K–$354.7K
Total franchises/co.-owned: 0/7

ADVERTORIAL

5 STEPS TO BUILDING YOUR OWN ENTERPRISE

By Michael Glauser

1. START WITH A CLEAR PURPOSE

Having a motivating purpose is a critical foundation for building a successful company. It is not enough by itself, but it is an important starting point. Make sure you get your starting point down before you jump into something that doesn't create staying power for you, your team, or your customers.

2. BUILD ON WHAT YOU KNOW

A strong and motivating purpose is critical to long-term business success, but a variety of opportunities can help you fulfill that purpose. The important thing is to do something you already know a lot about that is consistent with your "Why." Explore experiences and opportunities in your given industry, related industries, and industries you understand as a customer from frequent exposure to the products, services, and pain points. Building on what you know will be critical to your success.

3. LAUNCH OPPORTUNITIES, NOT IDEAS

You need to make sure you launch a true business opportunity, not just an idea. Determine if the five components of the **NERCM** model are working in your favor.

GENUINE **N**EED • CREDIBLE **E**XPERIENCE
ADEQUATE **R**ESOURCES • PAYING **C**USTOMERS
SOUND BUSINESS **M**ODEL

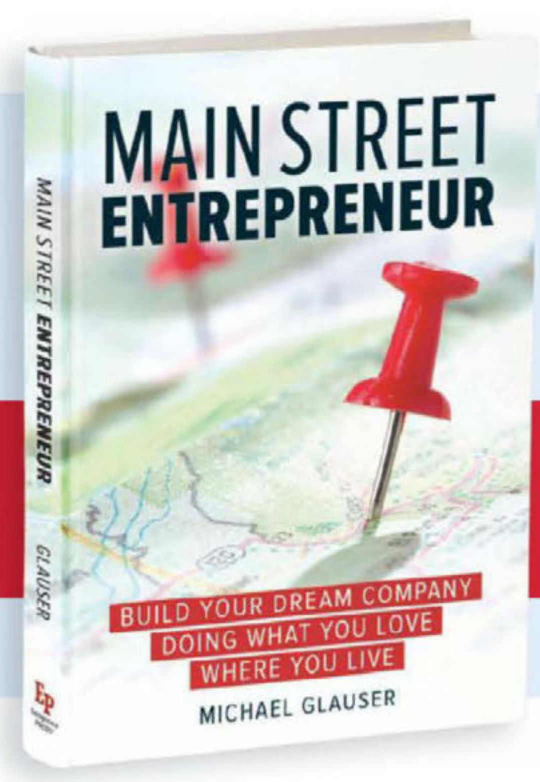
The more these factors are present in your new venture, the greater your probability for success.

4. DEVELOP YOUR SUPPORTING CAST

Successful entrepreneurs build a supporting cast of people around them in three ways: First, they develop a brain trust of mentors who advise them for free. Second, they find passionate team members who believe in their cause. And third, they create strategic partnerships that facilitate the growth of their business. It's all about relationships: The more win-win affiliations you create, the more successful you will be—plain and simple!

5. MAXIMIZE ALL AVAILABLE RESOURCES

Successful business builders don't just start off lean but continue to orchestrate efficiencies while growing their business. This sharp eye for "creating more from less" offers a tremendous competitive advantage. Being the low-cost operator in an industry allows you to: 1. maintain market prices and reap larger margins than your competitors or 2. lower your prices and quickly pick up market share.



Looking to find what it takes to create a successful and thriving business, lifelong entrepreneur, business consultant and university professor Michael Glauser geared up for an adventure. Riding more than 4,000 miles in 45 days, Glauser spent 246 hours on a bike seat, climbed 155,000 vertical feet, visited more than 100 cities across the country, and interviewed 100 small-town entrepreneurs.

FIND OUT WHAT IT REALLY TAKES TO START, RUN, AND GROW YOUR OWN BUSINESS.
BUY THE BOOK TODAY.

BARNES&NOBLE amazon.com iBooks

#MainStreetEntrepreneur entm.ag/mainstreetentrepreneur

Entrepreneur PRESS

HOME IMPROVEMENT

America's Color Consultants
Paint-color consulting
Founded: 2007
Began franchising: 2014
Startup cost: $13.1K–$41.1K
Total franchises/ co.-owned: 1/3

Apex Energy Solutions
Replacement windows
Founded: 1998
Began franchising: 2015
Startup cost: $95.9K–$195.5K
Total franchises/ co.-owned: 11/2

Bloomin' Blinds
Window covering sales, installation, and repairs
Founded: 2001
Began franchising: 2014
Startup cost: $47.4K–$111.7K
Total franchises/ co.-owned: 14/1

Crate Franchise Systems
Residential kitchen and bath remodeling
Founded: 2011
Began franchising: 2015
Startup cost: $98.4K–$171.96K
Total franchises/ co.-owned: 0/1

