

Noteworthy Events

Christmas



December 25, 2017

Hanukkah



December 12-20, 2017



From Shark Tank to Franchising: The Story of Cousins Maine Lobster

Two cousins from Maine that grew up together doing what they loved most: sports and cookouts. Their childhoods were surrounded with ice hockey, basketball, soccer, and boiling pots of seafood. Jim and Sabin were both star athletes and they were both two of the most hardcore Northeasterners you will find in the greater New England area. Jim pursued an early career in Division 1 Hockey while Sabin pursued an education in Drama.

After both cousins had graduated and pursued careers; Jim selling medical equipment in Boston and Sabin acting in Los Angeles, Jim took a much needed vacation to visit Sabin in LA. While in LA, they reflected on their childhoods in Maine but most importantly, they reflected on the lobster. Two staples of a diet in Maine are corn on the cob and lobster and they couldn't help but notice both of these things missing from the vibrant West Coast foodie scene.

So Jim and Sabin did what any sensible entrepreneurs with a great idea would do, they pooled together their savings and started a food truck in Los Angeles specializing in Maine-style lobster rolls. This venture began as most do: chaotic, with little restaurant experience and an endless supply of energy, they pieced together the concept into a very desirable stop in California. With just one food truck they began attracting some very important attention without even knowing it. According to the cousins, they had *Shark Tank* executive producers visiting their food truck more than once a week. It began as a taste test, but soon offers were put on the table to have Cousins Maine Lobster on the show.

Both Jim and Sabin felt that it was too premature to bring their concept into the national spotlight and they wanted to make sure they were confident in their creation before bringing it to "the sharks". Finally, after some more exposure, and some solid sales numbers, they agreed to appear on the show. Targeting Barbara, they looked for the investor that was fond of partnering with food brands. Barbara ended up being the shark that invested and to this day she remains a business consultant and very close partner and friend to both Jim and Sabin. She helped them gain exposure and improve the brand.

Today, Cousins Maine Lobster is pursuing a franchise model to bring their brand and amazing product to every region! They currently have over 20 food trucks in 13 different cities and are looking for motivated, aspiring owners to share that experience with them. With an amazing corporate team of over 100 employees in LA, they train and support their franchisees throughout the process and introduce them to the family environment so many have come to love. Without forgetting their roots, Jim and Sabin have created a modern day, delicious one-stop shop for everyone's favorite Northeastern delectable. Whether you're on the sunny beaches of Florida or the snowy mountains of Colorado, visit a Cousins Maine Lobster truck and you'll feel right at home in Maine.



5 Ways to Keep Your Bad Days at Bay

Nellie Akalp - CorpNet

“Have a Bad Day Day”—yes, it really is a thing—falls on the 19th of November each year. While this “holiday” has its origins in good humor, some negative people seem to purposefully set out to make days unbearable for the people around them on any given date. And sometimes, we even get in our own way of having a good day by doing things that sabotage our productivity and ability to view our world in an enthusiastic light. We all have our less-than-ideal moments when we fall prey to distractions, discontent, and naysayers. I’ve certainly experienced them, but I’ve found ways to make them fewer and far between. Fortunately, by keeping our minds purposefully focused and our energy positive, we can avoid ruining the day for ourselves and prevent the ill will of others from making our days a nightmare.

Here, I’ve listed the practices that work for me. By incorporating them into your daily routine, you also might stand a better chance of making the day great.

1. Start the day by reflecting on your accomplishments and what you have to be grateful for

No matter what challenges or setbacks you face, there’s always something to take pride in and give thanks for. As soon as my alarm clock rings in the morning, I take a moment to reflect on the blessings in my personal and professional life; that sets the tone for the rest of the day. By immediately focusing on the positive, you’ll start your day feeling empowered and uplifted.

2. Have a plan for your day

There’s nothing wrong with a little spontaneity, but if you play all elements of your day by ear, you’ll fall behind on your responsibilities, miss deadlines, and jeopardize business and personal relationships. By taking a few moments, either first thing in the morning or the evening before to set priorities and reserve time for what you need to accomplish, you’ll stay on track. Having a plan will help set the day’s pace and prevent you from overextending yourself.

3. Delegate when appropriate

Too many busy entrepreneurs try to do it all themselves—especially when first launching their businesses. As a “Type A” individual, I understand the urge to want to control every detail, but realize there’s only so much of you to go around. You cannot—and should not—try to do everything. By delegating select responsibilities to capable people, you can permit yourself to focus on what you do best and what you enjoy most.

