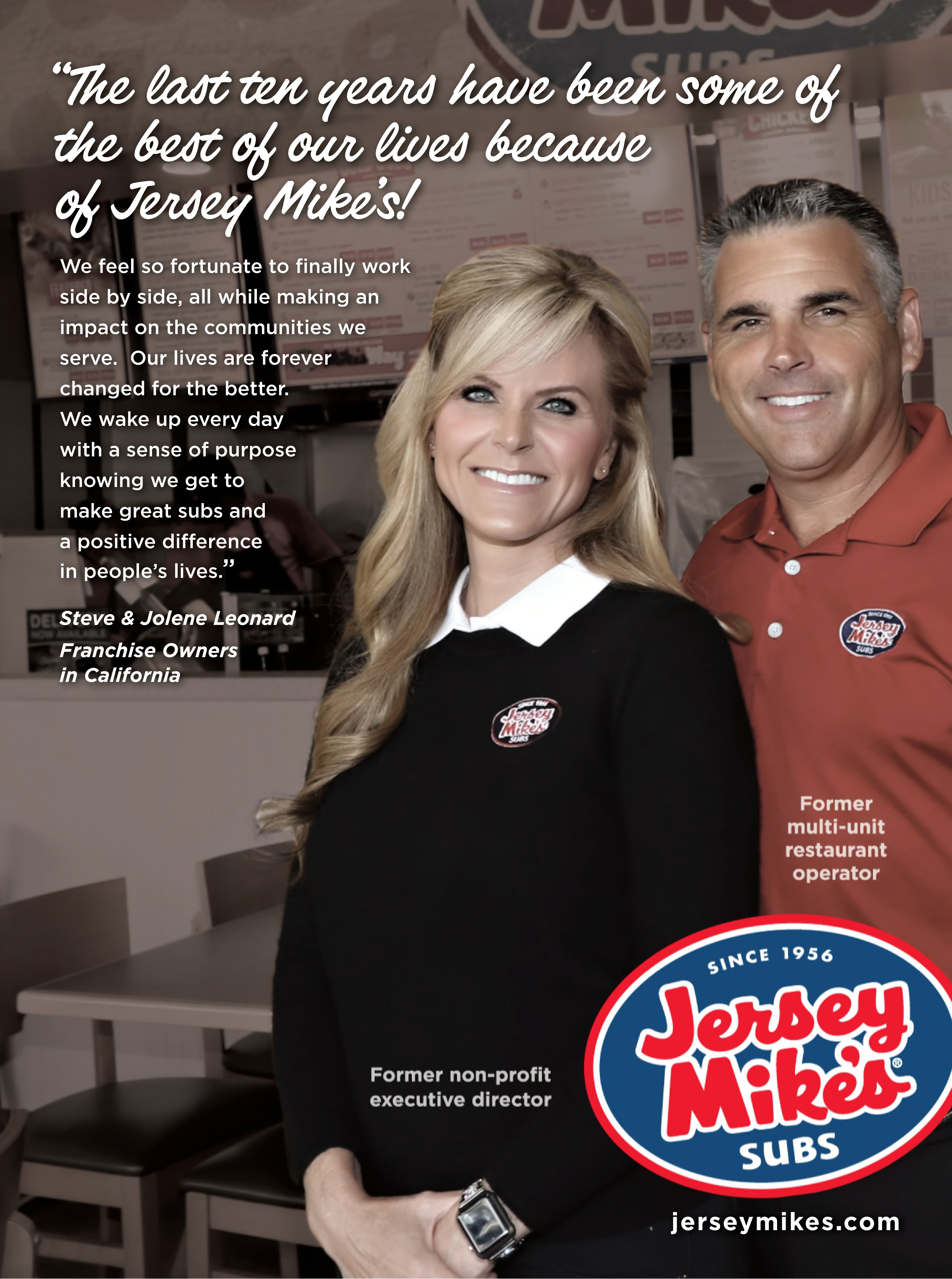
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BALANCE/ Why You Need to Take a Workcation **P.24**

PRODUCTIVITY/ Stay Focused! A Guide to Saying No **P.26**

INSPIRATION/ What It's Like Being Mentored by Gwyneth Paltrow **P.11**

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MAKE WORK FUN!

Shaquille O'Neal

Is Bringing Joy Back to Papa John's

P. 32


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Contents/

July-August 2019

FEATURES

→ **DELIVERY MAN**
Shaquille O'Neal's new game: Rescuing Papa John's.
P.32

ON THE COVER AND THIS PAGE
Photograph by JAKE CHESSUM

Contents/ July-August 2019

→ MOVING COMPANY
Inside Uber's Advanced Technologies Group.
P.28

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Contents/ July-August 2019

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→IN GOOD HANDS
NFL vet and Amada Senior Care founder Tafa Jefferson.
P.60

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Build a Bridge to Yourself

How will you persuade someone to work with you? Do more than you're doing now.

I WON'T NAME NAMES, but there's someone missing from this issue of *Entrepreneur*. I'd found a piece they'd written, liked their work, and planned to assign them a story for the magazine…but I couldn't find their email address online. They have no website. Their social media channels offer no way to get in touch. So I moved along to someone else instead.

Why'd I give up so fast? Because the way I see it, that person's job is to make themselves easy to work with. And I'm not going to spend my time doing someone else's job for them.

I hope this little story strikes fear into the hearts of many. Consider it: Right now, as you read this column, someone out there might be thinking about hiring you, partnering with you, or consulting with you. But maybe they can't because they don't know how to get in touch, or because they want to learn more about your work but can't, or because they just can't tell if you're trustworthy. And so they, like me, might move along as well.

I've run into this problem so many times. Writers—which is to say, the vendors I use most in my business—often put no effort into self-promotion. And this problem goes far beyond my own industry. I posted about my frustration on LinkedIn and heard the same complaint from people in vastly different fields. A woman at *American Whiskey* magazine said she struggles to contact craft distilleries: "They're so focused on making spirits that they don't think about getting their names out there." Another person said it happens often with web designers; they build websites for everyone but themselves! That puts them in good company, because according to one count, only a dismal 4 percent of people have personal sites.

I don't mean to make this an advertisement for websites, though. It's about something much bigger. It's about mindset. If you're not thinking about something as simple as whether people can find your email address, then you're probably not thinking granularly enough about your entire operation. Business is about building bridges, but in ways large and small, we often forget to build the bridges to ourselves. We're so busy chasing people that we forget to also *attract* them. And in doing so, we overlook some of the smallest, simplest, and ultimately most critical ways to increase our chances of success.

We've all been guilty of this, even here at *Entrepreneur*. Not long ago, for example, we created a service called Ask an Expert, where entrepreneurs can book one-on-one video consultations with a range of experts. (I'm on there, by the way! Visit entrepreneur.com/expert.) We thought our site did a good job of selling the service—but then one of our experts, digital marketing whiz Terry Rice, noticed that we'd included no testimonials. We'd created a personalized service but quoted zero people who experienced and vouched for it! What an oversight. We fixed it right away. Then, once our eyes had been opened to our site's shortcomings, we fixed a whole bunch of other problems as well.

I've learned that no matter how valuable you think you are, there's always another way to become more valuable. And here's the simplest way I've found to achieve that. Step back and ask yourself, *What else would convince someone to work with me?* The most important word there is *else*. You're already doing something, of course. But you could do more. I guarantee you could do more. So what small detail would put someone at ease? What tiny gesture would make their journey easier? What little thing sets you apart?

I'll suggest a first step: If your email address isn't easy to find, fix that. Now, what else?

Jason Feifer
jfeifer@entrepreneur.com
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Photograph / NIGEL PARRY

Business/Unusual

PHOTOGRAPH COURTESY OF GOOP

Gwyneth Paltrow, the Mentor

Even the busiest, most high-profile people can make time for others. Here, the **Goop** CEO talks about the power of mentoring—and is joined by the cofounder of **Maisonette**, whom she's supported for years.

by STEPHANIE SCHOMER

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→ LEARNING, LEADING
Sylvana Ward Durrett heads her startup, with support from mentors like Paltrow.

Gwyneth Paltrow has played many public roles—most notably, of course, first as an actress and now as the creator of Goop. Her lifestyle business and content platform launched in 2008 and has grown to a $250 million company by selling Paltrow-endorsed health-and-wellness products that shoppers swear by (even when the medical community cries foul). But here's a role she's less well-known for: Behind the scenes, she mentors female entrepreneurs. Sylvana Ward Durrett is one of them. She's a former *Vogue* staffer who for years produced the annual Costume Institute benefit at the Metropolitan Museum of Art and then went on to cofound the children's e-commerce site Maisonette in 2017. Today, Maisonette is a fast-growing business with more than $18 million in funding, and Ward Durrett often leans on Paltrow for advice. Here, the women chat about the value of mentorship, what it's like to be a woman running an early-stage startup, and texting during board meetings.

How did you two first meet?

SYLVANA WARD DURRETT: We were introduced through Anna [Wintour, *Vogue*'s editor in chief] two years ago. I had launched Maisonette that spring, and as a young—well, not young, but *new*—entrepreneur, Goop and Gwyneth had kind of been like the North Star. In your first couple of months in business, you don't ever know if what you're doing is right. So to have a conversation with Gwyneth about those early stages *and* to hear her say, "You're doing everything right"? It was incredibly soothing.

GWYNETH PALTROW: I've really learned on the job and made so many mistakes. I welcome the opportunity to share those mistakes so that nobody has to experience the same pitfalls I did.

After that initial meeting, how did the relationship progress?

SWD: Gwyneth said, "If you have a question, just text me." And I was like, "That's crazy; I'm not texting you all the time!" But I actually do. I'm sure she's super annoyed by my texts.

GP: Never!

SWD: But it really is as simple as that. I've texted her from board meetings. It's been so valuable.

GP: Awww, I'm blushing!

SWD: It's true, though! It's half business, half therapy.

What kinds of issues has Gwyneth helped you with?

SWD: We talk a lot about company culture. She told me to read this book I loved called *The Collaborative Way: A Story About Engaging the Mind and Spirit of a Company.* She gives advice on things like that, but I've also talked to her about really practical stuff, like voting rights, when we were closing our Series A round.

Gwyneth, have you seen a lot of parallels between what

PHOTOGRAPH BY GETTY IMAGES/BRYAN BEDDER (GWYNETH PALTROW); PHOTOGRAPH COURTESY OF HOMEPOLISH

Sylvana is experiencing now and your early days at Goop?
GP: I didn't raise money until about six years ago, and I just thought, *Oh my gosh;* it's tough to be a woman going into a group of mostly white males and try to explain to them why you're building a platform that's going to be impactful. They don't understand. It's hard when you're doing something for a female consumer and you have a bunch of guys allocating capital—*especially* at the nascent stage of a business, when there's not much to point to and they don't understand why someone would be interested in baby stuff or content about female sexuality.

How did mentorship impact you while you were building Goop?
GP: I had to sort of cobble together a group of people. I was very brazen about calling people and asking for their help and totally leveraging my celebrity to get them on the phone. [*Laughs*] You know? Like, it's good for a dinner reservation and it's good to get [Airbnb CEO] Brian Chesky to call you back. I would also listen out for people. For example, I was speaking with a woman who is a professor at Harvard Business School and I said, "Who comes [to Harvard] every year to talk about culture but also lives in Los Angeles?" And she pointed me to Alan Horn, who is co-chairman at Disney Studios now. I called him, and we talked about how he communicates with his team, and how he communicates bad news. Get really specific.
SWD: One of the first things you told me was to build my mentors with very specific skill sets. Gwyneth, I've learned, is always learning and doing. She puts in all this work, so when you talk to her, it's like she's done it for you. She'll say, "I've talked to 25 people about this, and here's what you should do."
GP: Nerds! Nerds Anonymous.

Sylvana, have you followed her lead in terms of cold-calling people to ask for help?
SWD: I do *a ton* of cold calls. I've been really surprised to see that people do want to help. Everyone has gone through this grueling process, and they want to pay it forward.

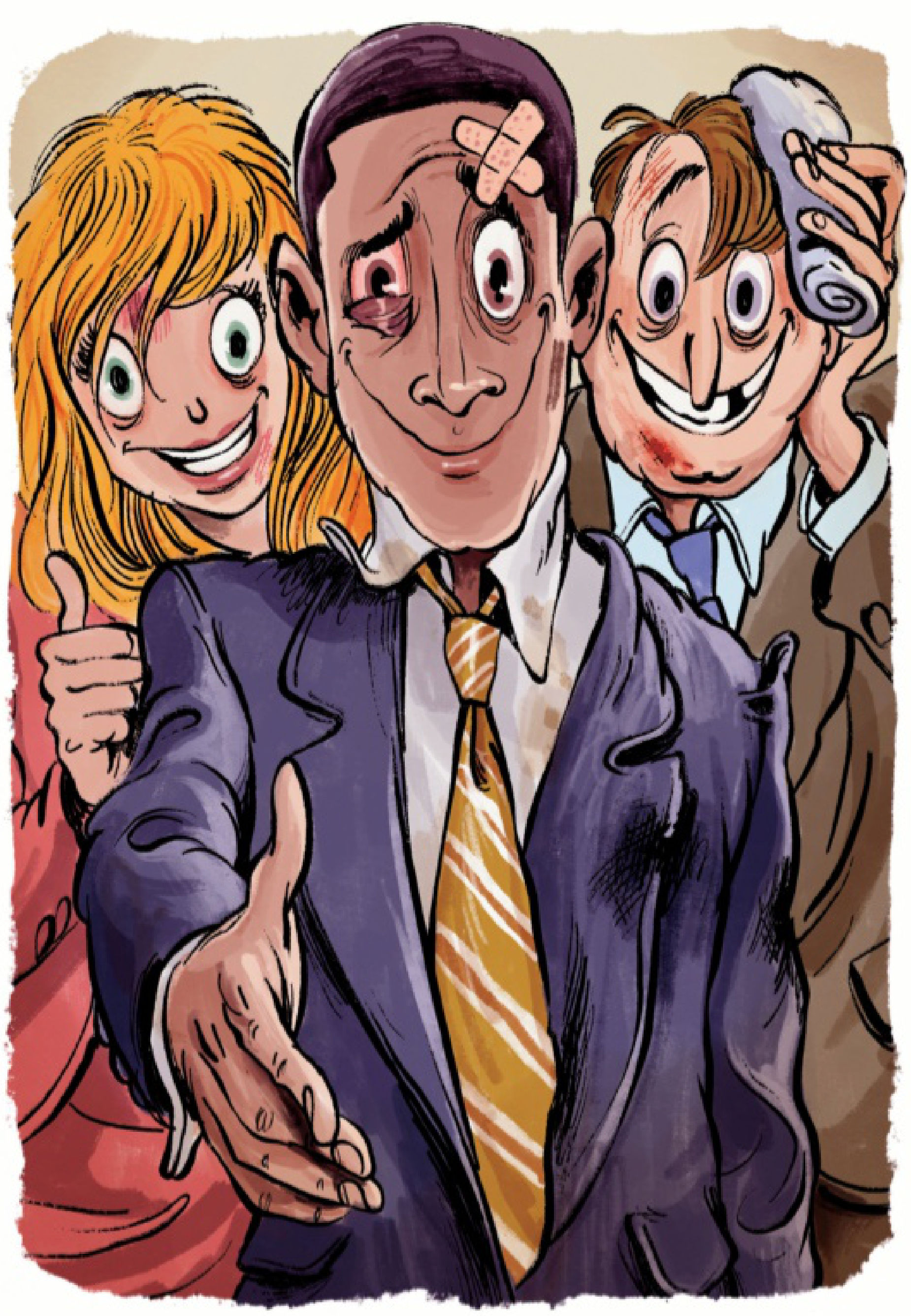
Have either of you been able to build a strong support network of other female entrepreneurs?
GP: At the CEO dinners I get invited to, I'm usually the only woman. I was at dinner once with Tina [Sharkey] from Brandless, and it was great to connect with her. But it just proves that we need more female entrepreneurs. If we're only getting 2 percent of the money from the VCs, there just aren't going to be that many of us. We need to seize this time and make this cultural shift. And obviously it will help when, quantifiably speaking, our businesses work and people can look to Maisonette or Goop or Brandless or Rent the Runway or Who What Wear or Stitchfix and say, "OK; maybe this is a good bet!" But it's been a slow process.

How does that make you both think about that aforementioned idea of paying it forward to the next generation of women?
SWD: I think about this a lot, even with our customers. Moms, women—we're sharers. When people come to me who are just starting out, I love walking through the process with them. It's sort of like the glory days even though it was five minutes ago. I want to give back the kind of support I got from Gwyneth.

You mentioned that the two of you talk about company culture a lot. What are you trying to create?
GP: I spend a lot of time thinking about culture, and had sort of figured out, *Oh, with a company of x amount of people, this feels good*—easy to maintain and model culture and transparency. But I went through a bit of a crisis at the end of 2018 and had to completely reassess the way I approach culture. We had grown to 250 people—I can't have one-on-one time with everyone anymore, and it becomes increasingly hard to model behavior and hope it gets dispersed. So how do we recreate the feeling we had when Goop was just eight women in a barn behind my house? The aha moment I had over Christmas break was *Wait a minute; we're all responsible for the culture at Goop.* We have to hold ourselves accountable, as opposed to being annoyed that you have a new manager you don't like and creating toxicity or back-channeling. We have an all-hands meeting every Tuesday, and I've said, "We're all responsible for our own side of the street." If we were to double in size again, I have no idea what that would entail. Company culture is its own living, breathing thing, and you have to have a lot of agility with the way you approach that.

As a leader, in what ways are you each accessible to your teams?
SWD: It's a little easier for me; we have 45 people. Even at this micro level, you do start to sort of lose touch with everyone. You go from the days of speaking to literally every member of your team a million times a day to… not. I like to just get out of my office and chat with people.
GP: I just finished Reid Hoffman's book—Sylvana, have you read it?
SWD: No, but I will now.
GP: Oh my God, you have to. He talks about how at the beginning, a startup is a family. And then it's a village, and then it's a city. Each stage requires rethinking. For Goop, we're very much at the village stage, and that all-hands meeting is a critical part of how I operate. Having a moment every week where everybody really feels part of the process is so important. On a less frequent basis, I try to have quarterly lunches with all the different teams. It's an open forum to ask me any questions about business or life or whatever. What makes a strong culture is that people feel valued and part of something bigger than themselves.

> I HAD TO SORT OF COBBLE TOGETHER A GROUP OF [MENTORS]," SAYS PALTROW. "I WAS VERY BRAZEN ABOUT CALLING PEOPLE AND ASKING FOR THEIR HELP AND TOTALLY LEVERAGING MY CELEBRITY TO GET THEM ON THE PHONE."



Regaining Trust

How do you bounce back from a PR nightmare? For **Cameo**, it was about connecting with the customers who mattered most. **by JASON FEIFER**

Steven Galanis was in his office one day last November when he got a text from a guy who works for NFL legend Brett Favre. "This is bad," the text said. "What do we do?" And that's how Galanis learned of the crisis about to consume his company—and threaten its very existence.

Galanis is the cofounder and CEO of Cameo, a platform that allows fans to pay celebrities for quick, personalized videos—wishing someone a happy birthday, congratulating them on an accomplishment, and so on. The talent includes actors, athletes, YouTube stars, and more, and each sets their own price, from a few dollars to a few hundred dollars. The company has facilitated 200,000 videos and until then hadn't experienced any major problems. (Full disclosure: I, the author of this piece, am also on the platform; I joined after this incident, and have earned $97 making 14 videos.)

But on that November day, things changed. A white supremacist group had duped Favre into filming a video filled with coded hate speech. Favre thought he was giving a shout-out to military veterans, but now his error was all over the internet and had become a fast-spreading news story.

"This was almost like an existential crisis," Galanis says. "The number one risk for Cameo would be for something to happen that would cause talent to lose trust in the platform." If celebrities don't trust Cameo, they won't use it—and then that's the end of the business. So to save his company, Galanis came up with a three-step plan: Be open about the problem, limit the damage, and create a solution for the future.

In addressing the situation, he wanted Cameo to be as transparent as possible. "If Cameo said nothing, it would have been like a deafening silence," he says. The company employs a team of talent managers, who coordinate with each individual celebrity. Galanis instructed the managers to immediately reach out to everyone they work with, explaining that Cameo takes the problem seriously and is working on a solution. The company shared the same message on its social platforms, and Galanis himself responded to every media interview request he could.

Then Cameo moved to take down the Favre video. Copies of it were all over YouTube, Instagram, and elsewhere. Cameo went into each platform and reported the video as hate speech, but the platforms didn't respond. Then the startup realized it had a better play: It technically owned the video, so it could report each posting as a copyright violation. That worked. Copies of the video began disappearing.