Fence Dynamics
Fence sales and installation
Founded: 2005
Began franchising: 2015
Startup cost: $110.9K–$154.1K
Total franchises/ co.-owned: 0/2

Garage Living
Garage renovation products and services
Founded: 2005
Began franchising: 2014
Startup cost: $171.1K–$238.3K
Total franchises/ co.-owned: 5/2

Granite America
Granite and stone countertop sales, installation, and service
Founded: 2002
Began franchising: 2014
Startup cost: $327.7K–$576.2K
Total franchises/ co.-owned: 0/4

Klappenberger & Son
Painting
Founded: 1989
Began franchising: 2015
Startup cost: $72.1K–$105.2K
Total franchises/ co.-owned: 2/1

Pono Home
Home energy and water efficiency and sustainability programs
Founded: 2014
Began franchising: 2015
Startup cost: $32.4K–$68.7K
Total franchises/ co.-owned: 0/1

MAINTENANCE

Black Diamond Pest Control
Termite, bedbug, and other pest control
Founded: 1940
Began franchising: 2015
Startup cost: $96.9K–$183K
Total franchises/ co.-owned: 1/2

bluefrog Plumbing + Drain
Plumbing and drain services
Founded: 2013
Began franchising: 2014
Startup cost: $69.4K–$340.5K
Total franchises/ co.-owned: 24/0

freedommaid
Residential cleaning
Founded: 2008
Began franchising: 2016
Startup cost: $49.5K–$103.1K
Total franchises/ co.-owned: 0/1

Midtown Chimney Sweeps Franchising
Chimney sweeping
Founded: 1979
Began franchising: 2014
Startup cost: $27.3K–$88K
Total franchises/ co.-owned: 26/0

1-800 Packouts
Building contents packing, cleaning, storage, and restoration
Founded: 2013
Began franchising: 2015
Startup cost: $109.2K–$440K
Total franchises/ co.-owned: 19/1

The Patch Boys
Drywall repair
Founded: 2006
Began franchising: 2015
Startup cost: $45.5K–$66K
Total franchises/ co.-owned: 19/1

Pool Service USA
Pool maintenance and cleaning
Founded: 2007
Began franchising: 2015
Startup cost: $40.6K–$49.4K
Total franchises/ co.-owned: 0/2

Shack Shine
Interior and exterior window washing, gutter cleaning, power washing, house washing
Founded: 2013
Began franchising: 2014
Startup cost: $66.9K–$99.1K
Total franchises/ co.-owned: 9/0

Spaulding Decon
Crime-scene, meth-lab, and hoarding cleanup
Founded: 2005
Began franchising: 2015
Startup cost: $84.8K–$120.1K
Total franchises/ co.-owned: 2/1

PHOTOGRAPH COURTESY OF PICKUP USA FITNESS

PERSONAL CARE: FITNESS

PICKUP USA FITNESS

Basketball-focused fitness clubs
Founded: 2011
Began franchising: 2016
Startup cost: $407.3K–$575.1K
Total franchises/co.-owned: 0/1

We've seen franchises focused on cycling, yoga, boxing, and even ballet, but surprisingly, PickUp USA is the first to put basketball center stage. (Or would that be center court?) The gym offers traditional cardio and weight-lifting equipment, but its main draw is the 10-minute basketball games constantly being run back-to-back—with staff members organizing teams and refereeing—so that members can drop in anytime they've got a craving to play. Serious ballers can also attend "basketball boot-camp" group training sessions or receive private training tailored to their needs.

PERSONAL CARE: FITNESS

Burn Boot Camp
Women's fitness centers
Founded: 2012
Began franchising: 2015
Startup cost: $62.9K-$106.5K
Total franchises/co.-owned: 21/5

Epic Hybrid Training
Fitness centers
Founded: 2012
Began franchising: 2015
Startup cost: $62.6K–$114.8K
Total franchises/co.-owned: 2/2

Fitwall
Group and semi-private training
Founded: 2013
Began franchising: 2014
Startup cost: $310.6K–$626.2K
Total franchises/co.-owned: 4/2

High Altitude Personal Training
Personal training
Founded: 2009
Began franchising: 2015
Startup cost: $261.3K–$365.5K
Total franchises/co.-owned: 0/1

Impact Strong Kickboxing/Fitness
Kickboxing and fitness gyms
Founded: 2011
Began franchising: 2014
Startup cost: $48.5K–$87K
Total franchises/co.-owned: 5/1

Legacy Fit
24-hour fitness centers
Founded: 2008
Began franchising: 2014
Startup cost: $207.7K–$381.5K
Total franchises/co.-owned: 1/1

Miami Yoga
Yoga studios
Founded: 2007
Began franchising: 2015
Startup cost: $99.1K–$199K
Total franchises/ co.-owned: 0/1

Polestar Pilates
Pilates studios
Founded: 1998
Began franchising: 2015
Startup cost: $121.8K–$196.95K
Total franchises/ co.-owned: 0/1