4. Take a deep breath when someone pushes your buttons

I admit, I don’t always find it easy to let go of the hurtful or antagonistic comments or actions inflicted by others. But when I do put that pessimism aside, I feel lighter and less stressed. When people push your buttons, remind yourself it’s their problem, not yours. Don’t dwell on their negativity and let it distract you or break your spirit.

5. Give yourself something to look forward to

Do this every day. Even the worst of days can seem less deflating if you reward yourself for your efforts. Carve out time for a massage, a special meal, quiet time with a favorite book, a long walk with your dog, a game of kickball with your kids before dinner, or whatever else will help relax you and makes you happy.

While acknowledging Have a Bad Day with some good-natured humor might be fun, actually having awful days on a regular basis can derail your business goals and aspirations. Rather than take bad days as a given, commit yourself to discovering ways to make them rare exceptions.

Business Is Booming for Senior Care Franchises

Excerpts of an [ARTICLE](#) by: Emma Pearson

With the Baby Boomer population steadily aging to the tune of 10,000 people turning 65 every day, senior care service franchises are in higher demand than ever before. In 2050, the number of Americans aged 65 and older is projected to be 88.5 million, according to the U.S. Census Bureau. The life expectancy of a 65-year-old woman in the U.S. today is 87.8 years, and for 65-year-old males it is 85.8 years, according to the Society of Actuaries.

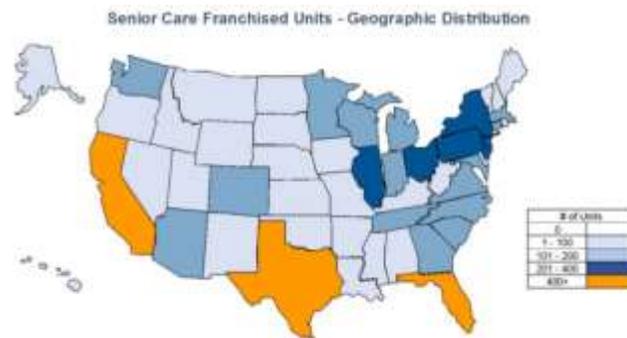
“We have seen explosive growth in the home care and senior care market, largely driven by franchise brands and franchisees seeking to capitalize on the aging U.S. population,” says John Reynolds, president of the International Franchise Association’s Franchise Education & Research Foundation. FRANdata states there are about 90 senior care franchise brands with more than 6,200 franchises across the United States. The average age of these brands is 8 to 9 years old.

According to a survey by the AARP, 86% of the 50-plus population in the U.S. wants to stay in their home as they age. Thankfully, the increasing number of in-home care service providers, which help seniors with daily activities such as cooking, cleaning, errands, and hygiene, are enabling more of them to do so. In-home senior services also make it possible for the elderly to avoid the high financial costs, loss of dignity, reduced independence, and diminished quality of life often associated with long-term care facilities and nursing homes.

Senior care as an industry experienced growth in the 1960s and 1970s thanks to government support and more elderly Americans needing care because they were living longer than in previous decades. In 1965, Medicare provided the elderly with federal money for home care. Today Medicare is the largest single source of revenue for home health care services. It also is the country’s largest health care payer, spending nearly \$650 billion in 2015, or roughly 15 percent of total federal expenditures. Other home health care funding comes from private insurance, individuals paying out of pocket, Medicaid, and local governments.

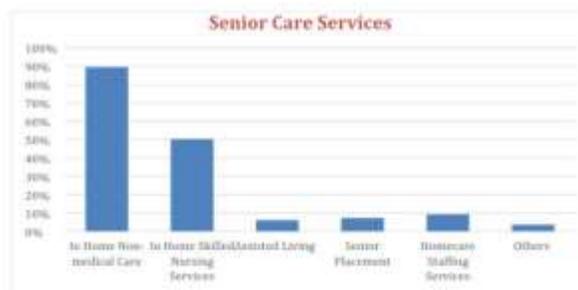
Some families try to assume the care of an elderly family member. However, because so many families today consist of dual-income earners and are far smaller than in previous generations, many seek the support of a third-party, in-home senior care provider. In 1990, there were 11 possible caregivers for every family member needing care, but it’s projected this ratio will fall to 6 to 1 by 2030, according to the Family Caregiver Alliance. This trend, combined with the large number of people turning 65 and the relatively high cost of nursing homes, will continue to drive demand for senior care services franchises.

The following map is the senior care franchised units’ geographic distribution for each state.

