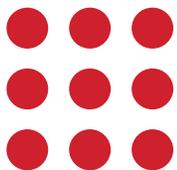


# How to Grow Your Franchise, Franchisors & Franchisees

By the RevLocal Brand Team



# How to Grow Your Franchise for Franchisors & Franchisees

Your guide to franchise growth through better communication, relationship building and effective marketing principles for both franchisor and franchisee.



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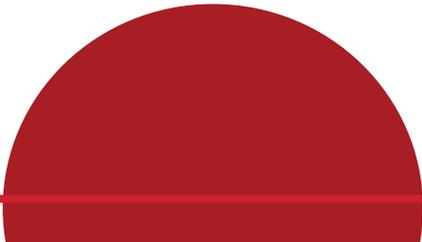
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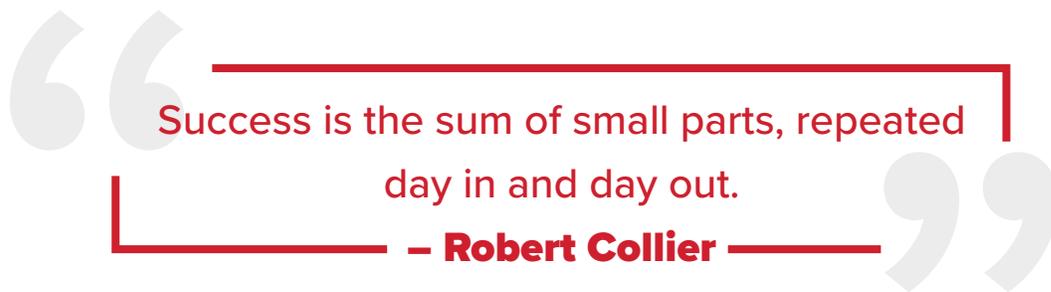


# The Franchisor Guide to Franchise Growth



Whether you're established as a franchisor or you're just getting started, there's always room for business growth and personal growth.

It takes a lot of effort to run a business, but this guide will help you work through the big and small things you can do each day to start to grow your business.



## **Build Better Relationships for Brand Success**

In order to grow your franchise and be successful, you'll need to build a positive, productive relationship with your franchisees. Those happy franchisees will support growth from the local level up. How can you build better relationships with franchisees? Here are some tips for building that franchisor/franchisee relationship.

### **Build Franchisee Trust**

Building trust takes time, but it's worth it. The following tips will also help, but the best way to build trust is to trust your franchisees first. It can be difficult to trust someone to represent your brand the way you would, but giving up some of the control will go a long way toward building successful relationships.

## 3 Factors of a Good Franchisor/Franchisee Relationship

- 1.) Trust
- 2.) Franchisee commitment
- 3.) Franchisee satisfaction

### Communicate Openly and Honestly

Open communication is a crucial part of both running a successful franchise and building positive relationships with franchisees. Be as honest and open as you can when communicating new ideas, policies, etc. Keep in mind that perception is reality, so go out of your way to make sure you're being intentional in how you communicate.

### Be a Good Listener

You know a lot about your franchise, and that's great, but that doesn't mean you have to do all the talking. Let your franchisees voice opinions, concerns and ideas. Actively listen to what they're saying, and make sure they know you're paying attention.

We know you're busy, but if you want to nurture your franchisees (which will ultimately lead to franchise growth for everyone involved, including you) you need to start by really listening to them.

Your franchisees are vetted, qualified and talented entrepreneurs that have a vested in the success of their business and yours, so listen when they speak. Sometimes, as a franchisor who is always looking at the big picture, it's easy to miss opportunities that your individual owners will see from working out in the trenches every day.

Listen to them and not only will they feel heard — but you'll see brand growth as well.