PERSONAL CARE: SENIOR CARE

A Right Place For Seniors
Senior-care referral and placement
Founded: 2012
Began franchising: 2014
Startup cost: $59K–$87.9K
Total franchises/ co.-owned: 10/0

Happier At Home
Senior-care management and nonmedical home care
Founded: 2008
Began franchising: 2015
Startup cost: $79K–$111.2K
Total franchises/ co.-owned: 0/2

My Elder Advocate
Senior advocacy
Founded: 2004
Began franchising: 2014
Startup cost: $85.2K–$123.2K
Total franchises/ co.-owned: 2/1

SAFE Homecare
Nonmedical home care
Founded: 2014
Began franchising: 2016
Startup cost: $86.4K–$132.2K
Total franchises/ co.-owned: 0/1

Senior Care Authority
Senior-care placement and consulting
Founded: 2009
Began franchising: 2014
Startup cost: $52.4K–$78.2K
Total franchises/ co.-owned: 21/1

Sunny Days In-Home Care
Senior care
Founded: 2011
Began franchising: 2015
Startup cost: $72.5K–$120.9K
Total franchises/ co.-owned: 0/1

PERSONAL CARE: MISCELLANEOUS

Chill Cryosauna
Cryotherapy
Founded: 2014
Began franchising: 2015
Startup cost: $75K–$250K
Total franchises/ co.-owned: 1/1

THE SALT SUITE

Salt therapy
Founded: 2011
Began franchising: 2015
Startup cost: $141.6K–$296.9K
Total franchises/co.-owned: 2/2

Never heard of salt therapy (also known as halotherapy)? It dates back to the mid-1800s, when a health official in Poland noticed that salt-mine workers rarely suffered from respiratory ailments. People with breathing and skin problems flocked to the mines to benefit from the dry salt aerosol. Today, The Salt Suite franchises re-create that salt-mine environment using a halogenerator. There's even a kids' room that looks like a beach.

PHOTOGRAPH COURTESY OF THE SALT SUITE

clubDetox
Detox programs and juice bar
Founded: 2012
Began franchising: 2015
Startup cost: $235.7K–$327K
Total franchises/ co.-owned: 0/2

Footy Rooty
Foot and body massage
Founded: 2011
Began franchising: 2014
Startup cost: $46K–$80K
Total franchises/ co.-owned: 4/3

Glace Cryotherapy
Whole-body cryotherapy
Founded: 2014
Began franchising: 2016
Startup cost: $124.7K–$202.5K
Total franchises/ co.-owned: 0/1

GloPatrol
Mobile sunless tanning
Founded: 2013
Began franchising: 2015
Startup cost: $9K–$25.5K
Total franchises/ co.-owned: 1/1

Grooming Lounge Franchise
Upscale men's barbershop/spa
Founded: 1999
Began franchising: 2014
Startup cost: $422.3K–$779.99K
Total franchises/ co.-owned: 0/2

Hammer & Nails
Men's grooming services
Founded: 2013
Began franchising: 2015
Startup cost: $234.7K–$541.4K
Total franchises/ co.-owned: 0/1

Image Studios 360
Salon suites
Founded: 2010
Began franchising: 2015
Startup cost: $287.7K–$888K
Total franchises/ co.-owned: 3/2

Pure Vanity
Laser hair removal, facials, body contouring, antiaging services
Founded: 2007
Began franchising: 2016
Startup cost: $387K–$746K
Total franchises/ co.-owned: 0/1

PET PRODUCTS/ SERVICES

Barkefellers, The Place for Dogs
Upscale pet hotel
Founded: 2008
Began franchising: 2014
Startup cost: $1M–$5M
Total franchises/ co.-owned: 0/3

Dee-O-Gee
Pet supplies and services
Founded: 2008
Began franchising: 2015
Startup cost: $161.5K–$387.5K
Total franchises/ co.-owned: 0/2

D.O.G.
Dog daycare, boarding, grooming
Founded: 2012
Began franchising: 2014
Startup cost: $429K–$548.5K
Total franchises/ co.-owned: 1/2

Pet Wants
Pet-food stores/delivery
Founded: 2010
Began franchising: 2015
Startup cost: $50.2K–$176.9K
Total franchises/ co.-owned: 26/0

Sitter4Paws
Pet-sitting, dog-walking
Founded: 2009
Began franchising: 2014
Startup cost: $21.3K–$46.8K
Total franchises/ co.-owned: 5/1

Splash and Dash for Dogs
Pet products and grooming
Founded: 2009
Began franchising: 2014
Startup cost: $89.9K–$159K
Total franchises/ co.-owned: 11/0

Sydnee's Pet Grooming
Pet grooming
Founded: 2011
Began franchising: 2014
Startup cost: $115.6K–$241.4K
Total franchises/ co.-owned: 4/2