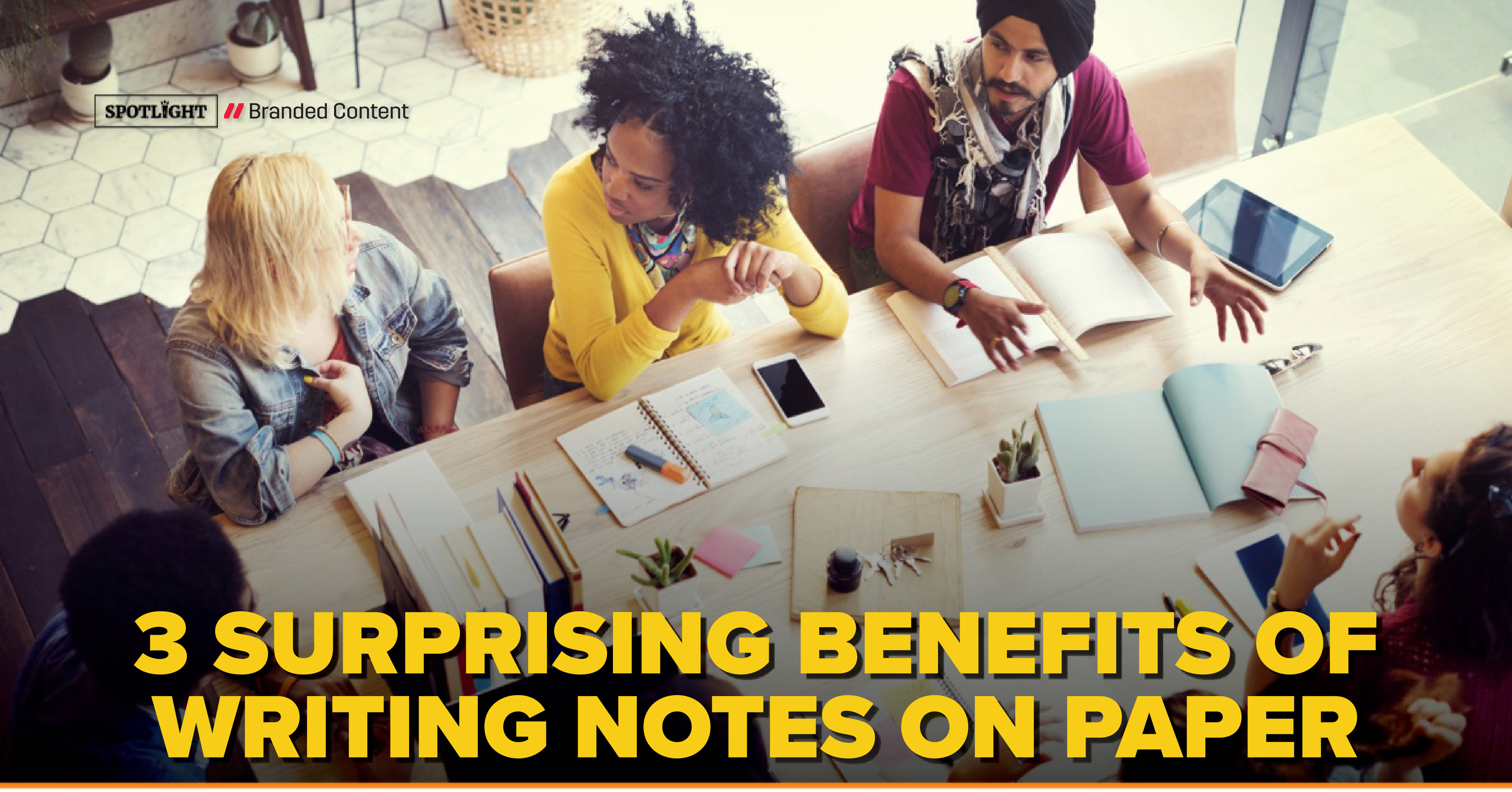
Meanwhile, Galanis wanted a way to stop this kind of abuse in the future. But how? Cameo couldn't monitor and research every request for every celebrity, he says. That would be too expensive and take too long. Instead, within 24 hours, his team had built what it calls a "Nazi bot"—a filter that utilizes the Southern Poverty Law Center's database of hate language and then looks for any signs of it in customers' video requests. If anything suspicious is identified, it's flagged so a celebrity can proceed with caution.

But Galanis felt that he still needed to add a personal touch. His is a business based on trust, after all—and trust is built on an intimate level. He discovered that, just days after the crisis, Favre was going to be signing autographs in Milwaukee, about 90 miles from Cameo's Chicago office. So Galanis and a colleague drove up, apologized to Favre in person, and told him about their response. "He really appreciated that we came, and we looked him in the eye and shook his hand," Galanis says.

The result of all this: Cameo sales went up 100 percent week over week after the scandal broke. (Bad news, after all, can still drive brand awareness.) Only one celebrity left Cameo. And Favre is still actively using the platform—charging $500 a video, and, Galanis says, getting plenty of business.

Hear Galanis on our podcast Problem Solvers, *available on iTunes or wherever you find podcasts.*

Illustration / ZOHAR LAZAR



3 SURPRISING BENEFITS OF WRITING NOTES ON PAPER

Electronics have become an extension of our work selves. Tethered to our computers and smartphones, we spend our days staring at a variety of screens. During meetings, many of us wouldn't dream of showing up without our laptop or tablet.

It's time to rethink this equation, supplementing digital devices with pens and paper. According to compelling research, there's evidence that the physical act of writing notes by hand increases productivity.

1. It boosts comprehension.

In a series of studies, researchers from Princeton and UCLA divided student participants into two groups: those who took notes by hand vs. those who typed them. Unsurprisingly, the typists were able to capture more of what was said in class. This thoroughness, however, did not translate into a better performance on tests. Instead, the students who took notes by hand outperformed those who typed out their notes.

In the report published in the *Association for Psychological Science*, the researchers theorized that the physical act of handwriting, which is more deliberate than typing, forces the brain to be selective. Instead of simply recording everything verbatim, as one can do on a laptop, the brain is forced to analyze information in real-time, selecting the most important information and encoding it for future use.

The same theory can be applied to the work environment. When employees take hand-written notes, a process that requires them to summarize and paraphrase instead of simply recording what's being said, they're more likely to leave a meeting having absorbed key details and takeaways.

2. It can improve your ability to focus and engage.

Internet-connected electronics are inherently distracting, an effect legitimized by multiple studies that have linked students' electronic use in the classroom with lower test scores. There are few things that kill concentration as quickly as a loud, intrusive ringtone.

So much of what we do at work requires the ability to absorb information by separating valuable data points from the background digital chatter. It's amazing what eliminating the ability to check social media or email during a brainstorming session can do for a group's productivity.

When employees are attentive, they are better enabled to participate and share worthwhile ideas. Take it a step further by assigning someone in the meeting to serve as an official "idea recorder." When someone shares an idea, have the recorder write it on a notecard. That way, great ideas aren't lost or forgotten.

3. It's good meeting etiquette.

Staring at a screen while someone is talking is rude. So is clattering away on a keyboard. You might simply be taking notes, but if you're being honest you also likely have multiple tabs open that have nothing to do with the presentation. Taking notes by hand allows you to increase the amount of eye contact with the presenter, which conveys a singular focus: you are listening and absorbing what is being said, not surfing the Internet.

The next time you head to a meeting or sign into a conference call, consider ditching the laptop for a pen and notepad. You likely won't capture everything that is being discussed, but that's the beauty of longhand: the process, by forcing you to identify, reframe, and record only the most salient points, encourages a deeper understanding of the material.

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Focus on What You Have

ELLEN LATHAM/ Cofounder, Orangetheory Fitness

ELLEN LATHAM'S brand, Orangetheory Fitness, has more than 1,250 locations worldwide. But a decade ago, she was just a single mom who'd been laid off from her job. "I didn't know what I was going to do," she says. Then she talked to her father, who had a philosophy about hard times: "Focus on what you have, not what you don't have." Latham had a talent for group fitness classes and a Pilates certification. So she talked her local Gold's Gym into letting her set up an indoor-cycling class there. Then she began teaching Pilates in her home, saved enough to open a studio, and created a workout that caught the attention of some fitness franchisors...which blossomed into Orangetheory.

Do the Work That Matters Next

NICK CANNON/ Actor and singer

What are the biggest mistakes you see from people who want to be successful?
Lack of preparation, or the anxiousness of wanting to be at a level they haven't prepared for. Things can happen very quickly. That 15 minutes of fame comes and then it fizzles out quickly because they weren't prepared for it.

Because they didn't have a long-term plan?
Yeah, or even just by not being ready for whatever's in front of you. That's why you don't see the transition a lot from a social media star into film or television. They got popular just making videos, but there's training and art that goes into making some of this other stuff.

Train to Become an Optimist

MICHAEL GERVAIS/ High-performance psychologist

PEOPLE crumble in high-pressure situations because they experience what Michael Gervais calls a "micro-choking"—a tension that inhibits them from thinking clearly. But you can teach your mind to stay sharp in hard times. Here, he says, are three trainable skills:

1/ CALMNESS. "We perceive a moment as larger or bigger than our capacity," he says. Keep it in context. All we have, Gervais says, is the moment we live in now. It's just as big as any other.

2/ OPTIMISM. During difficult times, the people who succeed are the ones who can imagine things going right, he says. It enables them to stay focused on the task ahead, while the pessimists give up.

3/ CONFIDENCE. Confident people remember all the reasons they're prepared for pressure. They trained. They're optimistic. They trust their instincts. *If it doesn't work out the way I hope,* they think, *I'll adjust.*

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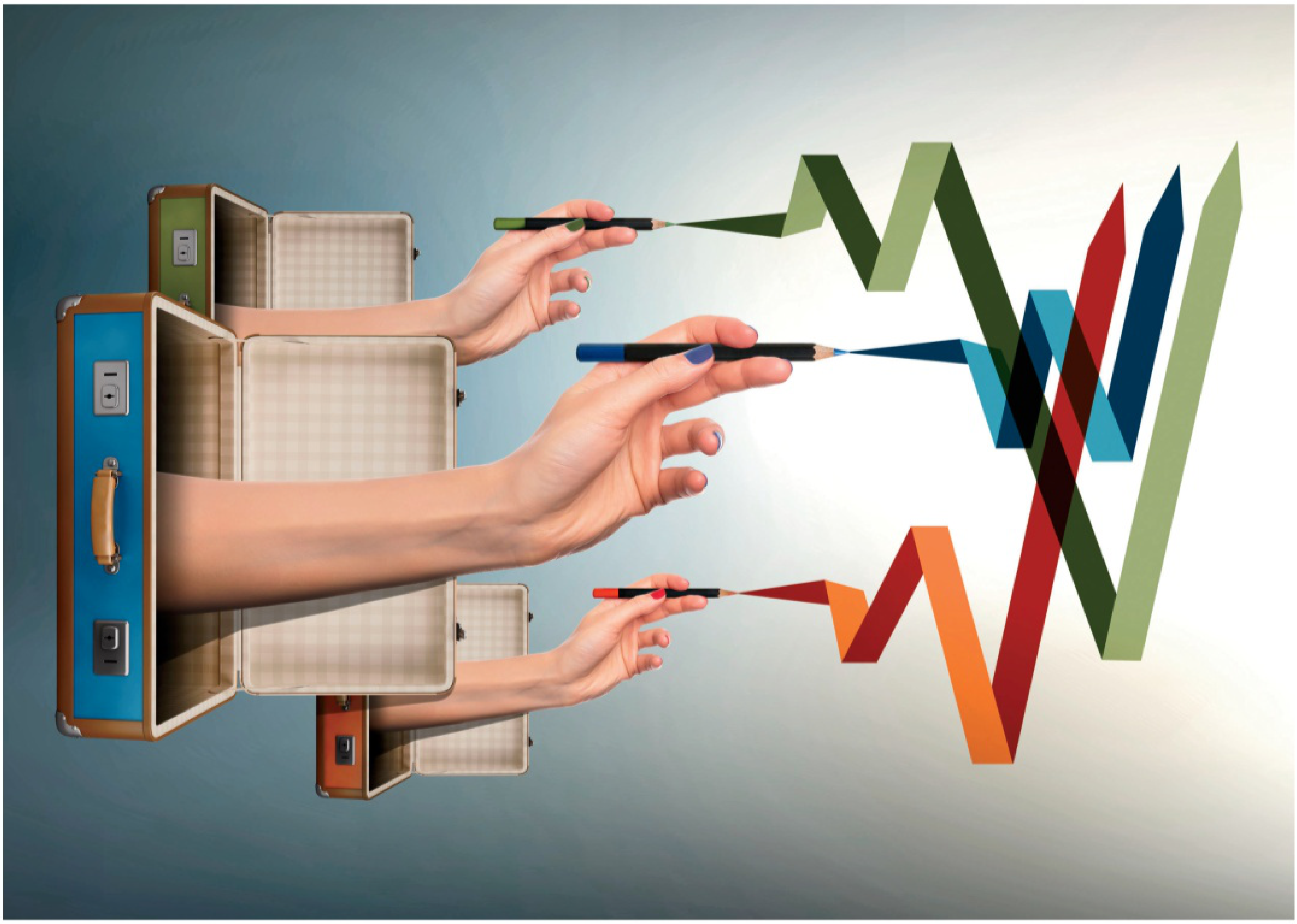

The New Workcation

Entrepreneurs are escaping for days of intense focus, isolation, and brutal feedback from their peers. Then they come back feeling refreshed. Ready to go? by **BLAIRE BRIODY**

Christina Stembel had a 70-item to-do list and no time to tackle it. So in 2018, she decided to eliminate all distractions. She'd get an Airbnb cabin in Ojai, Calif., with limited cell service, and spend a weekend alone with her work. She mentioned this plan to another founder she met at an Ernst & Young award ceremony, and the woman asked to come along. Stembel reluctantly agreed. Then the woman invited a friend. And with that, Stembel thought her time away would devolve into a social free-for-all.

But as the three founders settled in at their cabin, Stembel discovered an unexpected benefit. All three women ran companies that create tangible goods and generate millions to tens of millions of dollars in revenue: Stembel founded Farmgirl Flowers, which ships ethically sourced bouquets across the Lower 48; she was joined by Ellen Bennett of Hedley & Bennett, maker of premium aprons and chef's gear, and Chelsea Shukov of Sugar Paper, a high-end stationery business. At the cabin, the women began swapping experiences and insights, and soon they scrapped their original plans for the trip. They wouldn't tackle their to-do lists. Instead, they'd help one another with challenges in their businesses. "I didn't come back thinking, *Wow; I got so much accomplished*," says Stembel. "I came back feeling, *Wow; I'm thinking about things in such a*

Illustration / VIKTOR KOEN

different way."

The women now affectionately refer to their weekend as a *workcation,* a term that, historically, has meant little more than clearing emails poolside with a glass of wine, documented on Instagram to boast about your #dedication. But a fresh class of entrepreneurs like them are redefining the term, and their updated concept is catching on. This brand of a workcation is about much more than a change of scenery or luxury packaged as work. It's a way to focus exclusively on big-picture problems, harness creativity, and walk away with a clear, fresh vision on how to better run your company.

These kinds of escapes have genuine psychological and business value, according to experts who have looked at the trend. For example, a workcation can boost creativity by immersing people "into a different idea landscape of thoughts, emotions, perceptions, and goals," says Wilma Koutstaal, a psychology professor at the University of Minnesota and coauthor of *Innovating Minds: Rethinking Creativity to Inspire Change.* "Studies show that people who are more networked innovate more regularly, because they have access to all these different skills and knowledge possibilities." The small-group effect combined with inspiring scenery and limited distractions, she says, is a powerful combination.

The workcation is also beginning to take many forms—from the intimate to the professionally organized. The organization Project Getaway selects 16 entrepreneurs to participate in a one-month co-working, co-living brainstorming session, usually in Bali. Sunny Office brings founders together for shorter co-stays across Europe, while Nomad Pass offers "startup retreats," Airbnb-style—from a multibedroom eco beach house near Santa Cruz, Calif., to a luxury jungle treehouse for 16 in Phnom Penh, Cambodia.

Joshua Jordison, founder of a management and consulting firm in Los Angeles, has spun the trend into an annual event. A few years ago, he and a few entrepreneur friends started renting a cabin on California's Lake Arrowhead to brainstorm. That got him and fellow founder Wesley Chapman wondering why there weren't more conferences that mirrored this intimate atmosphere, so in 2017, they launched The Human Gathering, an annual invite-only three-day retreat for entrepreneurs that focuses on bonding and collaboration. About 100 people attend each year, and Jordison says it works because they break into smaller groups. Guests often tell him they met their cofounders at his retreats.

But for most entrepreneurs, a workcation is about combining simple ingredients: an isolated location, fellow founders, and a willingness to think big. "Choose your workcation companions wisely," advises Melissa Cassera, a brand consultant who recommends the getaways. "These should be people who inspire you, people you respect and admire. People who light up your brain—think, *OMG, every time we hang out, I leave with a zillion brilliant ideas! I heart yooou!*"

Stembel, Bennett, and Shukov had so much success with their first workcation, they decided to do it once or twice a year. For their second meeting, this February, they came prepared to discuss their three biggest challenges from 2018. "We said, 'Let's get everything out on the table tonight over dinner and wine,'" says Stembel. "'Cry if we need to, get it off our chests. That way we can move forward tomorrow.'"

For Stembel, who founded the flower company, 2018 had been awful—she'd dealt with a lawsuit and spent thousands of hours trying to raise capital with no success. The other two women had also slogged through rough years. Bennett struggled to integrate new hires into her growing company's culture; Shukov tried opening her own fulfillment warehouse for her stationery company but had to close it due to management issues.

The next morning, the three women woke up ready to come up with solutions. They covered the cabin, including the refrigerator, in oversize white paper. First they focused on Farmgirl Flowers, batting around alternative ways to grow besides courting big investors—like using the company's profits to open distribution centers. When the other women took their turns, they realized they were spending a lot on marketing without seeing enough return. Stembel offered a solution: She'd maximized Farmgirl Flowers' social media marketing reach by having her staff handle the whole thing rather than pay a high-priced agency to do it.

Later, they began digging into one another's blind spots, delivering hard-to-hear criticisms. Stembel learned that her directness could sometimes be seen as off-putting with potential investors and decided to improve her communication style. "It helped that it was honest feedback from someone in similar circumstances who cared for you," she says.

When the women returned to their offices, they took action. Stembel stopped her capital-raising efforts to focus on steady year-over-year growth, and revamped her onboarding process. At Hedley & Bennett, the culinary gear company, Bennett allocated funds toward more revenue-generating areas; she was inspired by seeing the other two founders' financial plans. And Shukov, of Sugar Paper, decided to implement one of Stembel's practices: setting quarterly project goals for each department. "We're watching the business make huge strides," Shukov says, "because we're placing the same importance on completing projects that we do on financial goals."

THE FOUNDERS BEGAN DIGGING INTO ONE ANOTHER'S BLIND SPOTS, DELIVERING HARD-TO-HEAR CRITICISMS. WHEN THE WOMEN RETURNED TO THEIR OFFICES, THEY TOOK ACTION.

And the impact still grows. As other entrepreneurs hear about the three women's workcation, they've been inspired to do their own. Stembel says she now regularly gets invited to them, which she loves. "It's hard to go up to someone and say, 'Hey, I heard you do this for your company. Can you show me?'" she says. "But there's a lot of overlap in our challenges. We can help each other."

Getting to "No"

Leaders love to be work heroes. But that can come at a hidden cost. Oftentimes, the most valuable thing you can do is say no—and here's how. by **NADINE GREINER**

Mary* was doing well as VP of business development at a San Francisco tech company. She'd been hired to create goodwill within the community, and she was a perfect fit. But her work had started suffering. Her CEO had asked her to take on a new project in Brazil, which would require her to spend at least a third of her time there. Her instinct was to say yes; she didn't want to lose her CEO's approval, and the opportunity was an honor. But realistically, she couldn't be in South America and do what she'd been hired to do in San Francisco, too.

When I met with her, I recognized the problem immediately. I've been an executive coach for more than 25 years, and Mary had made one of the biggest mistakes I see among top executives and founders: They're always saying yes. Leaders want to grow business, please people, avoid conflict, and keep a job. But accepting every request or business proposition can render leaders overloaded and overworked. Since this prevents them from thinking clearly, it can also keep them from focusing on their—and the organization's—most important work.

With another client of mine, the founder of a company who agreed to every merger and acquisition that came his way, I put up on a whiteboard all the costs of saying yes—his health, barely knowing his daughter, his COO constantly rotating. When he looked at that board, he cried.