# Top 3 Factors Contributing to Franchisee Happiness

- 1.) **Work/life balance**
- 2.) **Helping others**
- 3.) **Being passionate about their work**

## **Host and/or Attend Annual Conventions**

Many franchises hold yearly conventions, featuring presentations, partners, etc. If your franchise has a similar event, make sure to attend and listen to feedback and go to presentations whenever possible. This type of face-to-face networking is unparalleled as far as building relationships. Simply by putting yourself in front of franchisees, you will seem relatable, approachable and involved.

## **Hold Annual Regional Meetings**

Don't forget to hold smaller, regional meetings yearly (or more often if your network is on the larger size). This will help you the same way attending yearly conventions will help. You will be more approachable and more connected with your franchisees.

This is also a great way for franchise owners to come together to share ideas and get to know the business. It's a key way to build trust and help drive success by reviewing overall company goals.

## **COVID-19 Update**

With many in-person events canceled or postponed indefinitely, you'll need to find a creative solution to substitute for an annual convention.

## Technology

There has been an emergence of great and easy to use webinar and video conferencing software (Microsoft Teams, Zoom, Google Meet, etc.). These platforms allow for group interfacing, but many have also experienced virtual burnout as a result of a significant increase in virtual meetings. Make sure not to overdo it.

We'd recommend to try to leverage a system you already have to minimize the learning curve for your franchisees. If you're looking for a software solution to host an annual convention or quarterly meetings, start by making a list of required features you need and ones you want. It'll help you focus on the best solution for your needs.



## Content

Our recommendation is to strike a balance between work and play. You know your brand better than anyone, so consider what aspects of your annual conference or regional meetings that your franchisees find most valuable and enjoyable.

Is it the yearly earnings report, performance rewards or is it the opportunity to learn from a keynote speaker? Is it the reveal of new products or software? Some may enjoy the travel and the ability to socialize with colleagues. Invest in recreating these experiences as best you can - send out conference kits, gifts and look for unique experiences that can be shared virtually.

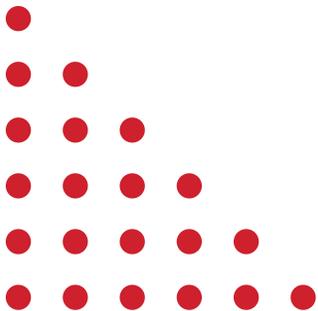
## Have an Open Door (or Even Better — No Door) Policy

At RevLocal, any employee can walk into the company president's office. This fosters a culture of openness, honesty and, well, comfort. Make sure your franchisees know they can come to you when they need help. Nothing builds a relationship like being the franchisee's go-to person when an issue arises. Let them know you want to celebrate their wins with them as well as help them through any inevitable failure. You might not have time for all this, and that's fine. It's a good idea to hire someone who can be the go-to person for franchisee help.





# Growing Your Franchise



Once your franchise is established, there's nowhere to go but up. In fact, 90% of franchises are still going strong 10 years later, whereas most small businesses don't make it that far.

Let's talk about growing your franchise and our best tips for franchise marketing.

## Think (Inter)National. Start Local.

A big part of successful marketing with any franchise network or multi-location brand is to start at the local level. Make sure your locations are ranking in Google's local 3-pack, because if consumers can't find your locations, you're missing out on a lot of sales and foot traffic!

This is a common oversight that big brands make, focusing on branding and largescale campaigns rather than building up a solid local marketing strategy that gets your locations ranking well locally.

You can think of it as your marketing foundation — without that local awareness, the rest of your marketing strategy will crumble.



**82%** of new franchise business owners have never owned a business before, so they will need plenty of coaching and training.

While you probably don't have time to do all this yourself, this is a task you can give to franchisees. Give them a guide, the tools or suggestions for a digital marketing agency that focuses on hyperlocal marketing so that you can work on the larger projects and your locations still rank for relevant searches.

## **Nurture Your Franchisees**

This guide is probably starting to sound like a broken record, but nurturing your franchisees (and again, giving them the tools they need to help market their locations) is the best way to build your franchise brand.