RETAIL: E-CIGARETTES/ TOBACCO

DragnVape
E-cigarettes and related products
Founded: 2014
Began franchising: 2015
Startup cost: $81.5K–$145K
Total franchises/ co.-owned: 1/1

Holy Smokes
Tobacco shop
Founded: 2011
Began franchising: 2015
Startup cost: $84.4K–$139.4K
Total franchises/ co.-owned: 5/2

Juicity Vapor
E-cigarettes and related products
Founded: 2013
Began franchising: 2016
Startup cost: $79.6K–$118.5K
Total franchises/ co.-owned: 0/2

Premier Vapor & Lounge
E-cigarettes and related products
Founded: 2014
Began franchising: 2015
Startup cost: $85.7K–$122.1K
Total franchises/ co.-owned: 7/2

Smart Spark Vapor and Lounge
E-cigarettes and related products
Founded: 2014
Began franchising: 2015
Startup cost: $77.8K–$159K
Total franchises/ co.-owned: 1/2

Twist Vapor
E-cigarettes, coffee shop
Founded: 2014
Began franchising: 2015
Startup cost: $184K–$213.9K
Total franchises/ co.-owned: 0/3

Vape & Smoke Shop
Smoke shop
Founded: 2012
Began franchising: 2016
Startup cost: $90.1K–$168.2K
Total franchises/ co.-owned: 0/6

Vapor Planet
E-cigarettes and related products
Founded: 2013
Began franchising: 2015
Startup cost: $95.8K–$140.4K
Total franchises/ co.-owned: 0/4

Vapor Safari
E-cigarettes and related products
Founded: 2013
Began franchising: 2015
Startup cost: $119.5K–$161.3K
Total franchises/co.-owned: 0/1

Vapor Shark
E-cigarettes and related products
Founded: 2012
Began franchising: 2014
Startup cost: $118.8K–$200K
Total franchises/ co.-owned: 25/9

Vintage Joye
E-cigarette store and lounge
Founded: 2009
Began franchising: 2015
Startup cost: $66.1K–$145.9K
Total franchises/ co.-owned: 0/1

White Horse Vapor
E-cigarettes and related products
Founded: 2012
Began franchising: 2015
Startup cost: $37K–$70K
Total franchises/ co.-owned: 4/3

RETAIL: MISCELLANEOUS

BookATailor
Custom clothing
Founded: 2012
Began franchising: 2014
Startup cost: $42.7K–$63.1K
Total franchises/ co.-owned: 6/9

NTY Clothing Exchange
Teen-clothing and accessories resale store
Founded: 2014
Began franchising: 2014
Startup cost: $181K–$292K
Total franchises/ co.-owned: 1/1

OfficeZilla Franchise
Office supplies
Founded: 2012
Began franchising: 2014
Startup cost: $10.3K–$29.3K
Total franchises/ co.-owned: 22/1

MISCELLANEOUS PRODUCTS/ SERVICES

AEV Unlimited
Real estate photography and marketing collateral
Founded: 2013
Began franchising: 2015
Startup cost: $23.6K–$38.7K
Total franchises/ co.-owned: 0/1

Beeline Bikes
Mobile bicycle sales, services, and repairs
Founded: 2013
Began franchising: 2015
Startup cost: $59.5K–$67.5K
Total franchises/ co.-owned: 20/8

MISCELLANEOUS PRODUCTS/SERVICES

THE ESCAPE ZONE

Group escape-room-adventure activities
Founded: 2015
Began franchising: 2015
Startup cost: $47.9K–$89.8K
Total franchises/co.-owned: 0/1

Escape rooms are a new form of immersive entertainment, where groups of players are locked in themed rooms and tasked with finding clues and solving puzzles in order to get out. People first started creating these live-action versions of "escape the room" video game adventures in Japan about a decade ago, but their popularity started to really explode worldwide in the past few years, and The Escape Zone is ready to capitalize on the craze.

B-Home Inspections
Home inspections
Founded: 2014
Began franchising: 2015
Startup cost: $21K–$34K
Total franchises/ co.-owned: 2/0

Clothes Bin Franchise
Clothing, shoe, and textile recycling bins
Founded: 2014
Began franchising: 2015
Startup cost: $122.5K–$149.8K
Total franchises/ co.-owned: 0/1

Grasons Co. Estate Sale Services
Estate sales, online auctions, staging
Founded: 2011
Began franchising: 2014
Startup cost: $68.6K–$131K
Total franchises/ co.-owned: 15/0

Hotel Makeover
Hotel design and renovation
Founded: 1999
Began franchising: 2014
Startup cost: $57K–$158.4K
Total franchises/ co.-owned: 1/1

Keyrenter Property Management
Residential property management
Founded: 2007
Began franchising: 2014
Startup cost: $39.4K–$89.4K
Total franchises/ co.-owned: 14/4

Lifeologie
Mental-health therapy services
Founded: 1999
Began franchising: 2015
Startup cost: $95.3K–$235K
Total franchises/ co.-owned: 0/3