I get it; telling someone no feels selfish. But when you learn to say it artfully and strategically, everyone wins in the end. It's all in how you deliver that important, critical word. Consider one of these approaches:

1/The flat-out "No." It's usually easier for someone to hear "No" for a reason, so you might try something like "I appreciate your request. Thank you. Since it comes from you, I've given it a lot of thought. As a leader who likes to say yes, I would like to take on everything. But I've learned that I have to prioritize in order to be effective for the company. I'm sorry that I have to say no, because I have already committed to x and y, and I need to do the best job possible on those projects."

2/Tinker with the timing. Offer to tackle the request at a later date—perhaps at the end of the fiscal year or when your current top-of-mind project is finished. But go this route only if you know you can deliver. If you're BS-ing, it will burn trust.

3/Accept with conditions. Can you alter the request to make it easier? You might say, for example, "If you assign a project manager who can ensure everything stays on time and budget, I'll be happy to do this." It's a good way to test whether the requesting party has skin in the game. Maybe the project isn't really that important to them.

4/Become a problem solver and offer an alternative solution. My client at the tech company ended up finding another candidate who was well-qualified to handle the Brazil project, while recommitting to what she was hired to do. The boss was delighted that she had come up with a solution, and it gave a colleague a terrific career growth opportunity.

THE THING ABOUT saying no is that it enables you to say yes in a much more collaborative way. We often think people don't want to hear "No," but CEOs get frustrated when people accept and then can't deliver. They generally have more trust in somebody who is assertive—who can either push back or provide a new way to deal with the situation. My client's boss saw that in her and thought, *Wow, she understands the business.* In his eyes, she's not a naysayer—she's a business strategist.

This article has been excerpted from Stress-Less Leadership, *by Nadine Greiner, available from entm.ag/bookstore.*

PHOTOGRAPH BY SHUTTERSTOCK/MANTINOV

*NAME HAS BEEN CHANGED

Inside Uber's Innovation Space

Interviews by HAYDEN FIELD

WHAT DOES SUCCESS look like at Uber? The company has famously had its share of scandals, and its IPO earlier this year disappointed investors, but in a letter to his staff, CEO Dara Khosrowshahi wrote that "our true north will be determined over the long term." Much of that long-term vision is explored here, in a recently renovated industrial complex in San Francisco called Pier 70, which once housed shipbuilders and ironworkers but is now home to Uber's Advanced Technologies Group. The employees in this space work on projects far outside Uber's core ride-hailing business—they're designing and developing self-driving vehicles, plans for aviation sharing, and the company's JUMP bikes and scooters. And they get out of the office a lot: Working on transportation often means going along for the ride.

LUCIE ZIKOVA/ Senior robotics program manager, New Mobility
"I returned in February from maternity leave, and as a new mom, I really enjoy the fact that we have accessible and comfortable nursing rooms. You can book it and it's yours for that half hour or however long you need. It makes coming back to work much, much smoother."

PAUL HANSON/ Engineering manager, JUMP
"I'm on the New Mobility team, and my role is to make sure bikes, scooters, and charging infrastructure are reliable before they go out into the field. It's been just me for the past two months—and I am hiring—but it's felt like everyone here is in it together. I've never had a situation where anyone has said, 'That's not my job.'"

CODY BOYD/ Senior operations manager, Uber Elevate
"When I started at Uber in 2014, I worked at a tiny coworking space in Columbus, Ohio—four desks, eight people. Despite the fact that we've grown dramatically over the past four or five years, I like that the collaborative culture is similar. Everyone is literally and figuratively on a level playing field in the new office."

Photograph / ADAM FRIEDBERG

GURJOT SANDHU / Mission manager, Advanced Technologies Group
"The biggest change in working at Pier 70 is that instead of every team being in its own silo, we have a pretty open office, and we can get to the root of any problem as it comes up. If someone on the Car Ops team needs to speak to the engineers, we just walk across the atrium."

PAIGE RECKER / Technical program manager, JUMP
"If one of us needs to get out, we'll take a bike from the tech shop and go on a ride around the area or to the park. Last week, someone on my extended team said he was having a bad day, so I biked a mile with him, sat and looked at the bay, then biked back."

SHERI JOHNSEN / Executive assistant, JUMP
"I signed up for a bike ride with the Uber cycling team, the AIDS Life Cycle, and it's 545 miles over seven days. Before, I'd never biked more than an hour in my life on a road bike. My team has been training with me every weekend, 25 to 40 miles, to get ready. I've never had a team support me this much."

SARAH SALEM / Quality program manager, JUMP
"On our team, the person who's latest to a meeting has to sing a song. It gets embarrassing. At the last meeting, one guy sang 'A Whole New World,' from *Aladdin*. I haven't had to do it yet and hope I never have to, because I don't think anyone wants to hear me sing!"

Should I Spend Big on Social Media?

Paid ads on social platforms can get your business in front of a lot of eyeballs. But don't overlook the many other (and cheaper) ways to grow your customer base online. **by ADAM BORNSTEIN**

Q When it comes to customer acquisition, how important is paid social media compared with other digital channels? **—JOHN L., HOUSTON**

SOCIAL MEDIA has created a beautiful opportunity for entrepreneurs: It's never been easier to get your message in front of hundreds, thousands, or even millions of people. But if you want to reach all those people, it's going to cost *a lot.*

It's a simple case of supply and demand, and social media platforms are limiting the supply. Organic reach—that is, your ability to speak directly to the audience that *chooses* to follow and interact with your business—has dwindled to almost nothing. On Facebook, for example, organic reach touches less than 5 percent of your audience on average. Facebook simply doesn't show your posts to most of your followers…unless you pay for the privilege. That's one of the reasons why advertising inside social media has become increasingly expensive, as brands outbid each other in a competition for users' attention.

Suddenly, social media isn't such a great deal. If you're on a budget, all of this can brutally limit your growth and acquisition opportunities.

That's not to say you should stop using digital platforms altogether. Paid social is a hotbed of marketing insight. With just a small amount of cash, you can easily test headlines, imagery, and offers on different audiences. That's valuable research. However, if your entire acquisition strategy depends on paid media, you could pay your way right out of business.

But there is another way! You just need to diversify. In the digital world, there are many ways to acquire customers: paid social, paid search, email acquisition, organic social, organic search (earning traffic through content), public relations, influencer marketing, and earned media. Start by identifying a few channels where you want to focus most of your efforts. (Ideally, at least some of those channels will *not* require the spend of ad dollars.) This way, you can test what's working while building an omnichannel approach that will pay off down the road.

At my marketing agency, we start with data and consumer insights, then use that to support tactics that allow clients to win at SEO through organic content. (Social media may be the ultimate toy for idle hands, but Google is still a business's best friend.) Then we tie that to a strategy that makes it easy to acquire email addresses. *Then* we focus on paid social to amplify direct selling.

For example, we have one CPG client for whom we created 40 original articles, designed to drive traffic to its website. On the surface, this might not seem like a way to grow revenue. But within two years, those 40 articles allowed the brand to rank for more than 12,000 keywords (up from 2,000), landing in the top three Google results for nearly 400 different topics and searches.

This influx of traffic made it easier than ever to directly sell on the article pages and add thousands of email addresses to the company's database, which they used for email marketing. This was a combination of smart SEO planning (knowing what keywords to target), strategy lead generation (creating pop-ups or other opt-ins to the site visitor), and positioning product offerings on specific article pages (like native ads that sold products related to the topic of a specific article). This way, the traffic was technically "free"—and so were the added emails, which we could now upload to social media platforms and directly sell to consumers with ads based on their known interests.

If you put all your eggs in the paid basket, you underestimate and undercut the long-term growth of your brand. And when you push on all levers at the same time, you make it increasingly hard to know which acquisition channels have the highest ROI. But when you diversify and segment your strategy, the opportunity for growth can feel limitless.

Adam Bornstein is the founder of Pen Name Consulting, a marketing and branding agency, and the creator of two12, a mentorship experience for entrepreneurs.

Illustration / FEDERICO GASTALDI

Photographs / JAKE CHESSUM

PAPA SHAQ

Papa John's founder and primary spokesman was mired in scandal and dragging down sales. This is the inside story of how the brand hatched a turnaround plan—and how **SHAQUILLE O'NEAL** *became the perfect face for it.*

by **CLINT CARTER**

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GROOMING, BARBARA O'BANNON; WARDROBE, RENEE TOM

LIKE MOST OF ITS STORES, the Papa John's on Wells Street in Milwaukee is primarily a carryout and delivery operation. The lobby fits only four chairs. So when 30 people crowd in, as they do on a recent Thursday afternoon when Shaquille O'Neal shows up for an impromptu pizza party, the sleepy joint suddenly feels like a nightclub.

"Shaq! Sign my shirt!" screams a grown man in a blue polo.

"Sign mine, too!" echoes one of the store's cooks.

Outside, people are pressing their noses against the plate-glass window as a man snaps a picture of his blond-headed son standing next to the 7'1" NBA Hall of Famer. But the dad's hand is shaking so violently that the few photos he fires off turn out blurry.

"Why are you shaking?" says O'Neal. Then, "You guys want pizza?"

Lunch is on O'Neal today. His visit is tied to his new role as a Papa John's brand ambassador, but the relationship runs deeper than the paid spokesman positions he's held with Buick, Gold Bond, Icy Hot, and dozens of other companies. As of earlier this year, O'Neal is also a Papa John's franchisee and one of 10 executives serving on the company's board of directors. That gives him an honest stake in the brand. And in turn, Papa John's gets a genuine—and, equally important, *symbolic*—turn away from its past two nightmarish years.

The brand's misfortunes have been widely covered in the press. It began in 2017, when the company's namesake, founder, and then-CEO, John Schnatter, jumped hard into the country's divisive culture wars. Then in 2018, he was accused of using racist language. A large, noisy, messy schism ensued, which separated Founder John from Papa John's. Sales tanked. In August 2018, Papa John's stock hit a low of $38.05, down more than 50 percent over the year prior, and same-store sales for the quarter dropped nearly 10 percent.

Investors and fans alike have been wondering ever since: Can a brand like this recover? Shaq is a big part of the answer. He is the rare universally beloved celebrity in America, and he represents everything the brand wants to return to—joy, inclusion, and a love of pizza.

And, oh, does Shaq love pizza. By his telling, he fell in love with

Papa John's in college. None of the other brands met his standard. "I don't like thin crust, I don't like BS cheese, and I don't like crust with seven ingredients," he says. (Papa John's crust uses only six ingredients—a recipe that will survive from the John Schnatter era.) That's why he was eager to buy into some Papa John's locations.

"Right now, I own 10," he says.

Uh, wait—according to Papa John's, he owns nine.

"Nine, 10, what's the difference?" O'Neal says. "I thought I had 10. Now I have to go buy another store."

AS THE FACE OF Papa John's, John Schnatter had one main benefit: authenticity. He was *the guy*. The name on the box! But like many founders who put themselves on TV—say, Jim Koch of Sam Adams and Bob Kaufman of Bob's Discount Furniture—he was also awkward on camera. Schnatter always seemed like a man who *tried* to look fun, rather than a man who actually was.

O'Neal serves as a different model. At an early age, he realized the financial power of joy. Then he fully embraced it.

It first clicked with O'Neal when he was an NBA freshman, at the age of 20. He had a basketball career ahead of him but was already thinking past it—inspired by Magic Johnson's career pivot into business. How, O'Neal wondered, could he leverage his own rising celebrity? Then he found an unlikely muse: Spuds MacKenzie.

You remember Spuds, right? The dog from the Bud Light commercial? When O'Neal saw Spuds on TV, he thought, *Hey, I could do that.* "Why do people like this ugly-ass, *Little Rascals* looking dog?" O'Neal says he asked himself. "Because his commercials are fun." Spuds wore sunglasses and a Hawaiian-print shirt. According to his commercials, he was a "party-loving, happening dude."

And O'Neal thought: *If I ever get the chance to market myself, it has to be on that. There always has to be humor, and there always has to be something that makes people remember.* In that moment an alter ego was born: O'Neal dubbed himself the Doctor of Fun.

Soon after, he picked up a *Dummies Guide* to business and discovered a chapter on joint ventureship. He liked what he read. Here was a model that would essentially allow him to be the entrepreneurial version of a slam-dunk guy—the same role he played on the court. The coach calls the play, and the point guard brings the ball up the court. "Then throw it to me," O'Neal says, "and I know what to do with it."

When the Doctor of Fun—an actual doctor, by the way, since he received a doctorate in education from Florida's Barry University in 2012—started making business decisions, he did so in the spirit of Spuds. Instead of a basketball video game, he came out with a wackadoodle street-fighting game called *Shaq Fu*. In the movie *Kazaam,* he played a genie liberated from a boom box. He once turned down the opportunity to be on a Wheaties box. Too plain! "I told my people, 'Call Frosted Flakes or Fruity Pebbles,'" he says. (In 2015, he did indeed make the Fruity Pebbles box.)

Whatever he put his name on, he wanted it to be widely accessible. O'Neal once had a Shaq shoe with Reebok, but after a mother outside a basketball arena told him it was too expensive, he launched a budget line with Walmart. Then he retired his line of upscale modern-cut suits to launch a big-and-tall line with JCPenney.

For his first foray into food, O'Neal considered buying a McDonald's franchise. He soured on the plan after discovering he'd have to attend McDonald's Hamburger University—where, famously, the brand initiates owners by working them at every station of the restaurant. But he found other ways into the franchise world. A friend of a friend at a party in Beverly Hills mentioned that he was looking for investors for his new burger chain, Five Guys. O'Neal would go on to own 27 stores, though he sold them. However, he still owns an Auntie Anne's and a Krispy Kreme, which he calls "the number one Krispy Kreme in the world." (He owns a few nonfranchised restaurants as well.)

But still, O'Neal is always looking for something new. And last year, as it so happened, Papa John's was looking for something new, too.

"He's very SERIOUS about the work he's doing here," PAPA JOHN's new CEO says of O'NEAL. "But at the same TIME, we need a little bit of FUN."

TODAY PAPA JOHN'S operates in all 50 states and 48 countries. Between its franchise and corporate stores, the company counts 5,336 locations and 120,000 employees. It's the third-biggest pizza delivery chain in the world, behind Domino's and Pizza Hut. But it started with an American origin story as humble as any you've ever heard.

It was 1983 in Jeffersonville, Ind., and John Schnatter, fresh out of college and 23 years old, sold his Camaro to purchase a pizza oven. Then he took a sledgehammer to the walls of a broom closet in the back of his father's bar, set up a kitchen, and began crafting his Papa John persona. In 1986, he sold his first franchise. In 1993, the company went public. And in 2009, Schnatter tracked down his old Camaro and bought it back for $250,000.

Schnatter was the undisputed leader and face of the company he built. In 2010, with some 3,500 stores to its name, the company signed on as the official sponsor of the NFL, which amplified Papa John's already huge visibility. Quarterback Peyton Manning became a franchisee and for years would appear in commercials with Schnatter, tossing a football like old chums. The company rode rocket-ship growth, with 14 years of positive or flat same-store revenues, a 22 percent increase on earnings per share, and record sales of $3.7 billion globally in 2016.

Then came November 2017. The news was everywhere: While trying to explain lackluster sales—Papa John's numbers were lower than expected—Schnatter chastised the NFL management for allowing its players to continue kneeling. At the time, kneeling for the national anthem was among the hottest-debated subjects, dividing America along predictable political lines. "We are totally disappointed in the NFL and its leadership," Schnatter said, adding that the problem should have been "nipped in the bud a year and a half ago."

Suddenly Papa John's learned the lesson that almost every major brand does when it picks a political side. Nobody wanted to talk about Papa John's vine-fresh sauce or six-ingredient pizza dough. They instead wanted to talk about Schnatter. The company's fourth-quarter sales dropped 3.9 percent, effectively flattening a year of modest gains, while franchisees across the nation began distancing themselves from their founder.

"We're not John Schnatter," says Melanie Langford, who runs 11 Papa John's stores in Alabama. She and her team relayed that message over and over on phone calls to churches, schools, and other corporate account holders within the community. "We're the local guys. We employ people locally, and we support local families."

Two weeks after the initial comment, and after the neo-Nazi site *Daily Stormer* called Papa John's the "official pizza of the Aryan master race," the brand finally responded. It apologized on Twitter and gave neo-Nazis an emoji middle finger. But by then, damage had been done. "What Schnatter said should have been corrected by public relations immediately," Langford says. "Instead they sat on it."

The PR fire continued to blaze. In January, Schnatter stepped down from his role as CEO. Papa John's and the NFL ended their relationship, and Peyton Manning sold his stake in 31 stores. Then the bottom fell out. *Forbes* published a claim from Papa John's former creative agency alleging that Schnatter had used racist language, including the N-word, during a call. In response, Schnatter stepped down as the company chairman. But that didn't soften the blowback.

"We're still dealing with the NFL thing, and now *this*?" says Kenyatta Theodore, an African American Papa John's franchisee who at the time operated three stores with her husband, Herb, in New Orleans. "It was like someone had punched me in the stomach."

Theodore began hearing customers say they didn't want to support Papa John's—or rather, they didn't want to support Papa John Schnatter. During a teacher appreciation day, one teacher refused her free slice on moral grounds. "Most people don't even know that we own our stores," says Theodore. "We never felt like we had to tell them before." When people started asking why they didn't leave the company and its controversial founder, Theodore replied: "John Schnatter does not represent me. I represent myself. I'm a franchisee, and this is my store."

Schnatter, for his part, maintains that his intended use of the N-word was to point out that another company, one that his agency wanted him to partner with, had used that word in the past. A power struggle ensued within Papa John's, and Schnatter was evicted from the office. He launched a website to share his side of the story and filed two lawsuits, both of which have since been dropped. While Schnatter still owns about 20 percent of the company, he now has nothing to do with the daily operations, say company reps. And he's been rapidly selling off his shares.

In 2018, during the corporate battle, 186 franchise stores shut down. One of those belonged to Kenyatta and Herb. "It really affected us tremendously," Theodore says. "We went from one of the highest-ranked stores to the bottom."

Papa John's installed a new CEO to solve the problem. He was Steve Ritchie, a 23-year veteran of the company. And nervous franchisees wanted to see action—fast.

THE MOMENT WAS not lost on Ritchie.

"With most brands, there aren't tremendous shifts in sentiment year over year," he says. The same could not be said of his. "We had a significant decline in sentiment." There was no time to waste—he needed to calm the company's nervous franchisees and make every change necessary to return that public sentiment back to where it was before. It wasn't an especially enviable role to step into, though it did have at least one upside: As the cleanup man, there was no need to sugarcoat anything. "It's going to be a struggle, but just give me time," he told Theodore when they met. "I'm going to do my part to get us back where we need to be."

Papa John's offered financial assistance to keep its franchisees afloat. It spent $15.4 million in royalty relief and $5.8 million to give the brand a new image—the company wanted Schnatter's face off all branding. It added $10 million to the national marketing budget, and then paid $19.5 million in legal and professional fees tied to a voluntary audit of the company's culture and a strategic review.

Then the brand announced a partnership with Starboard Value, an activist investing group that turned Olive Garden around by taking over the entire board of directors for its parent company, Darden. With $250 million from Starboard, Papa John's began paying down debt, and it vowed to continue providing financial assistance to franchisees and continue paying out marketing and legal expenses—a burden that will run between $30 and $50 million this year.

Ritchie is also well aware of the audience Papa John's needs to

court the most: nonwhite consumers, who were most offended by Schnatter's scandals. So the brand is reaching out to them overtly. In a new commercial featuring employees of different skin tones, for example, one store owner says, "You've heard one voice of Papa John's for a long time." Then a second owner completes the thought: "It's time you heard from all of us."

Papa John's has begun forming new partnerships with a diverse mix of suppliers and creative agencies, including those owned by African Americans. Through its newly formed charity, The Papa John's Foundation, the company made a half-million-dollar donation to North Carolina's Bennett College, a historically black female college, and a quarter-million-dollar donation to the Boys & Girls Club. The new Dough & Degrees program, launched with Purdue University Global, allows employees to earn college degrees with free or reduced tuition costs, and a new position—the chief of diversity, equity, and inclusion—is overseeing system-wide diversity training for all Papa John's employees.

But there was still an open question: Who should replace Schnatter as the new face of the brand? Who could appeal across demographics, while also showcasing Papa John's new commitment to diversity?

And then Ritchie got a call from a certain NBA Hall of Famer.

IN THE PAST, Papa John's knew exactly what it would do for the Super Bowl, the year's biggest day for pizza sales. It would be running ads during the game, and showing up at official events. But the scandals of the past had shattered that relationship. So as Papa John's looked for a new way to partake in the game this past February, it learned about a party O'Neal was hosting. He called it Shaq's Fun House, and it featured performances by T-Pain, Lil Jon, and Cirque du Soleil.