Make sure employees have the proper brand usage information so that they don't end up diluting your brand standards or representing themselves in a way that doesn't support your mission and vision.

Marketing is a vehicle for reaching more consumers. It's vital to success, but also comes with its own challenges. When considering options for your brand, we believe multi-location marketing should be two things, scalable and localized.

### **Scalable**

Digital marketing solutions that are designed to serve the needs of your entire organization to create brand consistency and maximize growth opportunities.

### **Localized**

Digital marketing solutions that are personalized for local markets to increase brand awareness and drive revenue.

So, give your franchisees the tools they need and be there for them. You will see a positive return if you do.



## Be Brand Consistent

Along the same lines, make sure your brand image is consistent. You'll need to keep an eye out for anyone non-compliant and make sure that all franchisees have a set of brand guidelines to follow. Make sure you define how elements of your brand should be used (logo, typography, colors, etc.). Your franchisees should know what's negotiable and what isn't. Consistency plays a big part of creating a repeatable customer experience, which is a benefit for all your franchisees.



## Make It a Friendly Competition

Obviously, you don't want to pit your franchisees against each other too much, but a fun competition can work wonders for your marketing.

You could do something like see which location can get the most reviews over the course of a month, a few months, even six months. Make sure there's incentive for franchisees to do so—that should keep them motivated and on track. Whatever you decide to do, make sure it's a worthwhile pursuit that will benefit the entirety of your brand.

The great thing about competitions like these is that even though there's one clear-cut winner, everyone wins.

So, hold a little competition and your franchise will grow as a result.

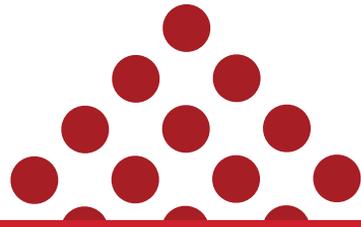
## Find a Good Agency

As we mentioned before, finding a great agency that specializes in local marketing and brand compliance is a great way to make sure your franchisees have the tools, resources and strategy they (and you) need to make your local marketing support your brand-level marketing.

Agencies can help you communicate with your franchisees and grow your franchise from the local level, resulting in large-scale brand growth! Just do your research and find a true partner with your best interests and a proven history in multi-location brand marketing as well as working with both franchisors and franchisees.

And, feel free to send out this next section to your franchisees! It's all about how to successfully market their locations.





# The Franchisee Guide to Franchise Growth

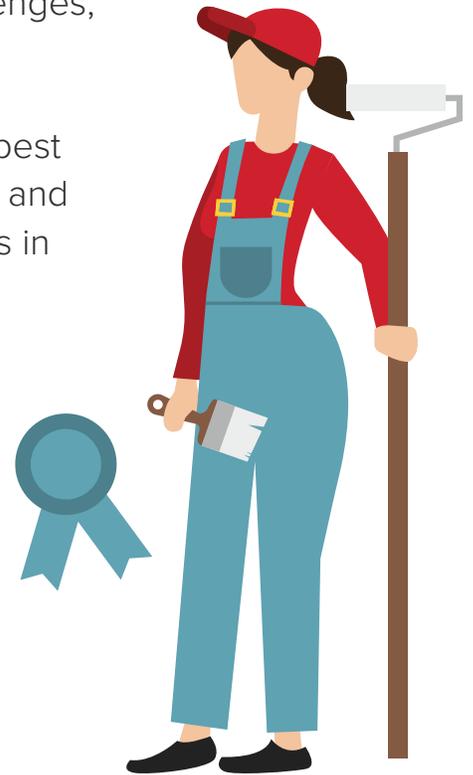


Running a successful franchise business has its challenges, but the benefits outweigh the hurdles.

Need a refresher on how to make your business the best it can be? Read our tips below to grow your franchise and build great relationships that will provide many returns in the years to come.