Lifesquire
Personal assistant services
Founded: 2009
Began franchising: 2015
Startup cost: $40.7K–$53.6K
Total franchises/ co.-owned: 3/2

Macrotech (USA) Franchising
IT services for hotels
Founded: 2000
Began franchising: 2016
Startup cost: $92.6K–$118.6K
Total franchises/ co.-owned: 0/2

MemoryWise
Digitization services
Founded: 2003
Began franchising: 2016
Startup cost: $175K–$300K
Total franchises/ co.-owned: 0/2

Move Smart
Home inspections
Founded: 2002
Began franchising: 2015
Startup cost: $32K–$41K
Total franchises/ co.-owned: 0/1

NorthStar Moving Company
Moving services
Founded: 1994
Began franchising: 2015
Startup cost: $150K–$180.5K
Total franchises/ co.-owned: 0/1

Palmetto Twist
Personalized apparel and accessories
Founded: 2012
Began franchising: 2015
Startup cost: $132K–$241.5K
Total franchises/ co.-owned: 3/1

Precept Environmental
Air- and water-quality testing, consulting services
Founded: 2007
Began franchising: 2015
Startup cost: $89.5K–$198K
Total franchises/ co.-owned: 0/1

Radisson Blu
Hotels
Founded: 2009
Began franchising: 2014
Startup cost: $11M–$15.96M
Total franchises/ co.-owned: 96/204

redbox+
Construction dumpsters with attached portable restrooms
Founded: 2007
Began franchising: 2014
Startup cost: $224.6K–$379.1K
Total franchises/ co.-owned: 3/1

Redefy Real Estate
Real estate
Founded: 2012
Began franchising: 2014
Startup cost: $67.2K–$530K
Total franchises/ co.-owned: 16/0

Specialized Risk
Security consulting and private investigation services
Founded: 1996
Began franchising: 2015
Startup cost: $65.7K–$143.1K
Total franchises/ co.-owned: 3/1

TechVoo
Computer sales and service
Founded: 2005
Began franchising: 2014
Startup cost: $81.5K–$150.7K
Total franchises/ co.-owned: 0/3

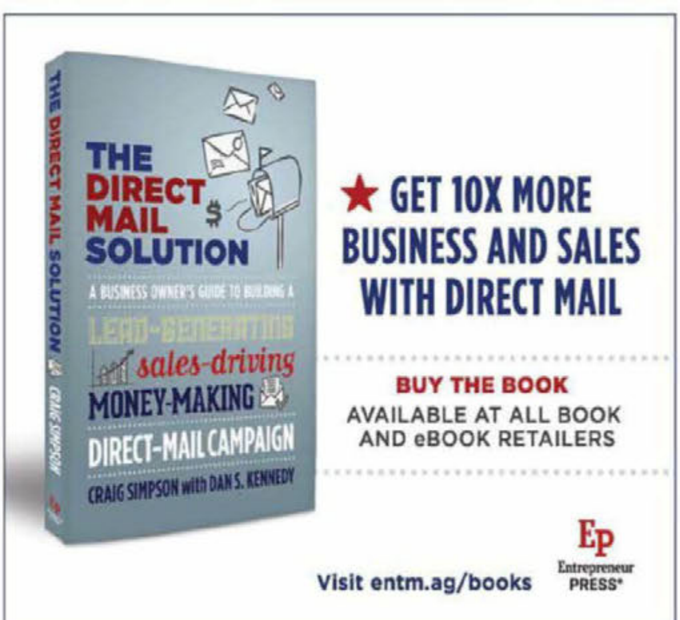
TFL Franchise Systems
Locksmith and security services and products
Founded: 1984
Began franchising: 2015
Startup cost: $112.5K–$356.6K
Total franchises/ co.-owned: 19/1

Tot Squad
Stroller and car-seat cleaning, repair, and installation
Founded: 2011
Began franchising: 2015
Startup cost: $50.6K–$207.6K
Total franchises/ co.-owned: 1/3

We Tie The Knots
Wedding and event planning
Founded: 2011
Began franchising: 2014
Startup cost: $19K–$24K
Total franchises/ co.-owned: 4/2