Papa John's signed on as a Fun House sponsor. To Ritchie's surprise, O'Neal asked him to fly down early for a meeting. "Before I could give him my sales pitch of having additional involvement with the brand, Shaq said, 'I love your story,'" says Ritchie. "'I'd love to be able to talk about how I can become a franchisee.'"

Ritchie took the idea back to Papa John's, and the company hatched a bigger idea. What if O'Neal joined the board? It was a long shot, and possibly a risky play. But it felt right. Papa John's was hemorrhaging fun, and O'Neal, the self-proclaimed Doctor of Fun, was just the guy to suture the wounds. Plus, he checked all the professional boxes. "Shaq obviously fits the bill of being a diverse candidate, but he's also an entrepreneur," says Ritchie. "We wanted to find someone who had franchising experience in the QSR industry, and we also wanted to find someone who knew how to connect to consumers."

The deal came together fast. O'Neal signed a three-year brand ambassador deal for $8.25 million in cash and stock, and his role on the board was designed to help him shape the company's culture. (He's the only African American on the board.) He also took a 30 percent stake in nine stores (not 10 yet!) in Atlanta, which he wanted to "Shaq-imize"—adding a building-size signature on the exterior, and his size-22 footprints leading up to the counter.

Six weeks after the Super Bowl, Papa John's announced the partnership. It led to what seems like the best press Papa John's has had in years, and has continued over the months as the relationship takes shape—O'Neal showing up at stores, say, or Ritchie revealing that a Shaq-themed pizza is in the works. Investors seem happy as well.

O'NEAL is the rare universally BELOVED celebrity, and REPRESENTS everything the BRAND wants to return to: JOY, inclusion, and a love of PIZZA.

"He's like Oprah," says Ivan Feinseth, an analyst covering Papa John's for Tigress Financial. "Everybody likes Oprah, and everybody likes Shaq. They were lucky to get him."

But the best reviews seem to be coming from the franchisees.

As a spokesperson, O'Neal is a big upgrade from Schnatter, some say. "John's really smart, and his tenacity built Papa John's, but he's a bit socially awkward," says Langford, the franchisee from Alabama. "He comes across as quirky." O'Neal, on the other hand, is as comfortable with crowds as he is with a basketball. "When he smiles, his whole face smiles," she says. "So while I kind of miss the NFL, I'm really happy to have Shaq."

It's early days, of course, and even O'Neal can't turn around a brand in a few months.

Store traffic is still hurting. While Domino's and Pizza Hut posted positive and flat first-quarter comps this year, respectively, Papa John's was down 6.9 percent. And the brand's franchise association is eager for tangible results. "Sales have gone down, and franchisees have been suffering," says Robert Zarco, an attorney representing the Papa John's Franchise Association (PJFA). "That's something that will not be repaired immediately. I don't think [corporate leadership] is doing enough, and I don't think they're doing it fast enough." (The PJFA president, Vaughn Frey, declined to comment.)

Papa John's corporate, however, expects sales to rebound by the end of 2019. "This year is all about doing the work," says Ritchie. "We would hope at the tail end of the year we're starting to show some monthly positive numbers, and next year will be a time of celebration."

But one number is already rising: Consumer sentiment is up double digits, says Ritchie. And he attributes part of that to O'Neal. "He's very serious about the work he's doing here," the CEO says, "but at the same time, we need a little bit of fun."

BACK AT THE STORE in Milwaukee, O'Neal orders eight pizzas, split among sausage, pepperoni, and cheese. The store supervisor, Scott Hermanson, shouts over the crowd: "Is everyone here for Shaq, or can I help anyone?" Nobody seems to hear him, so he gives up, steps around the counter, and snaps a few photos with the star.

O'Neal keeps one pie for himself and doles out the rest to the crowd, making sure that college kids eat first. Then, pizza in hand, he plows through his crowd of fans as they continue to shower him with love and gratitude, with one guy shouting at his back, "Thanks for being real, baby!"

There's been one board meeting since O'Neal signed on, and the value of this new relationship is still to be revealed. But O'Neal, who called himself Superman during his NBA days, seems to have a particular superpower here: He can make people live in the present, not the past. When he walks into a store, everyone rushes to him. When he talks, people light up. And by attaching his name to Papa John's, he's beginning to pry the brand away from its messy past.

In fact, O'Neal won't even refer to Schnatter by name. He just calls him "the old guy"—part of a bygone era.

"When the old guy said what he said, not only did it hurt his business, but it hurt the franchisees' business, too," O'Neal says. "But now I want to let people know that we accept everybody, we include everybody, and we love everybody."

Clint Carter lives in Goshen, N.Y. He covers travel, technology, business, and health.

Two Companies, Two Kids, One Family

Neil Blumenthal is cofounder of **WARBY PARKER**. His wife, Rachel, started **ROCKETS OF AWESOME**. With children ages 4 and 8, they run their home life like a third business. Here's how it breaks down by the hour.

by LIZ BRODY

Photographs / BRIAN FINKE

Gemma, wait!" Rachel Blumenthal orders the blonde blur that is her 4-year-old daughter with the zoomies. "You have a raspberry smoothie unibrow!" There are leggings and bows and 8-year-old Griffin to get out the door for school. But it's all good. Breakfast has been accomplished, workouts done, emails answered, lunches packed, assistants coordinated between his company and hers—and now, wipe in hand, a unibrow crisis averted. And it's only 7:30 at the Blumenthals'.

Neil and Rachel Blumenthal, 38 and 39, met freshman year at Tufts University and married in 2008. By then, she'd already started a jewelry brand, Rachel Leigh. He followed suit in 2010 by cofounding Warby Parker, the industry disruptor that sells trendy prescription eyeglasses for $95 and has grown to nearly 100 stores and 2,000 employees with a valuation, reportedly, of $1.75 billion. Meanwhile, in 2016 she launched Rockets of Awesome, talking to investors while in labor with their second child. With 55 employees and a new investment from Foot Locker, her new brand of children's clothing is designed exactly for mornings like this.

But while not every entrepreneur can claim the Blumenthals' level of business successes, many can relate to their real-life scramble outside the office. Being parent-entrepreneurs requires improvisation. Like the time this spring when they were checking in at JFK for a trip to the Bahamas and Neil turned to Rachel and said, "Your passport is expired." She thought: *Surely you don't know how to read a passport because that would never happen to me.* But, yeah: expired. So? Step one, distract the kids at Dunkin' Donuts; two, google "emergency passport"; and three, reschedule her flight as the others flew off to the Bahamas. "It was Saturday. I got there Monday," says Rachel. "It was the most peaceful three days of my entire life."

To see how it all works, *Entrepreneur* shadowed them for a day in May, when on top of the usual madness (unibrow included), they're in a hotel because their Greenwich Village apartment is still a construction zone eight weeks after a gut renovation was supposed to be finished.

6:00 A.M. / A minimalist morning

Rachel's phone alarm goes off so she can get to an exercise class. Neil does a seven-minute workout from *The New York Times*. "I think I do five of the seven minutes," he admits. "But I have Griffin or Gemma on top of me, which adds resistance training." Time management requires sacrifice, and real exercise is one of the tasks he cut. For her, it was cooking. "I'm like, 'I'm done,'" says Rachel. "I'm going to stop pretending I want your recipe. It's the thing I never have to think about again." Today she whips up a fruit smoothie, and Neil makes French toast—one of his four rotating breakfasts. Soap, toothpaste, kids' school outfits (five of the same shirts, five of the same pants, all Rockets, all the time), Fresh Direct, JetBlack, friend dates—everything that can be predecided and preset is on automatic delivery or repeat-scheduled, says Rachel, "so I can focus my energy on my business, kids, and our life together."

8:00 A.M./ Raising founders

It's Neil's turn to take the kids to school. His iPhone case says "Love You Dad." Griffin 3D-printed it. "He asked me how much iPhone cases cost," says Neil. "I told him mine was $40. And he said, 'Oh, perfect, I'll charge $10 and be the Warby Parker of iPhone cases.'" After Rachel wipes the smoothie off Gemma's face, the kids are out the door. "This is my favorite moment of my day," she says.

9:00 A.M./ Building her company

Rachel (yes, in Warby Parker—codesigned by Rosario Dawson) often does a work breakfast on the way to the office, and then doesn't leave. Once there, it's one meeting after another—from reviewing hoodies and tumble shorts for spring 2020 to strategizing the "back to school" immersive shopping pop-up they're planning in downtown Manhattan, ahead of a possible permanent store rollout. Having raised $49.5 million ("which would have been easier if I were a man and didn't experience the sexism I experienced," she says), Rachel is at the point where she has to stop herself from trying to do everything. "I learned from Neil that it's no longer valuable to be in the weeds," she says. "Warby just grew so quickly, and it was incredibly helpful to watch him raise himself up to be more visionary and strategic." Right now, he has more late work events than she does, so Rachel prioritizes being home by 6:30 or 7 to do homework with Griffin. But that may change as their companies do.

12:00 P.M./ Father-daughter time

Neil took the morning off to join Gemma on a school field trip. "That's the beauty of both running our own businesses," says Rachel. "We have flexibility." There's a nanny and a babysitter; his parents live nearby. But Rachel and Neil try to not miss these moments. "One of us always takes the kids to school, and one of us always puts them to bed," he says. "That's really important to us."

2:00 P.M./ Building his company

Having made it to the office, Neil scrambles to prep for yet another meeting that's starting in four minutes. Warby Parker (named after two Jack Kerouac characters) does 10-plus collections annually; its virtual-try-on app was released earlier this year; it launched a kids' line and is opening more stores. He and Rachel share a Google calendar so it's clear who can fetch a sick child from school or attend a field trip like today's. As for friends? Also on the cal. Neil has a standing guy date, and she has one with her girlfriends—always on the first Tuesday of every month, because "think about how much time you waste scheduling and rescheduling," says Rachel. Would they ever start a company together? He laughs. "I don't think it's crossed our minds," he says. "We are involved in each other's businesses at the right level—which is to be each other's closest confidant and adviser. And we run our home business together. I don't know if we need to create another." Rachel is more succinct: "No. No. No. No."

6:30 P.M./ Phone-free family time

"Pizza is here!" yells Griffin. The family have made a pilgrimage to their half-finished home. After dinner, Rachel helps Griffin with his homework, and Neil reads to the kids before bed. Then the couple gets ready for date night (every Tuesday but the friend one). "We put the phones away—it used to be before we walked into the restaurant, and now it might be after we order," says Neil. "We go to dinner and just talk."

THE SECOND ACT

More Difficult, Most Satisfying

Tamara Mellon is most famous for cofounding Jimmy Choo. But in 2013, she started building a new brand…named after herself. It's been bumpy. (She went bankrupt.) But she's finally become the entrepreneur she always wanted to be. ***by Stephanie Schomer***

Tamara Mellon just wanted to move on.

For most of her career, she'd been defined by one brand: Jimmy Choo. She cofounded the luxury footwear company in 1996, and it quickly became the final word on playful, sexy shoes for women. She grew the business for 15 years until her relationship with the company soured, leaving Mellon feeling overlooked, overworked, and undercompensated. She left in 2011.

Two years later, in 2013, she was ready to launch a new shoe brand. Everything about it would be different. (For starters, she'd name it after herself.) While the rest of the industry releases one large collection each season, she'd release products monthly. Women, she realized, no longer wanted to see autumn clothing on a runway in February, wait until August to buy it, *then* wait until it gets cold to wear it. "I was thinking about the next generation of luxury," she says.

At first, the industry was intrigued. Investors put in $24 million. Retailers set up meetings. But she hit a wall. She kept hearing the same feedback: She was trying to do things *too* differently. The timing wouldn't work, people told her. Monthly shipments would be impossible to manage. "I had three investors who wanted me to just go back to fashion's old calendar and build Tamara Mellon the same way I'd built Jimmy Choo," she says.

It was a crossroads. She could do things the way they'd always been done, or she could blaze her own path, despite the discomfort that was sure to follow.

She chose her own path. "And that," she says, "is how I ended up in Chapter 11."

But it would be worth it.

MELLON HAS LONG LIVED a life in the spotlight. The London-born designer is the daughter of the late Tom Yeardye, a Rock Hudson stunt double who was a partner in Vidal Sassoon. Her mother is a former Chanel model from whom Mellon is now estranged. Her ex-husband is the late banking heir Matthew Mellon; they met after attending the same Narcotics Anonymous meeting in the late '90s. This all made her a regular character in the British tabloids. Mellon even joined the press herself for a while: She was an assistant fashion editor at British *Vogue,* where she got to know the work of bespoke shoe designer Jimmy Choo. In 1996, at her suggestion, the duo went into business.

Jimmy Choo the brand took off and lent Mellon a different kind of celebrity, one she had earned and could embrace. She was even made an Officer of the Order of the British Empire for her contributions to fashion. But not everything from those days would be flattering. She clashed with Choo, who exited the company in 2001. In the decade that followed, the company ping-ponged between private equity owners, and Mellon felt lost. When she finally departed in 2011, she sold her stake for a reported $135 million.

She began plotting her way forward. She wanted to build a new kind of brand, something that was about more than just luxury. She interviewed more than 50 women and learned that the instant gratification of online shopping had changed their expectations. She envisioned a brand that could move as fast as the internet, slashing the production schedule and delivering seasonally appropriate product to consumers each month. "Buy it Wednesday, wear it Saturday," she says.

Mellon lined up Italian manufacturers and raised capital. She built a team, planned designs. But she hadn't anticipated just how challenging this new approach would be. The problem wasn't consumers. The problem was retailers—particularly department stores she'd done business with at Jimmy Choo. "They didn't know how to make [monthly deliveries] work," she says. "They didn't have the financial planning for it. I tried to put a new model through an old system."

And that system was just not willing to accommodate her. It didn't matter if department store execs liked Mellon's concept; their business was designed around seasonal releases, and they saw no reason to change just to support a startup. So Mellon compromised, releasing her shoes—and eventually, clothing and accessories—with less frequency, every three months. The product found some traction, but tensions with retailers remained. She kept pushing; they kept resisting.

By 2015, that tension had damaged the brand. Mellon needed to raise more money, but it would be a down round—investors believed the value of her company had shrunk. Rather than forge ahead, she saw this as an opportunity to pivot. She'd stop focusing on retailers and instead build an exclusively direct-to-consumer model. That way, she could finally release products as often as she wanted—while also cutting out the middleman, enabling her to slash prices.

Investors balked. They wanted her to follow retailers' rules. She refused. "I knew the ultimate vision was right," she says. "I just needed some help." So she pulled a high-risk move.

She approached the venture capital firm New Enterprise Associates (NEA), which had previously expressed interest in her proposed direct-to-consumer model. They were still interested. "Tamara is a force—her track record with Jimmy Choo speaks for itself," says Tony Florence, NEA's general partner. And he saw what she saw: Online sales is the fastest-growing segment in luxury footwear but accounts for less than 10 percent of the market. He was willing to bet that Mellon could seize that opportunity.

"I knew the **ULTIMATE VISION** *was right. I just needed* **SOME HELP** *getting there."*

Now she just needed to shake free of her existing agreements. In December 2015, she filed for voluntary bankruptcy and laid off 30 staffers. She submitted a plan to restructure and relaunch, maintaining the name. Once she came out of bankruptcy, NEA came through—leading a $16.8 million Series A round. Mellon was finally free of the past. Mostly.

WHEN TAMARA MELLON (the brand) was ready to rebuild, Tamara Mellon (the person) realized she needed someone by her side. "I really wanted a female CEO, someone who'd think outside the box, and had tech and e-com experience," she says. Investors suggested Jill Layfield, who was fresh off 12 years at outdoor e-commerce company Backcountry, which she'd grown to $515 million in revenue. Layfield—who was being courted by no fewer than 42 companies—agreed to meet with Mellon, but she had reservations.

"Oh, it was not good," Layfield says of her perception of Mellon before they met. "I'd read [her memoir]. I googled her. I asked people about her. And I did not hear great things. Honestly, the book worried me the most. I was like, *She's got problems everywhere! Is she crazy? Will she be mean?* I expected *The Devil Wears Prada.*"

About that book: It's called *In My Shoes,* and Mellon wrote it right after leaving Jimmy Choo. It describes her time there as a power struggle between her and the (all-male) management team put in place by PE firms. It's a series of backstabs, mostly endured by Mellon,

PHOTOGRAPHS COURTESY OF TAMARA MELLON

and while it paints a portrait of a woman who was undervalued, it also depicts one eager to distribute blame.

In person, however, Layfield found Mellon to be nothing like the finger-pointing narrator from her memoir. "Tamara was very warm and humble about the first version of the business," Layfield says. "She knew what didn't work, and she knew what she needed now to make it work."

Layfield signed on as cofounder and CEO to Mellon's creative director, and the duo got to work. At first glance, they're an odd couple. Mellon is soft-spoken and organizes her thoughts before she speaks. Layfield is loud and unfiltered. Mellon comes from luxury. Layfield spent 12 years selling rock-climbing gear.

But they found common ground as women in business, and as mothers to young daughters. Both saw an opportunity to build a company that supports women—first at their own office, and then far beyond it. Through this lens, taking care of employees became about more than just giving them equity and generous family-leave policies (though they did that, too). It was about making them feel heard—and this would require breaking old habits.

Layfield encouraged Mellon to set up her work space at a regular desk, among their staff. Mellon had spent her career with a corner office and two assistants perched outside, but she agreed to try something new—and discovered that she benefited from the frequent flow of her team's chatter. Soon after, a company-wide Slack channel dubbed "Crazy ideas" was introduced as a judgment-free zone; it's produced some of their biggest hits. "Someone suggested letting customers return shoes whenever they want, with no time limit, and we rolled that out," Mellon says. "Old luxury is intimidating; we want people to feel welcome."

→ ON THE MOVE
CEO Jill Layfield (*left*) and Mellon in front of a Tamara Mellon–branded truck.

When research showed that the Tamara Mellon shopper is just like the women building the company—career-minded with an eye on the C-suite—the team got to thinking about what they, as consumers, would like to see from a brand beyond product and service.

"My daughter is 17," Mellon says. "What does her future look like? She'll be 50 before the pay gap is closed. [Jill and I] thought about what we really care about, and that was equal pay, and women's health."

The team brainstormed ways to authentically join those conversations. Some efforts were simple (offering a 20 percent discount on Equal Pay Day to signify the pay gap), others more complex (driving RVs branded Love Your Mellons around Los Angeles, offering free mammograms).

"We don't want 'feminism' to come off as a marketing tactic," says Layfield, who has a quiet habit of offering free shoes to women she sees in the news, like the two who confronted then-senator Jeff Flake in an elevator over his support of Justice Brett Kavanaugh for the Supreme Court. And then, raising her voice to a faux-hysterical shout: "We're not trying to be like, '*We're about empowering women for empowerment and feminism and empowerment; did I say 'empowerment'?*'"

The experiments have so far paid off, in earned media and customer feedback. They see it in ways large and small, like on Instagram, where a follower wrote: "I started browsing over your feed occasionally, and now I go on it every single day. It's not just for the shoes...Every morning there are words of encouragement...It fuels me to work harder."

Today, Tamara Mellon is 42 people strong—35 of whom are women. Tom Dean, CTO, is one of seven men. And it's been an education.

"The ladies tell me when I'm being a dumb ass," he says. "We were working on a damaged-product sample sale, and I said, 'Ladies, don't catfight.' And [integrated marketing senior director] Caitlin Bray looked at me and said, 'Don't be a misogynistic dick.' And I was like, 'OK! Fair enough!'"

In March, when the brand hosted an Equal Pay Day event in Washington, D.C., Dean boasted about his employer on Instagram.

"My mother raised six children, and I saw her struggle to pay rent," he says. "Now when I'm talking to my mom, rather than just making money by building content, I feel like I'm making some sort of difference. And hopefully we'll have some impact on somebody, somewhere."

TWO AND A HALF YEARS SINCE (re)launch, Mellon's vision has taken shape. She sells a luxury shoe at nearly half the price of competitors'. She treats her team and customers well (free repairs for two years!). She has a store in L.A. with plans for five nationwide by 2021. They've raised $37 million. But there's more work to do and people to win over.

"It's hard when people say no—and you *will* hear no," Layfield says. It's March, and the cofounders are in New York raising their Series C. Despite positive feedback, Layfield says, the experience is a roller coaster. "It feels like we're dating, we get naked, and then the response is, 'Ohhh, ewww...no!' And we're scrambling to get our robe back on."

The Series C will ideally be their last fund-raise; they aim to break even by 2021. And they're eager to continue evolving the brand for the future—using new technology to innovate their sales and customer-experience processes.

Last year, for example, the brand joined Apple's Business Chat, which lets customers talk with companies via iMessage, like chatting with a friend. "Eighty percent of our business is mobile, and 80 percent of *that* happens on iOS devices," Dean says. "We've seen 25 percent of our total data activity migrate to the platform."