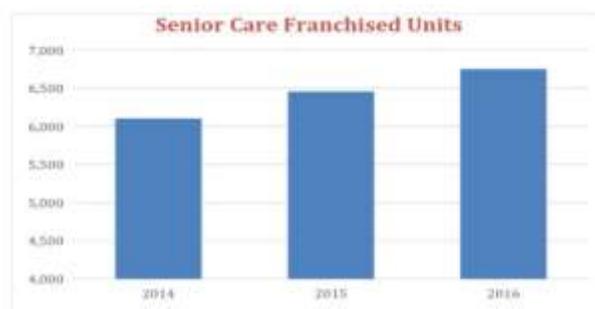


Source: FRANdata

The following chart shows the percentage of the different types of services each senior care franchise brand offers.



Source: FRANdata



Between 2014 and 2016, total senior care franchised units increased at a CAGR of 5%.

Source: FRANdata

There is an increasing trend in new senior care brands beginning to offer franchise opportunities. Since the economic recession of 2008, more brands have begun to franchise in the industry than in many of the previous years, a trend likely to continue.



Avoiding Information Overload as an Entrepreneur

By Kevin Haaland

Entrepreneurs don't have it easy. Between managing a team, streamlining business operations and staying on top of the latest trends and so much more, they have every day cut out for them. While knowledge is absolutely power, too much knowledge and information can be overwhelming and hard to manage, thus having an adverse effect and complicating a business.

While there is no "be all, end all" when it comes to managing information, there are a few tricks that can make it easier. Here are four tips on how to avoid information overload and compile a robust collection of information critical to elevating your franchise brand.

Filter out the bad

Plain and simple, continuous learning and acquiring new information is essential to business success. Not all information received is good information that will help your franchise grow and achieve its bottom line. Omission is the first step in the organizational system to efficiently store and manage information. Get rid of anything irrelevant or you'll end up hoarding a useless pile of data, impossible to sort through. Apply this to the dreaded inbox of email as well. Automate your inbox to filter important emails as necessary so they're easily accessible.

Organize and utilize the cloud

It's impossible and unrealistic to keep all information and data in your head. As an entrepreneur, utilize spreadsheets and assign data into logical buckets to manage it. Sort relevant news articles, social media channels, etc. into an organized system and once the system is created, make sure you abide by it and use it religiously. These spreadsheets will serve as a central information host, allowing you to review information at any time and share it across your franchise system.

To take it a step further, organize information electronically and utilize the cloud to store it. By centralizing data, accessibility is guaranteed from any device; the entire team and franchise system can share the data to help manage the workload.

Delegate and keep your focus

Staying focused on the initial projects at hand can be difficult. It's hard to let go and delegate various tasks that don't necessarily require your time and attention. The same goes for handling data and information. Make sure you're solely focusing on the information that directly benefits and correlates to the project you're working on. If you spread yourself too thin, you'll just be touching the surface of your projects, rather than diving deep in them for best results.

Delegate what you can to focus on working on the business, not in the business. As an entrepreneur, your focus should be on key metrics and what is important to your business and industry, such as the number of leads, cost per leads, lead to quote time, quote to close, etc.

Get the right tools

Nowadays entrepreneurs have it entirely easier than 20 years ago. Every day, a new tech-related tool is being released to help aid entrepreneurs in everything from day-to-day tasks to predictive analytics to streamlining business operations. In addition to a well thought out organizational system, take advantage of the countless amounts of tools available that make sense to you and will help systematize your business. Don't rely on manual systems or a pen and paper; instead, use tools that will automate processes. For example, use dashboards for an aesthetically appealing look at data and leverage a CRM to track customer data and remind you of follow-ups, preferences, etc.

As an entrepreneur, your day is spent making one decision following another. With so much information and data available, it's easy to let this bog you down and complicate the decision-making process. By following the simple steps above you'll be fresh on your way to entrepreneurial success and achieving your bottom line.

Unique Winter Holiday Traditions around the World



Philippines: Giant Lantern Festival: The Saturday before Christmas Eve San Fernando attracts onlookers from all over the world to watch this elaborate, fluorescent holiday lanterns.



Austria: Krampus: Krampus is the “dark St. Nicholas” a Christmas demon in Bavarian folklore that punishes misbehaving children. There is an entire festival dedicated to him in Austria.



Washington D.C.: Lighting the National Hanukkah Menorah: This 20 foot Menorah is raised and lit every Hanukkah at the nation’s capital to signify the Jewish holiday.



Caracas, Venezuela: Roller Skating to Mass: In Caracas the locals close down roads as thousands of people roller skate to mass!