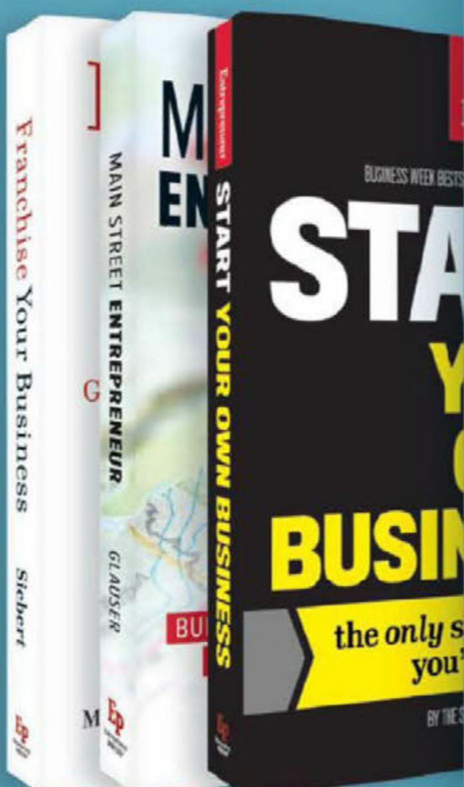
OPPORTUNITY SPOTLIGHT

One of these opportunities could mark the turning point to owning a business of your own, realizing your personal dreams and securing true financial independence. So go ahead, make your first move by considering all that they have to offer in this Opportunity Spotlight. Then make your first call.



STARTING A BUSINESS

You've got the idea and the passion; now learn what you need to know to hit the ground running



- Franchise Your Business
- Main Street Entrepreneur
- Start Your Own Business

PLANNING

Preparation is key to your success—uncover valuable tools to establish and grow your business

- The Marketing Plan Handbook
- The Tax & Legal Playbook
- Write Your Business Plan

LEADERSHIP

Your success is driven by your ability to lead—discover strategies and techniques to improve your leadership skills

- Real Leaders Don't Follow
- Fueled By Failure
- Think Big Act Bigger

shelve under

Whether establishing your operations or spreading the word, no matter what stage

ADVERTISEMENT

Entrepreneur

FREE INFORMATION FROM ADVERTISERS

Visit entrepreneur.com/freeinfo now to receive more information from the franchise and business opportunities advertisers in this month's Entrepreneur®. Simply take a minute to quickly enter your selections online to learn more about any of these opportunities!

1. ActionCoach
2. Big O Tires
3. CruiseOne / Dream Vacations
4. Cruise Planners
5. Great Clips
6. Happy Tax Brands
7. iLoveKickboxing.com
8. Interface Financial Group
9. Jimmy Johns Sandwich's
10. Liberty Tax Service
11. Lil' Orbits
12. Midas
13. Pillar to Post
14. Pinot's Palette
15. Pirtek
16. Puro Systems, Inc.
17. Restoration 1
18. Retro Fitness
19. Subway
20. Supercuts
21. Wild Birds Unlimited

Go to entrepreneur.com/freeinfo now to make your selection and get more information fast! Or, you can also fill out this form, circle your selections above, and then fax or mail back your request.

Please check appropriate boxes:

1. Are you considering starting/buying an additional business? ☐ 1/ Yes ☐ 2/ No
2. If "yes," when are you planning to start/buy an additional business?
   ☐ 3/ In the next 6 months ☐ 4/ 7 to 12 months ☐ 5/ 13 to 24 months
   ☐ 6/ More than 24 months ☐ 7/ Not sure
3. How much do you plan to invest in the purchase of your business?
   ☐ 8/ Less than $50,000 ☐ 9/ $50,000-$99,999 ☐ 10/ $100,000-$499,999 ☐ 11/ $500,000+

Please print clearly:

Name____________________ Title____________________

Company______________________________________

Address_______________ City_______________ State_____ ZIP________

Phone (_____)____________________ Fax (_____)____________________

e-mail ______________________________________

Fax to (888) 847-6035 or mail to Entrepreneur®, P.O. Box 413050, Naples, FL 34101-3050

Expires 3/31/2017

ADVERTISING

PRESS RELEASE WRITING and targeted newswire distribution since 1983, with free SEO and Social Media Marketing. Member BBB. www.Send2Press.com

ADVERTISE IN OVER 21,000 newspapers with one call! (407) 909-1644. www.NationwideAdvertising.com

BOOKS/PUBLICATIONS

HOT NEW OPPORTUNITY publication (100,000 + red hot readers). http://silverdollaradvertiser.com

BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES

HOMEBASED TRAVEL BUSINESS - Excellent income, affordable opportunity. Includes travel website. www.TheTicketCounter.com

CASH TO YOUR DOOR. $500+ per day! 1-(800) 931-7137. www.dailycashabundance.com

UNLIMITED EARNING POTENTIAL: Healthy Chocolate, improves health; Love Life. (800) 430-0136.

BIG MONEY MAILING POSTCARDS. Free Info. 1-(800) 313-0961, ID3837 www.abm3837.com

COMPANY PAYS ITS CUSTOMERS!
Save and make money on wireless bills! **www.buzzme.tempowireless.com/intro.html**

WANT TO PURCHASE MINERALS and other oil/gas interests. Send details to: P.O. Box 13557, Denver, CO 80201.

GIFTING WORKS! Real. Quick. Simple. Generate $1,000's cash daily. www.mycontinuouscash.com 1-(800) 220-0665.

$1,243.75 WEEKLY MAILING an amazing postcard from home! For free report call recorded message 1-(401) 427-2164.