And they collect a *lot* of data: six million pieces daily, a combination of feedback plus sales, returns, and exchange stats, all used to inform future designs. It's paying off; 35 percent of all purchases are by repeat customers.

They're also building on Mellon's first big vision, releasing products more often than the industry standard. The company has trimmed its sample-to-store timeline to three months (traditional retail's is at least six), but it wants to move faster and smarter, and cut back on waste. "If we introduce five styles a month with small production runs, get reactions, and then put a larger order behind the favorites? We cut down on overstock," Mellon says.

Still, challenges remain. They've yet to perfect hiring. They're working on brand awareness. (Tamara Mellon has a respectable 162,000 followers on Instagram; Jimmy Choo has 10.3 million.) And they struggle to explain direct-to-consumer pricing without sounding like a discount brand.

But as long as the customer is happy, they're happy. "We're not the darlings of luxury, and we're OK with that," Layfield says. "We can't be focused on being part of *that* community. We have to build our own."

That's just fine with Mellon. *That* community is what she'd worked so hard to leave behind. And now, many years later, she feels like she's done it. "I came from an industry where it was cool to be cruel, but now I feel so validated in my thinking about how to run a business," Mellon says. "This is probably the best company I've ever worked in." E

Stephanie Schomer is Entrepreneur*'s deputy editor.*

PHOTOGRAPHS BY CYCLEBAR

Leaving Corporate Life Behind

Lisa Locker built a high-powered corporate career. But when she ditched the suits and became a CycleBar franchisee, she found a whole new challenge. **by STEPHANIE SCHOMER**

→ **TEAM BUILDING**
Lisa Locker (*sixth from right*) with her CycleBar staff in Denver.

After two decades climbing the corporate ladder at tobacco conglomerate Philip Morris, Lisa Locker needed a change. She cherished her time there and learned how to lead a strong team, but she also found the environment to be limiting and, at times, unsupportive of working mothers like herself. The self-described fitness junkie tried out jobs in real estate and cannabis before taking a leap of faith and signing on as a CycleBar franchisee in 2017, purchasing six territories throughout the Denver metropolitan area. Now she operates two thriving studios, with plans to open a third this summer. And while she entered franchisee life with plenty of business acumen, she learned that running a local, service-based business required a new mindset.

Was it difficult to transition from the corporate world to business ownership?
When we first joined CycleBar, we took over two existing locations and were told we were inheriting one of the best managers in the nation—and the day we signed our agreement, she quit. Just never showed up again. So: Yes, it was challenging! I had no access codes, no systems, no passwords. It was a harsh entry.

That must have quickly forced you to think about how you'd build your team moving forward.
I came from an environment where I was handpicking people with MBAs who were financially driven. But here, it's about finding people who can work four-hour shifts and show up on time. I had to adjust my mindset; I can't run this like I ran a corporate business. With every potential hire, I do a phone interview first, ask them about fitness, and ask them why they're interested in CycleBar. Our best employees are people who know and love the brand.

What kind of support do you get from the home office?
Xponential Fitness—which owns Pure Barre, Club Pilates, and StretchLab, among other fitness modalities—acquired CycleBar soon after we signed on. There were franchisees who were losing money under the old leadership. Xponential really saw CycleBar as its biggest challenge, but also its biggest opportunity. It's made changes to retail, our infrastructure, our systems. We didn't really have marketing support before. Now we have it all: marketing materials, a new website, a full team for support.

When you took over those first two studios, how did you raise awareness and help people get to know *you* as the new owner?
You have to infiltrate your community, think about who you know. I sit on a couple of boards in Denver, which helps me get in front of a lot of influential people. I visit all our local businesses—even Whole Foods—to ask if I can help them in any way. I attend charity events, host community events. I chatted with two police officers on the street the other day and asked how we could maybe help each other. I love Denver. It's my home. Why not make your home a better place?

Sounds like you're giving everything you've got to this business.
We run top-performing studios. There are 12 CycleBars in Colorado—185 across the country—and some do better than others. Another franchisee came and hung out with me in one of my studios, and she kept asking how often I was there, if I only worked in the mornings, and was surprised to see that our riders knew me by name. And I said, "I am here *all the time.* I'm the owner! I mop the floors. I don't ask anyone to do something I wouldn't do myself." If you don't lead by example, people don't respect you and it's hard to motivate them.

Creating Better Care

Tafa Jefferson built a business to help senior citizens age in place. Franchising helped him do that better—and on a national scale. by STEPHANIE SCHOMER

Tafa Jefferson's mother spent years working in healthcare, and she encouraged him to do the same. But Jefferson had different plans: He joined the NFL in 1996 as a Chicago Bear—then a career-ending injury set him back a year later. So he finally took his mother's advice, becoming a certified nursing assistant, and in 1997, he launched Nurse Registry, an agency that worked with independent contractors. But years later, when he identified an increasing and overwhelming need for nonmedical care for seniors, he once again changed his plans. In 2006, he shuttered his registry business and started Amada Senior Care with business partner Chad Fotheringham a year later. After a successful start, the pair decided to franchise—and the San Clemente, Calif.–based business boomed. Today, Amada Senior Care has more than 130 franchised locations across the country, continuously attracting the attention of potential franchisees, the medical industry, and clients, all of whom craved a reliable brand name in the space.

PHOTOGRAPH COURTESY OF AMADA SENIOR CARE

Now that you franchise, how do you consider entering new markets?
We do a lot of due diligence in each market we enter. We look at the demographics, the household income, the healthcare infrastructure. And we make sure all our franchisees maintain full-time offices—this is not a home-based business. We have a sales team, a scheduling team, and clinicians to ensure that the customer service experience is top-notch.

What do you look for in your franchisees?
Our strategy is simple: We need a sales force. People who have demonstrated a successful career in sales companies do extremely well in our system, because so much of the role of the franchisee is interacting with physicians, case managers, and social workers, who will refer their clients and patients to us. We have that person in mind to run and manage our offices, and then we build the operational talent and staff around that individual.

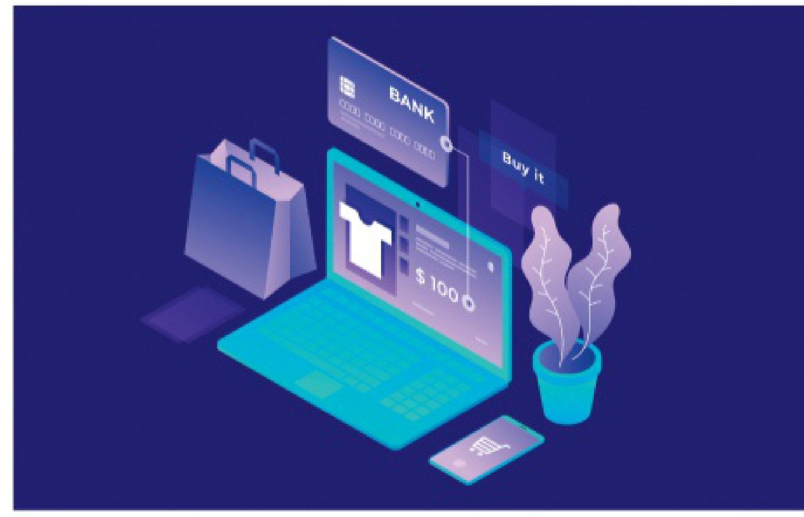
This is such a personal and emotional business. How do you train people to work with families who are going through a stressful time?
Usually our franchisees are dealing with a son or daughter, someone in the sandwich generation who's juggling kids and a career and healthcare issues related to their parents. We teach our franchise partners how to provide a total solution for care—placement services if affordable senior housing is needed, in-home placement, and technology that can help families keep tabs on mom and dad.

What's the biggest challenge your franchisees are facing?
We can't hire fast enough. With the amount of care required as more seniors are aging in place, we just don't have the workforce we need. So we're looking at changing our messaging and doing a better job of recruiting staff and reaching the workforce via technology. Seventy-two percent of our existing staff have experience in retail and fast food, so we want to attract that niche and position ourselves as a great employer that offers staff positions and is ready to help them take on a job and career path that is challenging but rewarding.

How to Choose a Payment System

In today's tech-first, mobile economy, it's not enough to simply process credit cards. Here's what franchises should demand from their payment partner.

by **HAYDEN FIELD**



1/ Prioritize Anytime, Anywhere Payments

From Kenny Wu, director of corporate marketing, Scorpion

If you're a quick-service or retail franchise, a traditional sale means a customer is entering a physical store and purchasing an item. But customers' expectations of convenience keep getting higher, so we're seeing many of the franchises on Square leverage self-service kiosks, e-commerce, and mobile apps to facilitate payments anywhere. For example, we work with Ben & Jerry's, and if you're a franchisee, a great place to sell is outside the store in the summer, or at the local high school football game. When you're looking for a merchant service provider, be sure to choose one that can, in any circumstance, allow you to accept all forms of payment: mag stripe, chip cards, mobile payments, and gift cards.

You'll also want to consider how the provider presents data, which is critical to understanding your customers. Whether your annual revenue is $500,000 or $500 million, connecting the dots on customer data from different channels—in-store, events, e-commerce, mobile—may be difficult, especially if you have a different service provider for each. When a customer swipes a card, Square logs a record of that transaction associated with that customer's name. Every future transaction will automatically show up there, and the franchisee can get to know not only that customer but also her purchase habits, like whether she typically buys in-store or online. This kind of information can guide future decisions that will be critical to a franchisee's top-line revenue and scalable growth.

2/ Look for a Holistic Approach

From Steven Johnson, franchisee, Mr. Appliance

MR. APPLIANCE, a Texas-based operation with more than 275 locations, offers in-home and in-office appliance repairs. More than a decade ago, longtime franchisee Steven Johnson partnered with payment processor CardConnect because of its...

1/ Data.
Easy-to-access transaction records are vital to Mr. Appliance's business. Johnson uses CardConnect's portal to pull up invoice numbers, purchase amounts, and transaction entry numbers, which makes it easier to reconcile invoices with proof of payment.

2/ Communication.
Johnson values CardConnect's quick response rate. If there's ever a platform issue or the company can't determine how a payment was processed, he says, his CardConnect representative replies right away.

3/ Personalized service.
Johnson's business recently enjoyed a growth spurt, and CardConnect notified him that the increase in processed payments qualified Johnson for additional savings on American Express transactions. "Three-fourths of a percent might not sound like a lot," he says, "but we do more than $15,000 a day in credit card sales."

3/ Unexpected Success

From James Meeks, CEO, MOVE Systems

What he expected/ After the 2014 launch of his sustainable mobile food-cart company, Meeks signed on with Clover, a payment processing system that prides itself on personalization and could help him secure payment hardware that would withstand the bumps and thumps of a jostling food cart.

What he got/ In addition to hardy hardware, Meeks was able to customize the checkout experience through Clover's integrative app store, which can help manage loyalty programs or encourage end customers to round up their purchase total for charity.

ILLUSTRATION BY SHUTTERSTOCK/MONKOGRAPHIC

Leadership with a Twist

What happens when a company outgrows its founders? **Painting with a Twist** is in the process of finding out. The women who launched the business, which popularized the paint-and-sip concept (wine + paint = fun!), no longer felt they could lead it. So they set out to find someone who could.

by **JENNIFER LARINO**

Illustration / ALESSANDRO LECIS and ALESSANDRA PANZERI

Chris Hatten's days were long and soul-fraying. This was back in 2012, when he worked at a residential treatment facility for children who had experienced deep trauma, and then spent his evenings worrying about his bills. "I was stuck," he says. "I didn't know what else I could do." One day, on a whim, he walked into an art studio called Painting with a Twist that had recently opened in a renovated fire station behind his home in Skippack, Penn. The window was filled with colorful artwork; a promotion offered a blank canvas, two hours of painting with an instructor, and a finished product at the end of the night. Wine was welcome, even encouraged.

Hatten joined the weeknight class, and a sense of calm washed over him as he painted. "I tuned everything out," he says. So he kept returning. Before long, he'd done 100 paintings and become a well-known regular. And in 2015, he decided to go all-in: He walked away from his job at the treatment facility and became a Painting with a Twist franchisee, opening a studio in Bethlehem, Penn.

Painting with a Twist had gotten used to success stories like Hatten's. The brand was created by two New Orleans women, Cathy Deano and Renee Maloney, in the wake of Hurricane Katrina. They wanted it to be a space where people in their community could escape from their daily worries, and that ethos, which clearly connected with Hatten, also easily connected in towns and cities across the country. In less than a decade, the brand grew to 300-plus locations in 39 states.

But growth doesn't always come easy. A sea of copycats followed, crowding into a category that became known as "paint-and-sip." Competing concepts followed—studios like The Rustic Brush, where people can sip wine while making antique-looking wooden signs, doormats, or lazy Susans. And many of Painting with a Twist's new locations would falter—leading to disappointments and an unclear path forward.

Last year, as Deano and Maloney wrestled with how to sustain their brand, they attended an event called the Franchise Unconference in Park City, Utah. "There was a session about founders who wouldn't get out of the way," Deano says. "I thought, *That's us.* It was just getting too big for us, for our wheelhouse."

So she and Maloney made perhaps the toughest decision of their careers: After building a brand that had become beloved nationwide, they decided to replace themselves as leaders.

"THERE WAS A SESSION [AT A FRANCHISE CONFERENCE] ABOUT FOUNDERS WHO WOULDN'T GET OUT OF THE WAY," DEANO SAYS. "I THOUGHT, *THAT'S US.* IT WAS JUST GETTING TOO BIG FOR US, FOR OUR WHEELHOUSE."

DEANO AND MALONEY never meant to get into franchising. The two met in 2003, when their children landed in the same kindergarten class, and they connected over a shared interest in local volunteer work. Then their lives were shaken in 2005, when Hurricane Katrina raged through the region—flooding Deano's home, and destroying the moving-and-storage business that Maloney ran with her husband. The two women tried helping each other out, but the challenges seemed immeasurable. Maloney recalls dumping floodwater from the silver ladles in Deano's china cabinet, thinking that they had to do something other than wallow.

"We could sit there and feel sorry for ourselves, or we could figure out how to change it," Maloney says.

They started kicking around business ideas. A friend suggested a "speed art" concept, where people would pay to spend a few hours working on a simple painting with the help of an instructor. Deano and Maloney liked it but were worried it might scare away novice customers. "I'm not an artist, and I'm a little afraid of it, quite frankly," Deano says. "Renee said the same thing: 'I don't know that I'd do that. I can't paint.' And I said, 'But what if you could drink?'"

In 2007, they invited family and friends into a large, air-conditioned building on Deano's property, with painting supplies purchased at a craft store. Deano remembers watching her 62-year-old brother-in-law sitting side by side with her 16-year-old niece, both intently painting a portrait of a reclining woman on a bright red background. The painters hunched over each other's canvases, offering tips and bonding over the challenge of getting the curve of the woman's face just right. Deano and Maloney asked their guinea pigs if they would pay to do something like that again. Everyone said yes.

The duo rented a storefront in the suburb of Mandeville, and Painting with a Twist officially opened in November 2007. It was far from glamorous: The 1,000-square-foot space suffered from frequent power outages, and a 30-year-old air conditioner wheezed in Louisiana's heat. But the new entrepreneurs had low expectations. "I wanted [to make enough money] to send my kid to a camp that was $4,000, and Renee wanted fancy boots," Deano says, laughing.

They exceeded those goals. Within a year, Deano and Maloney had built a passionate customer base. In August 2008, when their faulty electricity went out in the middle of a class, customers refused the founders' offer to finish their paintings at a later date. Instead, they pulled up their cars to the storefront and, with the help of the headlights beaming through the windows,

finished their wine and their paintings.

"We were like, 'What's going on here?'" Deano recalls, wondering why their customers were sticking around in the lousy conditions. "And they said, 'This is two hours when we're not thinking about the kids, the husband, or FEMA.' That was the real aha moment for us. This was more than just a little concept."

The next year, Deano and Maloney opened their second location, in a neighboring suburb. It attracted visitors from all over the country, many of whom were in town volunteering with post-Katrina recovery efforts. Those customers wanted to know how they could take the concept back to their hometowns.

The answer, it seemed, was franchising. That way, visitors could open their own Painting with a Twist back home. But the founders had no idea how to get going. They called up the owners of the successful Louisiana-based franchises PJ's Coffee and Wow Café, who gave them some advice. Then Deano and Maloney wrote an operations manual, and in 2009, they opened their first franchised location. By the end of the year, they had 24. By 2011, they had 75—and started to feel out of their depths.

"I was just buried in emails and questions like, 'Should we spend $50,000 on this IT setup?'" Deano says. "I don't know. Are you kidding? You're asking *me*?"

But what was there to do? Deano and Maloney had a simple understanding of franchising. They thought they needed to keep opening units—that growth was the solution to any challenge. So instead of focusing on what wasn't working in their business, and learning from it, they just pushed harder on opening more doors. And the result wasn't good. Over the next few years, as they continued to open locations, nearly 30 studios would go out of business.

In retrospect, they realize, many of those new units were doomed from the start. For example, they opened a studio in Destin, Fla., a beach community with plenty of tourists. But at night, Painting with a Twist struggled to compete with the dominant tourist activities—local mini golf courses and ice cream parlors. They should have seen that coming.

"We needed a CEO long before we actually got one," Deano says.

THE BUSINESS WORLD values leaders. We romanticize them. All praise is heaped upon the founders of companies, who craft a mission and inspire a team to action. But that doesn't mean the role is for everyone. "Too often, people are lured into a leadership role, not led," says Scott Miller, EVP of thought leadership at the consulting firm FranklinCovey, and author of the book *Management Mess to Leadership Success*. And so he preaches something that leaders rarely hear: *It's OK to not be the leader.*

"There's no shame in saying, 'You know what, no thank you,'" he says. "Too many people become leaders when they just should have stayed amazing individual producers. I have seen too many extraordinarily productive, influential individual performers move up into leadership and crumble."

Deano and Maloney hadn't exactly *moved up* into leadership, of course. They started a company—a small and manageable one at first, but one they eventually didn't feel confident leading. So they chose the path that might seem unflattering but that they felt was best for themselves and their organization: They hunted for someone more qualified.

To start, they got back in touch with the same local franchisors they'd called at the beginning of their journey. They were connected with Joe Lewis, who has spent 20-plus years in franchising, most notably with Smoothie King, which he helped grow from a few dozen units to nearly 1,000. They liked him and, in April 2018, hired him. Then Lewis assembled an executive team made up of other Smoothie King vets—CMO Katherine LeBlanc and chief development officer Richard Leveille.

They had a lot of work to do.

On a stormy afternoon in May, Lewis looks fully settled in at the company's headquarters in Mandeville. He leans forward in his seat, holding his hand at eye level to demonstrate the trajectory of a franchise. Many go through a plateau period, he says, and flattens his hand: That's where Painting with a Twist is now.

"We grew too fast, and now we've got to make sure everything's set," he says. "I don't see a reason why this company couldn't do 25, 50, 75, or 100 [new] units in a year. But you've got to be able to support that kind of growth."

> I DON'T SEE A REASON WHY THIS COMPANY COULDN'T DO 25, 50, 75, OR 100 [NEW] UNITS IN A YEAR," SAYS CEO LEWIS. "BUT YOU'VE GOT TO BE ABLE TO SUPPORT THAT KIND OF GROWTH."

His first order of business was expanding Painting with a Twist's footprint. Here it was useful for the brand to have copycats; it meant there were smaller franchises in marketplaces where Painting with a Twist wasn't. Lewis acquired Bottle & Bottega, a Chicago-based paint-and-sip concept with 20 locations in the Midwest and California, and has set out to rebrand them Painting with a Twist.

From there, Lewis says his challenge is to stay ahead of the competition. Painting with a Twist got a head start in the now crowded DIY space, though Lewis and his team admit the brand's identity has become less focused over the years. He thinks it has the potential to be among the last brands standing as others fall victim to the trend-driven whims of customers—but it needs to strengthen fundamentals.

"We're very confident that the demand is there and will be there," he says. "The question is, who is going to be the concept that's going to continue to grow and capture that demand when the others start falling away?"

To do that, Painting with a Twist is looking hard at untapped markets. The concept may sound old to people who

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For information on enrolling your child in Kumon, please visit Kumon.com or call 800.ABC.Math learned about it a decade ago, but it still has plenty of room for discovery. Roughly half the people who walk into a Painting with a Twist event are experiencing the brand for the first time, Leveille says, and plenty of cities don't have any paint-and-sip offerings at all.

> THESE [NEW] SYSTEMS ARE MAKING IT WORK FOR THE FRANCHISEES AND THE EMPLOYEES," DEANO SAYS. "IT'S LIKE WATCHING YOUR BABY GROW. OUR GOAL IS TO KEEP THE CULTURE INTACT FOR THE FRANCHISEES."