## Success is in the Commitment

Starting your own business can be scary, but you likely began with a lot of enthusiasm, feeling committed to the idea of owning a business and driving its success. Here are our tips for keeping up that enthusiasm and maintaining your commitment even when you're working long hours to build your business.



## Spread the Word

Get the word out about your business by being more involved locally.

Participate in local events. Network. Do what you can to be a presence in your community, and while you're out there making a name for yourself, talk about your business.

People will want to hear about your passions, and if you're enthusiastic when talking about your business, they're going to want to check it out and see what the fuss is about.



“

Don't forget: you have to follow the rules, too.

Franchises aren't designed for the independent-minded. They depend on the by-the-book execution of a business plan, adherence to time-tested systems, and a willingness to follow directions.”

— **Wall Street Journal** —

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## Work on Your Online Presence

One of the main ways to put your business in front of more customers is to make sure your local search presence is accurate and consistent across the biggest search engines and directories.

As long as you're not working against brand standards and guidelines, it's a great idea to make sure you've claimed your Google My Business page as well as top directories. Make sure your information is correct everywhere so that customers and search engines don't get confused.

Additionally, it's important to take advantage of all the tools that platforms like Google My Business offer you - monthly posting, holiday hour updates, COVID-19 updates, etc. All of these routine interactions build trust with Google.

That could result in you losing customers to the competition, so talk to your franchisor about how involved you can be in the marketing of your location.

## Put Branding First

Lots of franchisees want to do their own marketing, and that's great, but make sure you have franchisor guidelines and permission.

If you're lucky, your brand name may already be established, so make sure to adhere to your brand guidelines and use appropriate materials. Not only will this keep you brand compliant, but it will also help you bring in more customers since they are more likely to make a purchase when they recognize your brand

You'll need access to branding materials and any locally focused marketing agencies your brand recommends in order to do the best job of marketing your business while keeping yourself brand compliant. Following the branding rules is the best way to not only grow your business but support the brand and ensure that you are supporting brand growth.

## Communicate With Your Franchisor Often

Make sure to stay in contact with your franchisor regularly. The franchisor probably has plenty of resources that will help you with operations and marketing, so stay in touch and keep on top of any updates.

Attend conventions and regional meetings; send emails and pick up the phone once in a while. Open communication is the best way to build trust and foster a strong franchisor/franchisee relationship.



Don't forget to ask what the best way to communicate with your franchisor is. Some will want a phone call while others prefer email. They will appreciate that you want to communicate with them in their preferred method, making conversations and your relationship a lot smoother.



## Keep in Touch With Other Franchisees

Other franchisees can be your best support system, so stay in touch with them.

While no two franchisees will deal with the exact same things, you still understand what the other person is going through every day. Staying in contact will give you a support system and help you find new strategies to market your business as well as help you stay ahead of the trends.

## Don't Forget About Customer Service

Customer service issues can make or break your business, and no amount of branding or marketing can save you from poor customer service. Make sure you and your employees focus on keeping customers happy and treating them well.



Businesses in the U.S. lose  
**\$40 million yearly**  
because of poor customer service.

## Follow Best Practices

Marketing and keeping in contact with franchises as well as other franchisees are great ways to grow your business, but don't ignore the smart business practices that successful business owners follow.

These include:

- Finding ways to minimize costs and shrinkage
- Recruiting hard-working, enthusiastic employees
- Dedication to your business's success
- Maximizing sales and upselling

There you have it! Put branding first, keep open lines of communication and network locally to ensure your success as a business owner.

Don't forget about your all-important training and coaching. Make sure your employees are trained regularly on both new and old business practices—but, always be open to being coached as well. Keep learning. Stay hungry. If you do, you will keep moving forward.

And, remember that sometimes you can't do it all yourself. That's fine. That's when you should turn to the experts for help. Find a trusted partner to help you build an online presence that gets your business found and chosen by more customers. Not sure where to start? Contact us today to learn how we can help grow your business!





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