WORK FROM HOME
Pre-employment screening, background investigations. **www.homedatabiz.com (800) 350-1063.**

MAIL BOX INCOME! $70 commissions paid daily. www.MailBoxIncome.net 24 hour recording. 1-(800) 679-8087.

GET REWARDED FOR BEING responsible, make $100 or more in 10 minutes over and over again, if you have always paid your credit cards on time. (708) 717-2398. www.cash4yourgoodcredit.com

AMAZING INCOME FROM HOME. Call (863) 808-1118. Then visit: www.dailyfastcash.com

ANYONE NEEDING MONEY FAST call now! 1-(800) 311-6094. No denials. Guaranteed!

FRUSTRATED WITH YOUR INCOME?
Discover the two unusual secrets 96% of America's top earners use to make their money. **TwoMoneySecrets.com**

$10,000 IS WAITING FOR YOU! Get details at www.mailingflyersforpay.com

EFFECTIVE PRODUCT SHAKES UP Nutrition World! Shoestring budget to fully integrated. www.feel17again.com Ground floor opp – FDA approved!

FATTEN YOUR BANK ACCOUNT! Free 24-hour recorded message. 1-(800) 767-2403.

$12,854 PER MONTH processing judicial judgments. Amazing recorded message reveals details. 1-(209) 647-1867.

RECEIVE A FREE CLASSIFIED AD
In Entrepreneur's Classified Section

Any first time advertisers can order and pay for two issues and receive the third issue FREE-OF-CHARGE!

Details: 1-(727) 507-7505
www.rpiclassifieds.com

BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES

GET MENTORED! MAKE MONEY! Awakened millionaire seeking students. www.InstantGoldmine.com

$30 GRAND FIRST MONTH! www.TooDamnEasy.com 1-(800) 693-3967, Extension 1 ID# TID70698.

WORK AT HOME. Get paid daily. No experience needed. (251) 518-8043.

WANTED! 39 NEW PARTNERS. Can you make big money online? www.paulgiza.com/applynow

VENDING ROUTES
Sell Candy, Mints, Lollipops and more
Complete Custom Start-Up Packages
25 Vending Units + Locations only $399.00
(800) 327-7750
CandyBoxVending.com

MAKE $2,000 TO $22,000 PER SALE. Proven system! http://linktrack.info/gccl2

MAKE UNLIMITED INCOME
With your mobile phone. Free. Simple. http://www.ibuzzpro.com/?id=DaveOfHighDemand Questions/Ready: **(732) 320-7473.**

FREE OPPORTUNITY MAGAZINE. Liberty, PO Box 1110-E, Rogue River, OR 97537.

ARE MONEYMAKING OPPORTUNITY SELLERS ripping you off? www.go2homebiz101.com 1-(412) 734-5844.

FREEDOM/NO WORK. Gary made $22,000 first month. (641) 715-3900, Extension 45510#.

2 Sales A Month =
$100,000 A Year
- Direct Sales • Automated Marketing System
- We Buy Your Advertising & Close Your Sales
- Huge Commissions Starting At $2,000 & Up To $22,000 Per Sale.

Inquire Here: **www.TDiPros9.com**

RECEIVE $500, OR MORE, to your front door! Visit: www.Top-Video-Ads.com/video54

HAVE YOUR OWN BRAND NAME Electronics business! www.mydealersource.com (800) 421-5185.

STOP CHASING MONEY! Earned $253,000,000 from home. 1-(800) 818-5631. www.CopyTheExpert.com

BORING, BUT MAKES BIG MONEY! 1-(800) 771-1303 Ext 1 ID#TID80355. www.ExtremelyFastCash.com

TRAVEL MORE! EARN MORE!
www.TheBizOfTheFuture.com

$400,000 CASH YEARLY! Brand new. Simple. No selling. www.MyCASHKing.com 1-(800) 308-7462.

EASIEST HOME-BASED INCOME Opportunity ever! http://www.abminfo.com/ Referred By: ID#8798.

OWN YOUR OWN ORGANIC health and wellness company. Website (800) 728-6320.

INVESTIGATIONS FROM HOME. Pre-employment screening, all backgrounds. www.homedatabiz.com (800) 350-1063.

BUSINESS SERVICES

HILL BOOKKEEPING CERTIFIED Quickbooks ProAdvisor serving small businesses. www.hillbookkeepingqbo.com

DUE DILIGENCE. Get important guidance without obligation. www.theeonus.com (919) 228-0577.