But the company isn't eager to repeat its mistakes, so it's focusing on thoughtful growth rather than runaway growth. That means not just opening new locations, but instead ensuring that the people running those locations are set up for success.

To do that, Painting with a Twist is becoming a lot more selective about who can be a franchisee. Owner qualifications and requirements have been strengthened to ensure that new franchisees have enough money and business acumen to successfully run a studio. The brand has also revised how it selects new locations, and is paying closer attention to market demographics.

Once a new franchisee is in the system, Painting with a Twist is offering them a range of updated tools and services. The brand boosted its internal tech systems, improved supply-chain costs, and provided access to a digital media agency so that franchisees can fine-tune their social media marketing. It also invested more heavily in its existing training programs. Every other month, new and returning franchisees and their instructors are invited to HQ for several days of coaching focused on leading and engaging customers.

"[Franchisees] sort of have to be a bit of a politician," Maloney says. "You have to be willing to shake hands and kiss babies and make people feel special."

The brand is also expanding the services it offers to compete against the other DIY studio concepts. Rather than just have customers paint one of Painting with a Twist's 15,000 copyrighted designs on standard canvas, new surfaces such as pinewood planks are going to roll out later this year. "It's kind of like a McDonald's franchisee having 15,000 different ways to serve a hamburger," says Leveille.

The changes are slowly creating a much-needed structure and forward-looking awareness that Deano and Maloney had envisioned but couldn't quite build on their own. As the pair hand off day-to-day tasks to their new exec team, they will remain involved in big-picture ideas, keep up with longtime franchisees, and manage Painting with a Purpose, the company's nonprofit arm, which helps local franchisees give back to the community.

They feel, finally, that the rest of their brand is in expert hands. "These systems are making it work for the franchisees and the employees," Deano says. "It's like watching your baby grow. And we want to see it grow—in a good way. Our goal is to keep the culture intact for the franchisees."

IT'S BEEN JUST over a year since Painting with a Twist embarked upon its corporate makeover, but the results have so far been encouraging. In addition to the Bottle & Bottega acquisition, the company is moving forward with plans to sign on another 10 to 20 franchisees in the second half of 2019, primarily in the Midwest and Northeast, where it sees growth potential.

Existing franchisees, Lewis says, have been mostly receptive of the changes—and in some cases, even requested them. (Of course, there's a bit of grumbling about adopting new systems and practices, but that's to be expected, he says.)

"We've learned that you cannot overcommunicate," says Leveille, who implemented biweekly teleconferences between the corporate team and Painting with a Twist's franchise advisory council, which has kept conversations open and constant.

Hatten, the Pennsylvania franchisee, feels reassured. After he opened his first studio in 2015, he saw what felt like countless locations pop up all around nearby Philadelphia, and he worried that the company was growing too fast.

He was so worried, in fact, that he decided to open his new Allentown location simply because he didn't want to end up competing with another franchisee. The process—finding a site, getting permits, completing a build-out—has pulled his attention from his first location, he admits. And he is relieved to see the company focus shift from fast growth to measured growth.

"They've realized some of the errors of the past," he says. (Still: "I'm just glad it's me opening Allentown and not someone else.")

Past concerns aside, Hatten remains one of the brand's biggest fans. His collection of paintings has doubled to 200 canvases. He stores them at home and puts his favorites on display, swapping them out depending on the season. Painting with a Twist, he says, will always be more than a business to him. And his future, which used to frighten him, doesn't look so scary anymore.

"They have a piece of my heart," he says. "Honestly, I feel indebted to them." E

Jennifer Larino has been writing about business across the South for a decade, most recently as a reporter with NOLA.com|The Times-Picayune *in New Orleans.*

Get Ideas for the Next Business You Start

Browse this section to explore opportunities for business ownership that might be right for you.

InXpress
Shipping & Logistics Specialists

Pillar To Post
Home Inspection

(L to R): Dustin Hansen (CEO InXpress Americas), Anthony and Christina Escobedo, Paul Knott (COO InXpress Americas), and Rich Paongo (CFO/VP Finance InXpress Americas).

About InXpress

B2B-based shipping and logistics franchise offering small- to medium-sized businesses shipping rates traditionally only available to high-volume clients. InXpress owners work from home and coordinate movement of packages all over the world without personally handling any packages.

InXpress fun Facts

- Under $170k Initial Investment
- Home Office Business (no high cost brick & mortar lease required)
- Business to Business (no retail) and No Additional Employees Required
- Turnkey Carrier Contracts – Recurring Revenue Potential

$170K InXpress Investment, 13 Months Revenue $976K*

Florida-based InXpress owners Anthony and Christina Escobedo joined the InXpress network in early 2018 and immediately rose to the top of the ranks, earning the franchise's Rookie of The Year designation for their impressive training to operational and revenue excellence position. Upon completion of training and opening their business in February 2018 through the first quarter of 2019, the Escobedos' InXpress franchise has generated over $976,000 in gross revenue!

The Escobedos chose InXpress because of the great name, technology and innovation InXpress offers, sharing, "InXpress is a vehicle to help you get to where you want to go, but it's really yours to make it your own."

Revenue-related aspirations are not uncommon to the franchising industry. When coupled with a low investment, home-based business model, it's easy to understand why entrepreneurs are choosing InXpress, a B2B, global shipping and logistics leader for their next career move.

The InXpress franchise model is built on recurring business-to-business revenue, showing small- and medium-sized businesses how to reduce expenses and presenting ways to increase profitability with freight, parcel and shipping solutions. With no brick-and-mortar expenses and no additional employees required to start, franchisees are able to on-board quickly and start servicing clients in almost any industry without being in or near a port city.

With territories available in the US and Canada, now's the time to take advantage of the growth of the shipping and logistics industry by opening your own InXpress franchise business. InXpress has a network of 100+ franchise units in the US and Canada and 380+ units globally; most franchisees have no prior industry background. Using the brand's fully-tested turnkey system and as the leading customer of DHL, InXpress Franchisees collectively coordinate movement of millions of shipments annually – all without personally handling a single package.

InXpress®

For More InXpress Information:

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inxpressfranchise.com
(844) 514-7447

*Gross revenues figure based on unaudited financial information as submitted by franchisee ID #277 operating from February 2018 to March 2019 and as published in Item 19 of our April 2019 Franchise Disclosure Document (FDD). As of March 31, 2019, there were 102 InXpress outlets in operation. One outlet has sold this amount. Your individual results may differ. There is no assurance that you'll sell as much. See Item 19 of our April 2019 FDD for a definition of gross revenues and for further information.

This advertisement is not an offering. An offering can only be made by a Franchise Disclosure Document filed with the referenced state, which filing does not constitute approval. The following states regulate the offer and sale of franchises: CA, CT, HI, IN, IL, MD, MI, MN, NE, NY, ND, RI, SD, TX, VA, WA and WI. If you reside in one of these states, you may have certain rights under applicable franchise laws.

About Pillar To Post Home Inspectors®

North America's leading homeinspection company with nearly 600 franchisees in 49 states and 9 Canadian provinces.

Pillar To Post Home Inspectors® Fun Facts

- Franchise Fee: $21,900
- Provides flexibility and financial security
- Helps your work/life balance
- Allows you to take control of your financial future

Canada Booms with Number One Home Inspection Company in North America

Brian Sheehey knew the home inspection business inside and out before he ever took ownership of his Pillar To Post Home Inspectors franchise. A lifelong resident of the area he works in, Sheehey provides professional home inspection services for the greater Durham region of Ontario and surrounding areas. A professional evaluation both inside and outside the home is at the core of Pillar To Post Home Inspectors' service. All information is provided to clients in a customized binder for easy reference, allowing homebuyers or sellers to make confident, informed decisions.

"I started working for a great couple who operated a Pillar To Post Home Inspectors franchise in 1998," said Sheehey. "I worked full time as a home inspector for them all the way to 2013, when the opportunity arose to buy one of their existing territories."

"I really enjoy running my own business," says Sheehey. "I set goals and am only limited by the time and effort I put in. I am constantly challenged to learn new things since every house presents a unique situation. Even though the job stays the same each one is different! If I could choose what I like best about this career it's having no one looking over my shoulder, I am my own boss. That, and helping young couples buy their first home. That never gets old."

The business has truly become a family affair with his wife and son both taking active roles. "I am fortunate to work side by side with my wife and son. They have helped me market and build the business into what it is today."

Founded in 1994, Pillar To Post Home Inspectors is the largest home inspection company in North America with home offices in Toronto and Tampa. There are nearly 600 franchises located in 49 states and nine Canadian provinces. This is the brand to which more than three million families have turned to for 25 years to be their trusted advisor when buying or selling a home. They are the category leaders for home inspection throughout North America. Consistently ranked as the top-rated home inspection company on Entrepreneur Magazine's annual Franchise500®, Pillar To Post Home Inspectors is enjoying its 19th year in a row on that list.

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Crossing Borders

Our ranking of the top 200 global franchises in 2019.

compiled by **TRACY STAPP HEROLD**

PHOTOGRAPH BY SHUTTERSTOCK/KHAKIMULLIN ALEKSANDR

Increasingly, franchise companies have their sights set on not just national expansion but bringing their brands to the whole world. More than 60 percent of the companies that applied for *Entrepreneur*'s 2019 Franchise 500 ranking told us they were offering franchises outside the United States. International franchising comes with unique challenges, but franchisors aren't deterred—and those that met those challenges and are reaping the rewards can be found here, in our annual ranking of the top global franchises.

The ranking is based on our Franchise 500 formula of 150-plus data points that we then adjusted to give extra weight to international size and growth. Other factors we took into account included costs and fees, franchisee support, brand strength, and financial standing. Companies that indicated that they are seeking new franchisees outside the U.S. and had at least five units open internationally as of July 2018 were eligible to rank.

As you review the list, remember that our ranking is not intended as a recommendation of any particular franchise. Always do your own research before investing in an opportunity. Read the company's legal documents, consult with an attorney and an accountant, and talk to as many franchisees as you can in order to decide if the franchise is right for you—and for your corner of the world.

1
KFC
Chicken

STARTUP COST
$1.4M–$2.8M

TOTAL UNITS
(Franchised / Co.-Owned)
20,775/668

2
McDonald's
Burgers, chicken, salads, beverages

STARTUP COST
$1.1M–$2.2M

TOTAL UNITS
(Franchised / Co.-Owned)
34,521/2,885

3
Pizza Hut
Pizza, pasta, wings

STARTUP COST
$327K–$2.3M

TOTAL UNITS
(Franchised / Co.-Owned)
15,325/93

4
7-Eleven
Convenience stores

STARTUP COST
$47.1K–$1.2M

TOTAL UNITS
(Franchised / Co.-Owned)
63,754/2,439

5
Dairy Queen
Ice cream, burgers, chicken

STARTUP COST
$1.1M–$1.8M

TOTAL UNITS
(Franchised / Co.-Owned)
7,066/2

6
Dunkin'
Coffee, doughnuts, baked goods

STARTUP COST
$228.6K–$1.7M

TOTAL UNITS
(Franchised / Co.-Owned)
12,871/0

7
RE/MAX
Real estate

STARTUP COST
$40K–$230.5K

TOTAL UNITS
(Franchised / Co.-Owned)
7,985/0

8
Baskin-Robbins
Ice cream, frozen yogurt, frozen beverages

STARTUP COST
$93.6K–$401.8K

TOTAL UNITS
(Franchised / Co.-Owned)
8,041/0

9
Taco Bell
Mexican food

STARTUP COST
$525.1K–$2.6M

TOTAL UNITS
(Franchised / Co.-Owned)
6,299/606

10
Kumon Math & Reading Centers
Supplemental education

STARTUP COST
$73.4K–$154.8K

TOTAL UNITS
(Franchised / Co.-Owned)
25,854/27

11
Anytime Fitness
Fitness centers

STARTUP COST
$107.5K–$722.8K

TOTAL UNITS
(Franchised / Co.-Owned)
4,043/38

12
H&R Block
Tax preparation, electronic filing

STARTUP COST
$31.6K–$149.4K

TOTAL UNITS
(Franchised / Co.-Owned)
4,068/6,761

13
Snap-on Tools
Professional tools and equipment

STARTUP COST
$171.4K–$359.8K

TOTAL UNITS
(Franchised / Co.-Owned)
4,663/170

14
Arby's
Sandwiches, fries, shakes

STARTUP COST
$320.6K–$2M

TOTAL UNITS
(Franchised / Co.-Owned)
2,340/1,132

15
Papa John's International
Pizza

STARTUP COST
$130.1K–$844.4K

TOTAL UNITS
(Franchised / Co.-Owned)
4,691/645

16
Eye Level Learning Centers
Supplemental education

STARTUP COST
$76.3K–$143.8K

TOTAL UNITS
(Franchised / Co.-Owned)
818/814

17
Supercuts
Hair salons

STARTUP COST
$144.4K–$297K

TOTAL UNITS
(Franchised / Co.-Owned)
1,889/913

18
Keller Williams
Real estate

STARTUP COST
$183.9K–$336.99K

TOTAL UNITS
(Franchised / Co.-Owned)
978/0

PHOTOGRAPH COURTESY OF KFC

KFC/ No.1

LAST SEPTEMBER, KFC encouraged team members around the world to perform 128,000 acts of kindness in honor of what would have been Colonel Sanders' 128th birthday. Franchisees and employees in 18 countries participated in the first annual Acts of Colonel-ness event. KFC South Africa expanded a program to donate surplus food to local community organizations. Two hundred schoolkids in India got to enjoy a birthday party thrown by KFC India. And franchisees in Egypt, Saudi Arabia, and the UAE gifted delivery drivers with "coolness kits" filled with cooling products to help them beat the heat.


Winning is your style. Invest in your success today.

19
Hilton Hotels and Resorts
Upscale hotels and resorts
STARTUP COST
$29.2M–$111.9M
TOTAL UNITS (Franchised / Co.-Owned)
447/64

20
Subway
Subs, salads
STARTUP COST
$150.1K–$328.7K
TOTAL UNITS (Franchised / Co.-Owned)
42,431/0

21
Carl's Jr. Restaurants
Burgers
STARTUP COST
$1.6M–$2.2M
TOTAL UNITS (Franchised / Co.-Owned)
1,589/52

22
Ace Hardware
Hardware and home-improvement stores
STARTUP COST
$272.5K–$1.6M
TOTAL UNITS (Franchised / Co.-Owned)
4,946/122

23
Novus Glass
Auto glass repair and replacement
STARTUP COST
$46.2K–$249.9K
TOTAL UNITS (Franchised / Co.-Owned)
1,991/32

24
Petland
Pets, pet supplies, boarding, daycare, grooming
STARTUP COST
$280K–$1M
TOTAL UNITS (Franchised / Co.-Owned)
176/15

25
Hardee's Restaurants
Burgers
STARTUP COST
$1.5M–$1.99M
TOTAL UNITS (Franchised / Co.-Owned)
2,124/118

26
Hampton by Hilton
Midprice hotels
STARTUP COST
$6.9M–$17.1M
TOTAL UNITS (Franchised / Co.-Owned)
2,381/0

27
The Little Gym International
Child-development/fitness programs
STARTUP COST
$181.5K–$431.5K
TOTAL UNITS (Franchised / Co.-Owned)
421/0

28
GNC Franchising
Vitamins and nutrition products
STARTUP COST
$188.2K–$467.98K
TOTAL UNITS (Franchised / Co.-Owned)
3,045/3,332

29
Super 8 by Wyndham
Hotels
STARTUP COST
$188.9K–$4.5M
TOTAL UNITS (Franchised / Co.-Owned)
2,836/0

30
My Gym Children's Fitness Center
Early-learning/fitness programs
STARTUP COST
$36.8K–$244.2K
TOTAL UNITS (Franchised / Co.-Owned)
649/0

McDonald's/ No.2

MCDONALD'S HAS restaurants in more than 100 countries, often with menus that cater to local tastes and cultures. Now Americans can sample some of the most popular dishes from McDonald's around the globe without leaving home. In June the company introduced its new Worldwide Favorites menu to participating restaurants with items such as Spain's Grand McExtreme Bacon Burger, Canada's Tomato Mozzarella Chicken Sandwich, Australia's Cheesy Bacon Fries, and the Netherlands' Stroopwafel McFlurry.

PHOTOGRAPHS COURTESY OF MCDONALD'S CORPORATION

31
The UPS Store
Postal, business, printing, and communications services
STARTUP COST
$168.9K–$398.3K
TOTAL UNITS
(Franchised / Co.-Owned)
5,071/0

32
Mac Tools
Automotive tools and equipment
STARTUP COST
$129K–$283.2K
TOTAL UNITS
(Franchised / Co.-Owned)
1,266/8

33
Jazzercise
Group fitness classes, apparel, and accessories
STARTUP COST
$2.4K–$17.2K
TOTAL UNITS
(Franchised / Co.-Owned)
8,930/2

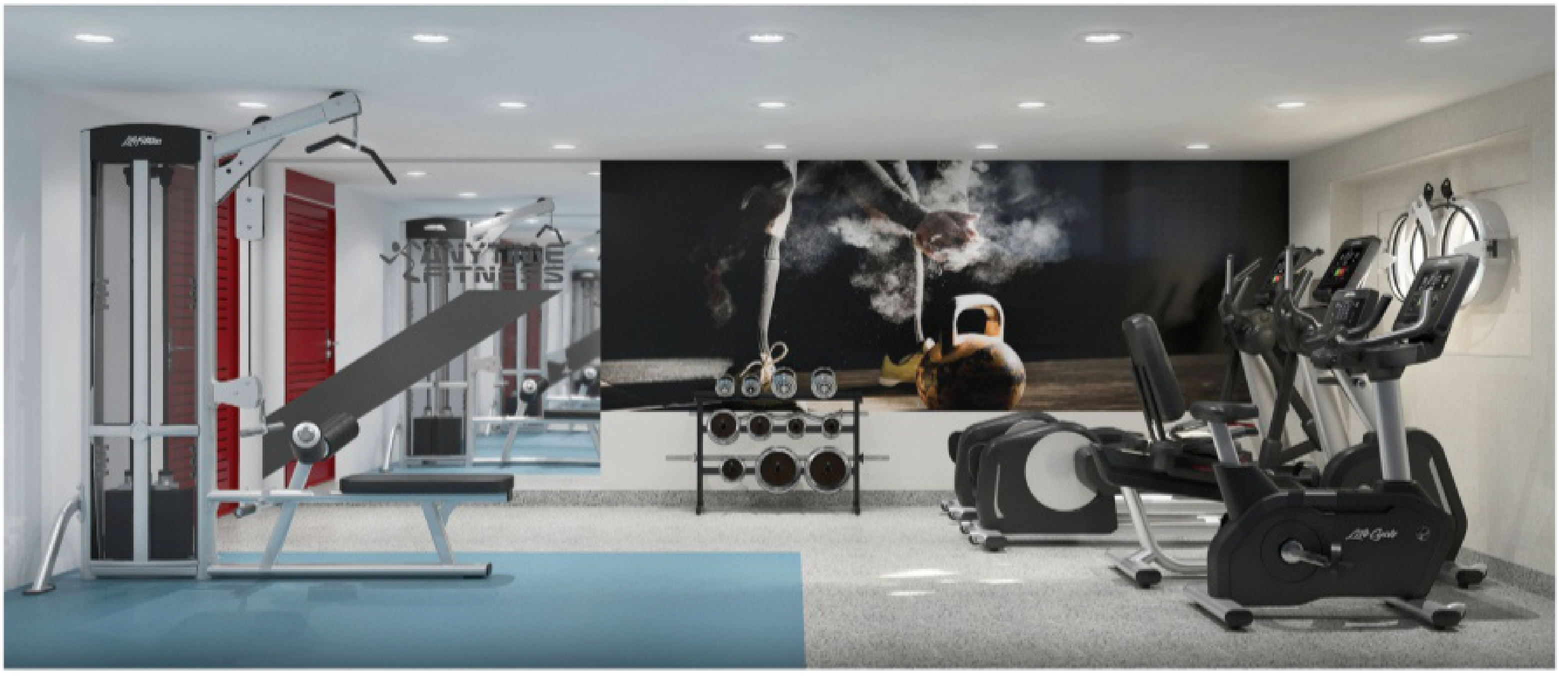
34
Great Clips
Hair salons
STARTUP COST
$136.9K–$258.3K
TOTAL UNITS
(Franchised / Co.-Owned)
4,261/0

35
Hooters
Casual restaurants
STARTUP COST
$956.5K–$4.3M
TOTAL UNITS
(Franchised / Co.-Owned)
225/207

36
Holiday Inn and Holiday Inn Express
Hotels
STARTUP COST
$7.8M–$24.8M
TOTAL UNITS
(Franchised / Co.-Owned)
3,867/3

37
Weed Man
Lawn care
STARTUP COST
$68.5K–$85.5K
TOTAL UNITS
(Franchised / Co.-Owned)
309/0

38
Liberty Tax Service
Tax preparation, electronic filing
STARTUP COST
$58.7K–$71.9K
TOTAL UNITS
(Franchised / Co.-Owned)
3,104/248



Anytime Fitness/ No.11

LATER THIS YEAR, Anytime Fitness will become the first franchise to serve customers on all seven continents. It teamed up with Antarctica21, a company offering air-cruise expeditions to Antarctica, to build a gym aboard its newest ship, *Magellan Explorer*, and set sail in November for the icy continent.

PHOTOGRAPHS BY ANTARCTICA21/ANYTIME FITNESS

LunchboxWax:

A Growing Movement, with a Culture to Match

FOUNDER & CEO DEBI LANE TALKS ABOUT THE VIBE BEHIND THE BODY-WAXING BRAND, THE EXPLOSIVE GROWTH AND THE KINDS OF PEOPLE CHOSEN TO JOIN THE CULTURE-DRIVEN FRANCHISE.

When Debi Lane selects new franchisees for the chic-and-cheeky body-waxing concept she launched in 2010 and franchised in 2013, there's a question she asks herself each time: Could I spend an engaging and enjoyable week on a sailboat with this person?

It's not the only requirement, she admits, but it speaks volumes to the company's culture and the people who create and thrive in it.

"We're redefining what success means in business by embracing a person's emotional intelligence and ability to run and grow a successful business," Lane said. "We want partners who strive to be a positive force in their communities, personally and professionally. Bringing the sailboat theory full circle, people can easily come together to achieve a goal (or reach a destination), but if the focus isn't on collaboration and purpose, it's not success at all."

So, does this progressive, people-first with a culture to match approach work?

The short answer is yes. In 2018, Entrepreneur Magazine named LunchboxWax one of the top 50 fastest growing franchising opportunities in the country. This accolade follows a 2017 earned honor from the magazine as one of the top 100 new franchises.

Ed Sheridan and his son Patrick, franchise partners in the Northeast, say the attention to detail and the commitment to culture has been central to growth.

"Walk into any salon, and the competence and kindness is palpable," said Sheridan. "The energy resonates and tells a great story. It's natural to want to be a part of it."

As 2019 unfolds, LunchboxWax continues to bring partnership opportunities to a diverse mix of curious, driven professionals — people who desire the independence afforded by business ownership and the support of a dedicated team poised for growth (no pun intended).

Learn more about becoming a LunchboxWax franchise owner by calling 833-426-1198 or visit lunchboxfranchise.com/em.

LunchboxWax®

39
Sport Clips
Men's sports-themed hair salons
STARTUP COST
$224.8K–$373.3K
TOTAL UNITS (Franchised / Co.-Owned)
1,759/69

40
Servpro
Fire and water cleanup and restoration
STARTUP COST
$159.3K–$213.2K
TOTAL UNITS (Franchised / Co.-Owned)
1,687/0

41
Rainbow International Restoration & Cleaning
Indoor cleaning and restoration
STARTUP COST
$172.2K–$278.6K
TOTAL UNITS (Franchised / Co.-Owned)
416/0

42
Anago Cleaning Systems
Commercial cleaning
STARTUP COST
$10.4K–$68.5K
TOTAL UNITS (Franchised / Co.-Owned)
1,559/0

43
Color Glo International
Leather, vinyl, fabric, carpet, and surface repair and restoration
STARTUP COST
$56.3K–$61.4K
TOTAL UNITS (Franchised / Co.-Owned)
143/0

44
SafeSplash/ SwimLabs/ Swimtastic
Child and adult swimming lessons, parties, summer camps
STARTUP COST
$39.5K–$1.6M
TOTAL UNITS (Franchised / Co.-Owned)
142/11

45
Ben & Jerry's
Ice cream, frozen yogurt, sorbet, smoothies
STARTUP COST
$149.2K–$504.3K
TOTAL UNITS (Franchised / Co.-Owned)
556/37

46
Pearle Vision
Eye care and eyewear
STARTUP COST
$399.4K–$603.9K
TOTAL UNITS (Franchised / Co.-Owned)
416/114

47
Abrakadoodle
Art-education programs
STARTUP COST
$37.96K–$81.8K
TOTAL UNITS (Franchised / Co.-Owned)
481/2

48
Hilton Garden Inn
Upscale midprice hotels
STARTUP COST
$12.1M–$23.2M
TOTAL UNITS (Franchised / Co.-Owned)
788/0

49
Ziebart
Auto appearance and protection services
STARTUP COST
$228.2K–$450.5K
TOTAL UNITS (Franchised / Co.-Owned)
379/13

50
CPR Cell Phone Repair
Electronics repairs and sales
STARTUP COST
$55.7K–$170.5K
TOTAL UNITS (Franchised / Co.-Owned)
507/4

51
Leadership Management International
Leadership and organization training and development
STARTUP COST
$20K–$27.5K
TOTAL UNITS (Franchised / Co.-Owned)
462/0

52
Home Instead Senior Care
Nonmedical senior care
STARTUP COST
$108.9K–$124.9K
TOTAL UNITS (Franchised / Co.-Owned)
1,126/5

53
PostNet Neighborhood Business Centers
Packing, shipping, printing, signs, marketing solutions
STARTUP COST
$174.8K–$217.3K
TOTAL UNITS (Franchised / Co.-Owned)
661/0

54
The Maids
Residential cleaning
STARTUP COST
$63.3K–$141.2K
TOTAL UNITS (Franchised / Co.-Owned)
1,255/142

55
The Alternative Board (TAB)
Peer advisory boards, business coaching
STARTUP COST
$45.6K–$94.6K
TOTAL UNITS (Franchised / Co.-Owned)
252/27

Papa John's/ No.15

PAPA JOHN'S INTERNATIONAL presence has grown exponentially since the opening of its first unit in Mexico City in 1998. It reached 500 international units a decade later, then 1,000 in 2013, and earlier this year it doubled that again, opening its 2,000th international restaurant in Moscow. Altogether, Papa John's is in 48 countries and territories—12 of those just in the past three years—and Russia is one of its fastest-growing markets, with more than 200 locations.

PHOTOGRAPH COURTESY OF PAPA JOHN'S INTERNATIONAL

56
Embassy Suites by Hilton
Upscale all-suite hotels
STARTUP COST
$17.4M–$74.96M
TOTAL UNITS
(Franchised / Co.-Owned)
229/0

57
Pirtek
Hose service and supply centers/mobile services
STARTUP COST
$161.9K–$782.3K
TOTAL UNITS
(Franchised / Co.-Owned)
488/4

58
Interim HealthCare
Medical home care, medical staffing
STARTUP COST
$125.5K–$198.5K
TOTAL UNITS
(Franchised / Co.-Owned)
560/0

59
Matco Tools
Mechanics' tools and equipment
STARTUP COST
$91.8K–$269.7K
TOTAL UNITS
(Franchised / Co.-Owned)
1,791/2

60
Chem-Dry Carpet & Upholstery Cleaning
Carpet and upholstery cleaning, tile and stone care, granite countertop renewal
STARTUP COST
$67.6K–$178.9K
TOTAL UNITS
(Franchised / Co.-Owned)
3,553/0

61
UFC Gym
Boxing, kickboxing, Brazilian jiu jitsu, high-intensity interval training, and group fitness
STARTUP COST
$151K–$4.2M
TOTAL UNITS
(Franchised / Co.-Owned)
116/17

62
AAMCO Transmissions and Total Car Care
Transmission and general auto repairs, diagnostic services
STARTUP COST
$223.6K–$330.5K
TOTAL UNITS
(Franchised / Co.-Owned)
624/4

63
Circle K
Convenience stores
STARTUP COST
$186.5K–$1.9M
TOTAL UNITS
(Franchised / Co.-Owned)
2,563/5,620

64
Planet Fitness
Fitness clubs
STARTUP COST
$969.6K–$4.2M
TOTAL UNITS
(Franchised / Co.-Owned)
1,540/68

65
Romp n' Roll
Recreational and enrichment classes, camps, parties
STARTUP COST
$198.7K–$399.2K
TOTAL UNITS
(Franchised / Co.-Owned)
200/2

Color Glo International/ No.43

RUBEN MOODLEY became Color Glo International's master franchisee for South Africa in 2002, and he has spread the surface repair brand not only throughout that country but also in Cyprus and, most recently, the U.K. In 2004, his training facility became the first outside the U.S. to be certified by Color Glo, and he and his team have since trained franchisees from all over the world, including Australia, Ireland, Germany, Saudi Arabia, Sweden, France, Greece, and the Netherlands.

66
Kinderdance International
Children's dance, gymnastics, fitness, and yoga programs
STARTUP COST
$18.1K–$46.8K
TOTAL UNITS
(Franchised / Co.-Owned)
148/2

67
Doubletree by Hilton
Upscale hotels and resorts
STARTUP COST
$22M–$69.3M
TOTAL UNITS
(Franchised / Co.-Owned)
418/0

68
Kids 'R' Kids Learning Academies
Childcare centers
STARTUP COST
$4.4M–$5.7M
TOTAL UNITS
(Franchised / Co.-Owned)
168/0

69
Smoothie King
Smoothies, healthful snacks, health products
STARTUP COST
$263.6K–$844.5K
TOTAL UNITS
(Franchised / Co.-Owned)
944/28

70
Orangetheory Fitness
Group personal training
STARTUP COST
$563.5K–$999.1K
TOTAL UNITS
(Franchised / Co.-Owned)
977/23

71
Homewood Suites by Hilton
Upscale extended-stay hotels
STARTUP COST
$11M–$22.1M
TOTAL UNITS
(Franchised / Co.-Owned)
468/0

72
Buffalo Wild Wings
Buffalo wings
STARTUP COST
$1.9M–$3.8M
TOTAL UNITS
(Franchised / Co.-Owned)
653/621

73
Red Roof Inn
Economy hotels
STARTUP COST
$195.5K–$5.1M
TOTAL UNITS
(Franchised / Co.-Owned)
432/121

74
Pak Mail
Packing, shipping, crating, freight, mailboxes, business services
STARTUP COST
$153.5K–$230.5K
TOTAL UNITS
(Franchised / Co.-Owned)
382/1

75
Rooter-Man
Plumbing, drain, and sewer cleaning
STARTUP COST
$46.8K–$137.6K
TOTAL UNITS
(Franchised / Co.-Owned)
639/46

76
Dale Carnegie Training
Workplace training and development
STARTUP COST
$52.2K–$226.5K
TOTAL UNITS
(Franchised / Co.-Owned)
271/2

77
Merry Maids
Residential cleaning
STARTUP COST
$86.8K–$123.8K
TOTAL UNITS
(Franchised / Co.-Owned)
1,719/5

78
Carstar Franchise Systems
Auto collision repair
STARTUP COST
$283.7K–$829.8K
TOTAL UNITS
(Franchised / Co.-Owned)
603/1

79
Potbelly Sandwich Shop
Toasted sandwiches
STARTUP COST
$503.95K–$849K
TOTAL UNITS
(Franchised / Co.-Owned)
56/435

PHOTOGRAPH COURTESY OF CGI SOUTH AFRICA

80
Church's Chicken
Chicken

STARTUP COST
$348.3K–$1.8M

TOTAL UNITS
(Franchised / Co.-Owned)
1,388/168

81
uBreakiFix
Electronics repairs

STARTUP COST
$60.4K–$225.4K

TOTAL UNITS
(Franchised / Co.-Owned)
393/28

82
Sky Zone
Trampoline playing courts

STARTUP COST
$1.3M–$2.8M

TOTAL UNITS
(Franchised / Co.-Owned)
193/9

83
ServiceMaster Clean/ ServiceMaster Restore
Commercial/residential cleaning, disaster restoration

STARTUP COST
$92.99K–$300.3K

TOTAL UNITS
(Franchised / Co.-Owned)
4,467/10

84
ActionCoach
Business coaching

STARTUP COST
$47.96K–$904.8K

TOTAL UNITS
(Franchised / Co.-Owned)
853/3

85
Jan-Pro Franchising International
Commercial cleaning

STARTUP COST
$4.2K–$54.7K

TOTAL UNITS
(Franchised / Co.-Owned)
8,790/0

86
Maid Brigade
Residential cleaning

STARTUP COST
$73.5K–$95.5K

TOTAL UNITS
(Franchised / Co.-Owned)
447/0

87
Steamatic
Insurance/disaster restoration, cleaning, mold remediation

STARTUP COST
$74.6K–$183.6K

TOTAL UNITS
(Franchised / Co.-Owned)
172/0

88
Right at Home
Home care, medical staffing

STARTUP COST
$79.3K–$137.9K

TOTAL UNITS
(Franchised / Co.-Owned)
579/0

89
Jiffy Lube International
Oil changes, preventive maintenance

STARTUP COST
$234K–$372.7K

TOTAL UNITS
(Franchised / Co.-Owned)
2,078/0

90
Budget Blinds
Window coverings, window film, rugs, accessories

STARTUP COST
$110.1K–$235.9K

TOTAL UNITS
(Franchised / Co.-Owned)
1,154/0

91
Once Upon A Child
New and used children's clothing, equipment, furniture, toys

STARTUP COST
$268.5K–$396.9K

TOTAL UNITS
(Franchised / Co.-Owned)
369/0

92
Kid to Kid
New and used children's and maternity clothing and products

STARTUP COST
$280.9K–$471.4K

TOTAL UNITS
(Franchised / Co.-Owned)
119/2

93
CleanNet USA
Commercial cleaning

STARTUP COST
$20.4K–$85.4K

TOTAL UNITS
(Franchised / Co.-Owned)
2,038/0

94
9Round
Kickboxing fitness circuit-training programs

STARTUP COST
$99.7K–$143.1K

TOTAL UNITS
(Franchised / Co.-Owned)
786/7

95
Gyu-Kaku Japanese BBQ Restaurant
Japanese barbecue restaurants

STARTUP COST
$1M–$2.1M

TOTAL UNITS
(Franchised / Co.-Owned)
706/21

96
First Choice Haircutters
Family hair salons

STARTUP COST
$163.9K–$302.6K

TOTAL UNITS
(Franchised / Co.-Owned)
205/197

97
Yogi Bear's Jellystone Park Camp-Resorts
Family camping resorts

STARTUP COST
$62K–$3M

TOTAL UNITS
(Franchised / Co.-Owned)
84/0

Dale Carnegie Training/ No.76

DALE CARNEGIE TRAINING can be found in 90 countries thanks to its famous founder and long history. “Dale Carnegie’s books have been very famous in India since they were first published,” franchisee Pallavi Jha says. “In fact, I still have a 1939 edition of *How to Win Friends and Influence People* that belonged to my grandfather.”

PHOTOGRAPHS COURTESY OF DALE CARNEGIE

98
Grease Monkey Franchising
Oil changes, preventive maintenance, brakes, light repairs
STARTUP COST
$156.7K–$340.9K
TOTAL UNITS (Franchised / Co.-Owned)
239/104

99
Precision Tune Auto Care
Auto repair and maintenance
STARTUP COST
$127K–$253.6K
TOTAL UNITS (Franchised / Co.-Owned)
263/53

100
Aqua-Tots Swim Schools
Swimming lessons
STARTUP COST
$496.9K–$1M
TOTAL UNITS (Franchised / Co.-Owned)
90/1

101
Drama Kids International
After-school drama classes and summer camps
STARTUP COST
$33.8K–$43.5K
TOTAL UNITS (Franchised / Co.-Owned)
237/0

102
Auntie Anne's Hand-Rolled Soft Pretzels
Soft pretzels
STARTUP COST
$199.5K–$385.1K
TOTAL UNITS (Franchised / Co.-Owned)
1,934/13

103
YESCO Sign & Lighting Service
Sign and lighting service and maintenance
STARTUP COST
$65K–$352.2K
TOTAL UNITS (Franchised / Co.-Owned)
57/39

104
Firehouse Subs
Subs
STARTUP COST
$92.3K–$824.8K
TOTAL UNITS (Franchised / Co.-Owned)
1,118/37

105
Charleys Philly Steaks
Philly cheesesteaks, fries, lemonade
STARTUP COST
$252.1K–$580.5K
TOTAL UNITS (Franchised / Co.-Owned)
539/56

106
Merle Norman Cosmetics
Cosmetics and skin-care products
STARTUP COST
$30.7K–$188.3K
TOTAL UNITS (Franchised / Co.-Owned)
1,131/1

107
Days Inn by Wyndham
Hotels
STARTUP COST
$192.7K–$8M
TOTAL UNITS (Franchised / Co.-Owned)
1,744/0

108
Sir Speedy Print Signs Marketing
Printing, signs, marketing services
STARTUP COST
$227.98K–$277.98K
TOTAL UNITS (Franchised / Co.-Owned)
231/0

109
Ramada Worldwide by Wyndham
Hotels
STARTUP COST
$214.1K–$13.7M
TOTAL UNITS (Franchised / Co.-Owned)
839/0

The most popular regions OUTSIDE THE U.S. for TARGETED FRANCHISE EXPANSION are:

1/ Canada
2/ Western Europe
3/ Australia/New Zealand
4/ Mexico
5/ Asia

110
Plato's Closet
Teen- and young-adult-clothing resale stores
STARTUP COST
$255K–$400.9K
TOTAL UNITS (Franchised / Co.-Owned)
479/0

111
Two Men and a Truck International
Moving services
STARTUP COST
$100K–$585K
TOTAL UNITS (Franchised / Co.-Owned)
304/3

112
Wyndham
Hotels
STARTUP COST
$984.6K–$65.8M
TOTAL UNITS (Franchised / Co.-Owned)
114/0

113
MaidPro
Residential cleaning
STARTUP COST
$57.6K–$207.5K
TOTAL UNITS (Franchised / Co.-Owned)
251/1

114
Expense Reduction Analysts
Business consulting
STARTUP COST
$66K–$85.9K
TOTAL UNITS (Franchised / Co.-Owned)
690/6

115
Snap Fitness
24-hour fitness centers
STARTUP COST
$149.8K–$462.8K
TOTAL UNITS (Franchised / Co.-Owned)
1,351/44

116
Allegra Marketing Print Mail
Printing, marketing, mail, signs, promotional products
STARTUP COST
$204.96K–$560.8K
TOTAL UNITS (Franchised / Co.-Owned)
246/2

117
The Melting Pot Restaurants
Fondue restaurants
STARTUP COST
$1.5M–$1.7M
TOTAL UNITS (Franchised / Co.-Owned)
114/3

118
Hawthorn Suites by Wyndham
Hotels
STARTUP COST
$227.96K–$12.3M
TOTAL UNITS (Franchised / Co.-Owned)
110/0

119
School of Rock
Music education
STARTUP COST
$169.4K–$399.1K
TOTAL UNITS (Franchised / Co.-Owned)
179/35

120
AlphaGraphics
Printing, marketing communications, signs, and graphics
STARTUP COST
$190.7K–$380.3K
TOTAL UNITS (Franchised / Co.-Owned)
280/0

121
American Leak Detection
Concealed water, gas, and sewer leak detection
STARTUP COST
$76.8K–$259.6K
TOTAL UNITS (Franchised / Co.-Owned)
162/13

122
Gold's Gym
Health and fitness centers
STARTUP COST
$2.2M–$5M
TOTAL UNITS (Franchised / Co.-Owned)
553/150

123
Cinnabon
Cinnamon rolls, baked goods, coffee
STARTUP COST
$185.2K–$330.7K
TOTAL UNITS (Franchised / Co.-Owned)
1,512/1

124
Fibrenew
Leather, plastic, and vinyl restoration and repair
STARTUP COST
$94.1K–$106.8K
TOTAL UNITS (Franchised / Co.-Owned)
239/0

125
Express Employment Professionals
Staffing, HR solutions
STARTUP COST
$140K–$211K
TOTAL UNITS (Franchised / Co.-Owned)
813/0

126
Motel 6
Economy hotels
STARTUP COST
$2.6M–$3.9M
TOTAL UNITS (Franchised / Co.-Owned)
908/395

127
Padgett Business Services
Financial, payroll, consulting, and tax services
STARTUP COST
$20.2K–$99.98K
TOTAL UNITS (Franchised / Co.-Owned)
343/0

128
Signarama
Signs
STARTUP COST
$110K–$295.5K
TOTAL UNITS (Franchised / Co.-Owned)
702/0

129
Image360
Signs, graphics, displays, digital imaging
STARTUP COST
$192.4K–$364.1K
TOTAL UNITS (Franchised / Co.-Owned)
313/2

130
Minuteman Press International
Printing, graphics, and marketing services
STARTUP COST
$64.2K–$166.5K
TOTAL UNITS (Franchised / Co.-Owned)
966/0

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**Ranked #4 for
"Top New Franchises in 2019"
by Entrepreneur Magazine**