BUSINESSES FOR SALE

PROFITABLE BUSINESSES with owner financing! All types, sizes, locations. 1-(800) 617-4204. Bizsale.com & Efranchisesale.com

BUSINESS REAL ESTATE

RESTAURANT, SPA, OFFICE AND RESIDENTIAL
6,200 sq./ft. beautiful customized building complex which includes all of the gorgeous landscaped property. Complex includes restaurant, spa and upstairs loft apartment with private elevator. Indoor seating about 70. Restaurant features two indoor fireplaces, licensed full bar, large gazebo outside with brick/stone fireplace. Tall evergreen, concrete pool with waterfalls, fruit trees, vegetable/herb gardens, multiple flower beds and ornate limestone boulders. Spa has waterfall feature with Zen appeal. 2 bedroom, 2 bath spacious loft apartment. Additional lot for parking and another 4,000 sq./ft. commercial building, land and parking. $1.5MM for all. Northeastern Oklahoma. **ronnikkel@cableone.net (918) 914-0229.**

DESIGN

STORE DESIGN AND DECORATIONS. Store / Office Vinyl Wallcovering Support. Provide designers selections. Manage / ship inventory. goldcrestn@aol.com Neil (518) 478-7214.

EDUCATION/INSTRUCTION

MASTER OF ENTREPRENEURSHIP DEGREE AACSB Accredited and 100% Online. Coursework focused on your business, taught by real entrepreneurs. Visit meblog.wcu.edu

EXECUTIVE COACH

EXECUTIVE COACH BUSINESS EXPERIENCE:
$50M to $1B revenue in 6 years. Recognized by Forbes, Fortune, Enrapture, Inc., and Mercury. Exceptional executive coaching to transform your career and deliver powerful company results. Free consultation. **(720) 810-3309.**

FRANCHISES

FRANCHISE YOUR BUSINESS
30 years experience. National Franchise Associates, Inc. **(706) 356-5637.**

INVENTIONS

EVERY INVENTOR – Entrepreneur needs to know, we provide world-class consulting, design, engineering, prototyping, and manufacturing exclusively for start-ups and Entrepreneurs. Experienced. Honest. Dedicatedtohelpingourclientssucceed. 1-(844)757-8278. www.productquickstart.com

MONEYMAKING OPPORTUNITIES

DYNAMITE OPPORTUNITY. Work from home. Make $100 - $500 hourly, no selling, no investment, no scam, takes 2 minutes to qualify. 5 minute training. Start today. (708) 717-2398.

$800 WEEKLY POTENTIAL! Process HUD/FHA refunds from home. Free information available. Call (860) 357-1599.

SIMPLE SYSTEM to create wealth. Call (970) 343-5950 or visit www.YourWay4Freedom.com

OF INTEREST TO ALL

NEW IDENTITY. CREDIT. FREE MONEY. 500 sources. Free catalog. 1-(800) 338-8484. www.EdenPress.com

PODCAST GUESTS WANTED – Part-time business owner? Contact us. No costs! (410) 558-4500. http://www.homebusinessprofiles.com

CLASSIFIED INFORMATION

Rates: The classified word rate is $11.40 per word for one issue, $10.70 per word for three or more prepaid issues. Minimum ad is 12 words. The classified display rate is $795 per column inch. Contact us for our special "Free Ad Offer" for first time advertisers!

The next available issue is the December issue which closes on October 1st.

Entrepreneur Magazine, Classified Department
1-(727) 507-7505 • info@rpiclassifieds.com


ENTREPRENEUR® IS THE
PLACE TO ADVERTISE
Entrepreneur® magazine is the #1 selling business magazine on the newsstand!
Entrepreneur
BRANSON
AND OTHER ADVENTURERS TAKE ON THE FINAL FRONTIER
The most CREATIVE PEOPLE in business
Place your ad in the Products & Services section.
Call 800-938-4660 today.
Direct Action MEDIA


WhiteWalls®
Magnetic Whiteboard
Steel Wall Panels
Brainstorm, Innovate and Create
These whiteboard walls give you and your team an unlimited blank slate that encourages original ideas and fosters out-of-the-box solutions.
WhiteWalls.com 800 624 4154


Entrepreneur
IF YOU CAN LEAD YOU WILL SUCCEED
WOMEN TO WATCH
FRANCHIS
THINK IT.
LOVE IT.
DO IT.
BUILD A COMPANY THAT REDEFINES EVERYTHING
ARTICLE REPRINTS
FROM Entrepreneur
PARS INTERNATIONAL CORP.
For Article Reprints, Permissions and Content Licensing Contact our Partner: PARS International Corp.
www.EntrepreneurReprints.com / (212) 221-9595.

Resolutely Difficult Advice

By James Victore

My work is a process of playing and simplifying and trying to free myself to find the visual tone that matches what I want to say. I'm searching for my "voice." Then comes the hard part of ignoring the self-doubt, worry, and fear—and trusting that my voice has value. This is where I—most of us, really—struggle. We think that if our work actually expresses our opinion and shows our vulnerability, then it couldn't possibly be worth anything. But our voice is what makes us valuable. It's our own particular truth and what others are drawn to. When we summon the courage to express our voice, our truth will resonate deeply with our audience and incite lasting change.

James Victore is a designer for bold believers, an advocate for creativity, and an artist whose work has been exhibited at New York's Museum of Modern Art.