131
Pita Pit
Pita sandwiches and salads
STARTUP COST
$216.4K–$435.1K
TOTAL UNITS
(Franchised / Co.-Owned)
592/13

132
Which Wich Superior Sandwiches
Sandwiches
STARTUP COST
$203K–$495.3K
TOTAL UNITS
(Franchised / Co.-Owned)
465/2

133
Dogtopia
Dog daycare, boarding, and spa services
STARTUP COST
$606.5K–$1.3M
TOTAL UNITS
(Franchised / Co.-Owned)
69/6

134
LeafSpring Schools
Educational childcare/preschool
STARTUP COST
$3.5M–$6.5M
TOTAL UNITS
(Franchised / Co.-Owned)
19/5

135
Wild Birds Unlimited
Bird-feeding supplies and nature gift items
STARTUP COST
$150.8K–$260.99K
TOTAL UNITS
(Franchised / Co.-Owned)
338/0

136
Boston's Restaurant & Sports Bar
Restaurants and sports bars
STARTUP COST
$1.1M–$3M
TOTAL UNITS
(Franchised / Co.-Owned)
422/2

137
Sculpture Hospitality
Bar and restaurant management solutions
STARTUP COST
$43.4K–$57.1K
TOTAL UNITS
(Franchised / Co.-Owned)
341/13

138
Senior Helpers
Personal, companion, and Alzheimer's home care
STARTUP COST
$103.3K–$142.3K
TOTAL UNITS
(Franchised / Co.-Owned)
305/4

139
Fantastic Sams Cut & Color
Hair salons
STARTUP COST
$144.9K–$316K
TOTAL UNITS
(Franchised / Co.-Owned)
1,000/2

140
F45 Training
Fitness studios
STARTUP COST
$220K–$299K
TOTAL UNITS
(Franchised / Co.-Owned)
972/10

141
Home Care Assistance
Nonmedical home care
STARTUP COST
$77.8K–$245.3K
TOTAL UNITS
(Franchised / Co.-Owned)
123/42

142
Line-X
Spray-on truck-bed liners, truck accessories, protective coatings
STARTUP COST
$125.3K–$318.98K
TOTAL UNITS
(Franchised / Co.-Owned)
576/6

143
Midas International
Auto repair and maintenance
STARTUP COST
$181.7K–$459.6K
TOTAL UNITS
(Franchised / Co.-Owned)
2,020/0

144
Travelodge by Wyndham
Hotels
STARTUP COST
$178.7K–$7.8M
TOTAL UNITS
(Franchised / Co.-Owned)
424/0

145
HouseMaster
Home inspections and related services
STARTUP COST
$61.1K–$106.2K
TOTAL UNITS
(Franchised / Co.-Owned)
304/0

146
Poolwerx
Pool and spa maintenance, service, remodeling, and supplies
STARTUP COST
$93K–$309.5K
TOTAL UNITS
(Franchised / Co.-Owned)
142/5

147
Marco's Pizza
Pizza, subs, wings, cheese bread
STARTUP COST
$289.8K–$762.5K
TOTAL UNITS
(Franchised / Co.-Owned)
905/0

PHOTOGRAPH COURTESY OF THE LITTLE GYM

The Little Gym International/ No.27

THE FIRST LITTLE GYM opened in Bellevue, Wash., in 1976, but founder and educator Robin Wes was inspired in part by his childhood in South Africa—and his negative experiences with the competitive way sports were taught there. He sought to create a more nurturing environment and movement-based learning programs that were fun rather than competitive. Today, The Little Gym International has expanded to 32 countries—and this fall it will come full circle and open its first location in South Africa.

148
CertaPro Painters
Residential and commercial painting
STARTUP COST
$134.8K–$169.5K
TOTAL UNITS
(Franchised / Co.-Owned)
362/0

149
1-800-Got-Junk?
Junk removal
STARTUP COST
$209.8K–$255.7K
TOTAL UNITS
(Franchised / Co.-Owned)
156/0

150
Sylvan Learning
Individualized supplemental education
STARTUP COST
$70.98K–$159.9K
TOTAL UNITS
(Franchised / Co.-Owned)
574/11

151
Crunch Franchise
Fitness centers
STARTUP COST
$255.5K–$2.3M
TOTAL UNITS
(Franchised / Co.-Owned)
249/25

152
Howard Johnson by Wyndham
Hotels
STARTUP COST
$264.8K–$9.3M
TOTAL UNITS
(Franchised / Co.-Owned)
333/0

153
Hot Dog on a Stick
Corn dogs, lemonade, fries, funnel cakes
STARTUP COST
$338.2K–$556K
TOTAL UNITS
(Franchised / Co.-Owned)
29/45

154
Great American Cookies
Cookies
STARTUP COST
$160.5K–$461.1K
TOTAL UNITS
(Franchised / Co.-Owned)
376/0

155
La Quinta
Hotels
STARTUP COST
$452.4K–$11.1M
TOTAL UNITS
(Franchised / Co.-Owned)
592/316

156
Chester's
Chicken
STARTUP COST
$12.4K–$286.8K
TOTAL UNITS
(Franchised / Co.-Owned)
1,192/0

157
Mr. Electric
Electrical services
STARTUP COST
$97.6K–$234.8K
TOTAL UNITS
(Franchised / Co.-Owned)
178/0

158
The Interface Financial Group - IFG 50/50
Invoice discounting
STARTUP COST
$86.8K–$137.8K
TOTAL UNITS
(Franchised / Co.-Owned)
51/0

159
Vanguard Cleaning Systems
Commercial cleaning
STARTUP COST
$5.5K–$36.6K
TOTAL UNITS
(Franchised / Co.-Owned)
3,327/0

160
PuroClean
Property damage restoration and remediation
STARTUP COST
$72.7K–$190.6K
TOTAL UNITS
(Franchised / Co.-Owned)
263/0

161
Maaco Franchising
Auto painting and collision repair
STARTUP COST
$362.3K–$567.3K
TOTAL UNITS
(Franchised / Co.-Owned)
510/0

162
Buffalo Wings & Rings
Sports restaurants
STARTUP COST
$1.3M–$2.4M
TOTAL UNITS
(Franchised / Co.-Owned)
76/3

163
Tutor Doctor
Tutoring
STARTUP COST
$68.5K–$101.7K
TOTAL UNITS
(Franchised / Co.-Owned)
554/1

164
Gloria Jean's Coffees
Specialty coffee
STARTUP COST
$173.2K–$473K
TOTAL UNITS
(Franchised / Co.-Owned)
854/0

165
Fully Promoted
Branded products and marketing services
STARTUP COST
$100.7K–$248.4K
TOTAL UNITS
(Franchised / Co.-Owned)
278/0

166
Qdoba Mexican Eats
Mexican food
STARTUP COST
$936.2K–$2.3M
TOTAL UNITS
(Franchised / Co.-Owned)
356/385

167
GradePower Learning
Supplemental education
STARTUP COST
$106.6K–$275K
TOTAL UNITS
(Franchised / Co.-Owned)
150/3

168
Duraclean
Carpet and upholstery cleaning, disaster restoration, mold remediation
STARTUP COST
$38.7K–$117.9K
TOTAL UNITS
(Franchised / Co.-Owned)
270/9

169
Floor Coverings International
Flooring
STARTUP COST
$153.9K–$222.4K
TOTAL UNITS
(Franchised / Co.-Owned)
174/0

PHOTOGRAPH COURTESY OF 9ROUND

9Round/ No.94

9ROUND HAS BEEN franchising outside the U.S. for only about five years, but the kickboxing fitness company already has almost 200 international locations in 18 countries. In some of those countries, though, women's workout options are typically limited because cultural standards prohibit men and women from exercising together. So 9Round opened its first women-only gyms last year—two in Kuwait, and a third in Dubai.

170
Crowne Plaza Hotels & Resorts
Hotels
STARTUP COST
$29.8M–$56.5M
TOTAL UNITS (Franchised / Co.-Owned)
417/0

171
Fit Body Boot Camp
Indoor fitness boot camps
STARTUP COST
$136K–$198K
TOTAL UNITS (Franchised / Co.-Owned)
540/1

172
InterContinental Hotels & Resorts
Hotels
STARTUP COST
$70.4M–$102.9M
TOTAL UNITS (Franchised / Co.-Owned)
190/6

173
Furniture Medic
Furniture and wood restoration, repair, and refinishing
STARTUP COST
$80.4K–$90.7K
TOTAL UNITS (Franchised / Co.-Owned)
349/0

174
Gateway Newstands
Newsstand and sundry stores
STARTUP COST
$55.9K–$501.8K
TOTAL UNITS (Franchised / Co.-Owned)
367/0

175
Mathnasium Learning Centers
Math tutoring
STARTUP COST
$112.8K–$149.1K
TOTAL UNITS (Franchised / Co.-Owned)
924/13

176
Experimac
Electronics resales and repairs
STARTUP COST
$142K–$321.1K
TOTAL UNITS (Franchised / Co.-Owned)
112/4

177
Mr. Appliance
Residential and commercial appliance installation and repairs
STARTUP COST
$60.8K–$139.5K
TOTAL UNITS (Franchised / Co.-Owned)
230/0

178
American Poolplayers Association
Recreational billiard leagues
STARTUP COST
$20.8K–$28.6K
TOTAL UNITS (Franchised / Co.-Owned)
317/7

179
Christmas Décor
Holiday and event lighting
STARTUP COST
$19.6K–$62.3K
TOTAL UNITS (Franchised / Co.-Owned)
257/0

180
Rocky Mountain Chocolate Factory
Chocolates, confections
STARTUP COST
$186.5K–$476.8K
TOTAL UNITS (Franchised / Co.-Owned)
247/2

181
Glass Doctor
Auto/residential/commercial glass installation, repair, and replacement
STARTUP COST
$127.3K–$265.5K
TOTAL UNITS (Franchised / Co.-Owned)
182/0

182
High Touch-High Tech
Science enrichment activities for schools/parties
STARTUP COST
$62.8K–$69K
TOTAL UNITS (Franchised / Co.-Owned)
30/4

183
SuperGlass Windshield Repair
Windshield repair, glass scratch removal, headlight lens repair
STARTUP COST
$18.7K–$84.2K
TOTAL UNITS (Franchised / Co.-Owned)
341/0

184
Engineering for Kids
STEM activities
STARTUP COST
$27.6K–$94.3K
TOTAL UNITS (Franchised / Co.-Owned)
168/1

185
milliCare
Flooring, carpet, and textile maintenance
STARTUP COST
$113.2K–$154.9K
TOTAL UNITS (Franchised / Co.-Owned)
57/0

186
GoliathTech
Foundation systems for the construction industry
STARTUP COST
$72.9K–$176K
TOTAL UNITS (Franchised / Co.-Owned)
202/0

187
Pillar To Post Home Inspectors
Home inspections
STARTUP COST
$36.4K–$44.6K
TOTAL UNITS (Franchised / Co.-Owned)
574/0

Auntie Anne's Hand-Rolled Soft Pretzels/ No.102

LAST YEAR, Focus Brands celebrated the opening of its 1,500th international location, an Auntie Anne's in Liverpool One Shopping Centre, the largest outdoor mall in the United Kingdom. The soft-pretzel franchise's first international location opened in Indonesia in 1995, and its largest international presence is in South Korea. Focus, which also franchises Cinnabon (#123), Carvel, Jamba Juice, Schlotzsky's, McAlister's Deli, and Moe's Southwest Grill, has stores in more than 55 countries and regions.

PHOTOGRAPH COURTESY OF AUNTIE ANNE'S

188
Curio Collection by Hilton
Hotels
STARTUP COST
$3.6M–$97.4M
TOTAL UNITS
(Franchised / Co.-Owned)
55/0

189
N-Hance Wood Refinishing
Wood cabinet and floor refinishing
STARTUP COST
$49.9K–$153.2K
TOTAL UNITS
(Franchised / Co.-Owned)
541/0

190
Transworld Business Advisors
Business brokerages, franchising consulting
STARTUP COST
$74.9K–$97.2K
TOTAL UNITS
(Franchised / Co.-Owned)
274/0

191
Mad Science Group
Science education and entertainment programs
STARTUP COST
$74.8K–$110.5K
TOTAL UNITS
(Franchised / Co.-Owned)
143/1

192
FastSigns International
Signs, graphics
STARTUP COST
$197.2K–$313.1K
TOTAL UNITS
(Franchised / Co.-Owned)
699/0

193
Microtel by Wyndham
Hotels
STARTUP COST
$3.8M–$5.3M
TOTAL UNITS
(Franchised / Co.-Owned)
341/0

194
ComForCare Home Care
Nonmedical and skilled home care
STARTUP COST
$81.3K–$185.3K
TOTAL UNITS
(Franchised / Co.-Owned)
191/0

195
Real Property Management
Property management
STARTUP COST
$86.8K–$117.8K
TOTAL UNITS
(Franchised / Co.-Owned)
310/0

196
Quesada Burritos & Tacos
Mexican food
STARTUP COST
$239K–$320.5K
TOTAL UNITS
(Franchised / Co.-Owned)
102/3

197
Expedia CruiseShipCenters
Retail travel agencies
STARTUP COST
$165.5K–$281.99K
TOTAL UNITS
(Franchised / Co.-Owned)
240/1

198
Bricks 4 Kidz
Lego-engineering classes, camps, parties
STARTUP COST
$17.6K–$75.98K
TOTAL UNITS
(Franchised / Co.-Owned)
640/0

199
Wingate by Wyndham
Hotels
STARTUP COST
$305.7K–$10.5M
TOTAL UNITS
(Franchised / Co.-Owned)
157/0

200
Comet Cleaners
Dry-cleaning and laundry services
STARTUP COST
$93K–$890K
TOTAL UNITS
(Franchised / Co.-Owned)
158/0

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

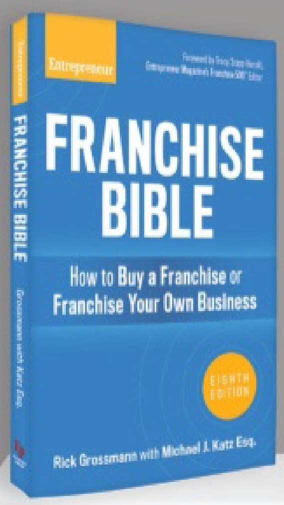
You've got the idea and the passion; now learn what you need to know to hit the ground running

Planning

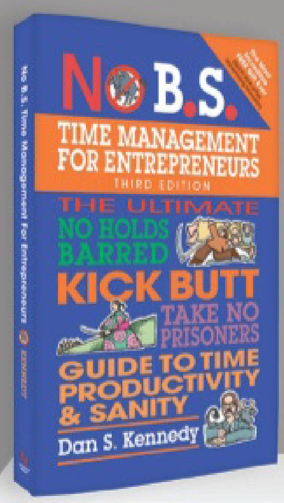
Preparation is key to your success—uncover valuable tools to establish and grow your business

Leadership

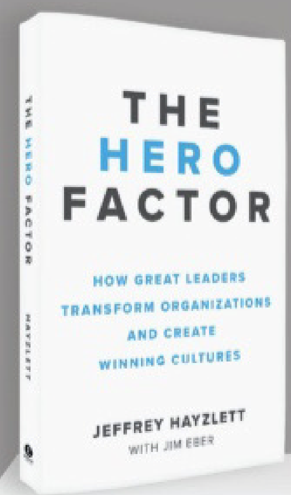
Your success is driven by your ability to lead—discover strategies and techniques to improve your leadership skills



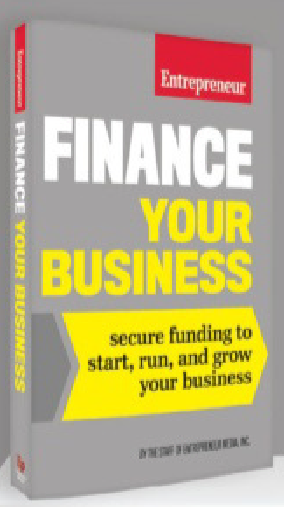
Franchise Bible



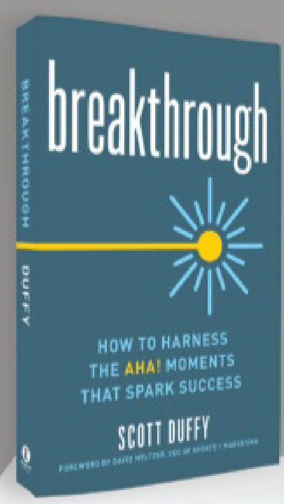
No B.S. Time Management for Entrepreneurs



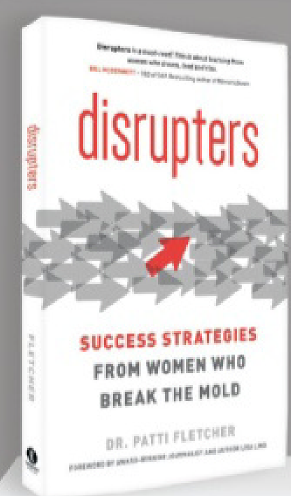
The Hero Factor



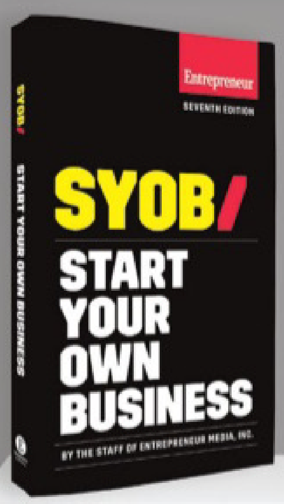
Finance Your Business



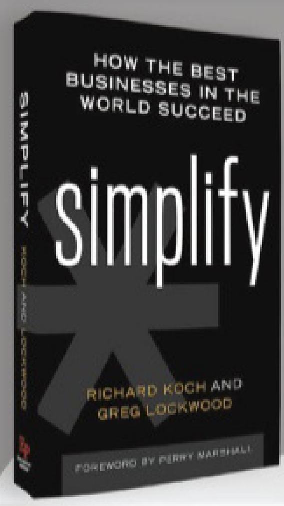
Breakthrough



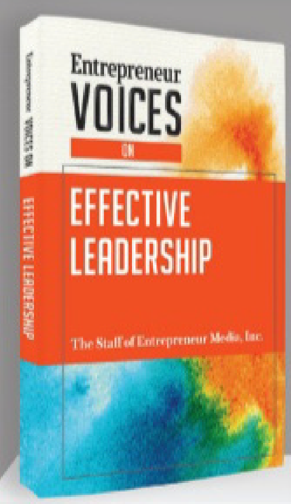
Disrupters



Start Your Own Business



Simplify



Entrepreneur Voices on Effective Leadership

Shelve Under

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

→ **HOT ITEM**
The toy oven that started it all for Laurie Gray.

The Sign I Needed, When I Needed It

by Laurie Gray, founder and CEO, The Pie Bar

There's something about working with dough that's calming and therapeutic. I learned that from my mother, Beverley. As a child, I'd be by her side as she'd make cookies, brownies, breads, lemon bars, and pies—all from scratch. I'd then spend hours in my bedroom in a make-believe kitchen, replicating what I saw with my Little Chef toy oven.

Years passed. I grew up. After two decades and a career in banking, I decided, *Heck, I'm going to give baking a shot instead.* In 2003, my friend and I put in $500 each, stocked a space in a commercial kitchen with supplies, and started baking pies. We wholesaled to about a dozen local food stores and sold directly to customers at nearby farmers' markets.

Thing is, though, starting and running a business isn't easy. I was a single mother raising two kids. I had no health insurance or retirement savings. Steady paycheck? Yeah, right. I got nervous. After about two years, I sold my stake and returned to the corporate world.

Fast-forward to October 2014, and I lost my job. My reliable corporate cash flow was gone. While I tried to figure out my next move, I started baking pies to help calm my nerves. Then I got a call from my mother and she said, "Laurie, you won't believe it. I found your Little Chef oven in the attic."

Seeing it after all those years was emotional. I took it as a sign at exactly the right time. I was inspired to become a business owner again. To generate buzz, I started doing pop-up shops near my home in Long Beach, Calif. The response to my pies—many old family recipes—was overwhelmingly positive. When the doors to my new business, The Pie Bar, opened in June 2016, we had people lined up down the sidewalk. It hasn't slowed since.

Today that Little Chef toy oven sits on display in the front of the store. When kids come in with their parents, I get to share my story about playing with it and how it created a passion that led to owning my pie shop. It reminds me of how far I've come. If you quit, and that's it, then you'll never know what you can accomplish.

WHAT INSPIRES YOU?
Tell us about a story, person, object, or something else that pushes you forward, and we may include it in a future issue. And we may make you photograph or illustrate it, too. Email **INSPIRE@ENTREPRENEUR.COM** with the subject line **"WHAT INSPIRES ME."**

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