

## Noteworthy Events

Our 45<sup>th</sup> U.S. President



Donald J. Trump

President's Day



Monday, February 20th

INTERNATIONAL  
FRANCHISE EXPO



June 15-17, 2017  
New York, NY

## The Importance of Following the Franchisor's System

An article by [Debra Hill](#)

"Oh, I just will do it my own way" is a gigantic step toward trouble. When I hear a prospective franchisee announce something along those lines, I have one bit of advice for them. "Don't buy a franchise." Recreating the wheel is not a good idea in the franchise world. Sure, there are examples of products derived through franchisees. However, those examples are few and were accomplished under the direction of the franchisor.

Running the franchisor's program isn't just an exercise of power. By following the rules of the franchisor's system, the brand is consistent across all locations. And, consistency is the vital key to success of your location as well as the entire brand.

Strong franchise chains with consistent products and services generate brand awareness in their customers. Customers know what product or service they will receive just by seeing the sign on the door. That Big Mac will taste like a Big Mac wherever it is purchased. This consistency of the products and services is the most important asset of the franchise chain. Consistency creates brand awareness. Brand awareness attracts and retains customers. Brand awareness drives new customers to your location because they know what they will get even if they have not visited your location.

If a location varies from the product or service offered in the franchise chain, customers become confused. They expect "x" but receive "y". This confusion undercuts confidence not in the renegade location but in all locations. This uncertainty of consistent products and services drives away customers.

Consistency is obtained, primarily, by training. A strong franchisor has a solid training program and a continuing support plan in place. Training should encompass every detail of importance in running a franchised location. It is more than how to serve up those burgers. It is more than an Operations Manual or "Training Manual". Training should reach into areas such as corporate philosophy, keys to customer service, operational procedures, vendor relationship, reporting requirements and valuable hands-on experience. Furthermore, a strong franchisor will have methods in place for training and assistance throughout the franchise relationship.

My advice to franchisees is get as much training as possible whenever possible. During that training, make sure you understand every aspect of it. Use training opportunities to their fullest. Then implement that training in your business faithfully at every turn. Attend annual or regional conferences if offered by the franchisor. Make monthly call-in opportunities offered to franchisees. These types of interaction are valuable in both acquiring knowledge, but identifying successful trends or potential problems. They are also opportunities to interact with your franchise peers.

# 3 Ways to Make Email Marketing Work for You

Excerpts from an article by [Rieva Lesonsky](#), allBusiness Networks



For small business owners, email offers many selling points as a marketing method. Email marketing is easy, it's affordable and most of all, it actually works.

One reason emails get attention is that about two-thirds (63 percent) of consumers have only one email address. That means your email marketing messages stand a good chance of getting to customers' primary email inbox.

Mobility matters when it comes to marketing emails. That's because 67 percent of Americans say their smartphone is the dominant device they use to check their messages—far above the next most popular device, laptops (just 12 percent use that most often). Those who typically use smartphones to check email also check their email more often than people who check on a desktop or laptop, making them better bets to act on your marketing messages.

But all is not well in email marketing land. Just 15 percent of consumers surveyed say the emails they get from businesses are useful to them and 56 percent say they get too many marketing emails. As a result, half of respondents say they rarely or never open marketing emails.

How frequently do they want to get emails? About two-thirds of respondents say the ideal frequency of marketing emails is one per month. This makes a monthly email newsletter a good vehicle for getting customers' attention without annoying them to the point that they unsubscribe. For best results with an email newsletter, try the following tips:

**1. Make sure it's mobile-friendly.** Use responsive design, format your images so they display properly and load quickly, and include plenty of white space around call-to-action buttons or active links so they're easy to click on. Just as important: Make sure the landing pages your email goes to are mobile-friendly, too. Otherwise, users might try to buy on their phones but not be able to.

**2. Make them feel special.** Special offers and discounts are the top reasons people subscribe to marketing emails. Affluent consumers care more about receiving special offers, while lower-income consumers care more about discounts. You can use these as "carrots" to entice people to sign up for your email newsletter. Once they've joined, however, you'll need to go beyond just providing deals (see #3).

**3. Provide useful information.** Make your email newsletter stand out from the pack of marketing emails by sharing valuable information with your readers. For instance, a clothing boutique could share the latest style trends for the coming season; a toy store could give readers tips for choosing age-appropriate toys; a pest control business could advise readers what seasonal inspections they should conduct to stay pest-free. When you offer something of value—rather than just a sales pitch—recipients are more likely to save the email, read it and act on it.

# An Overview of 2017 Small Business Trends

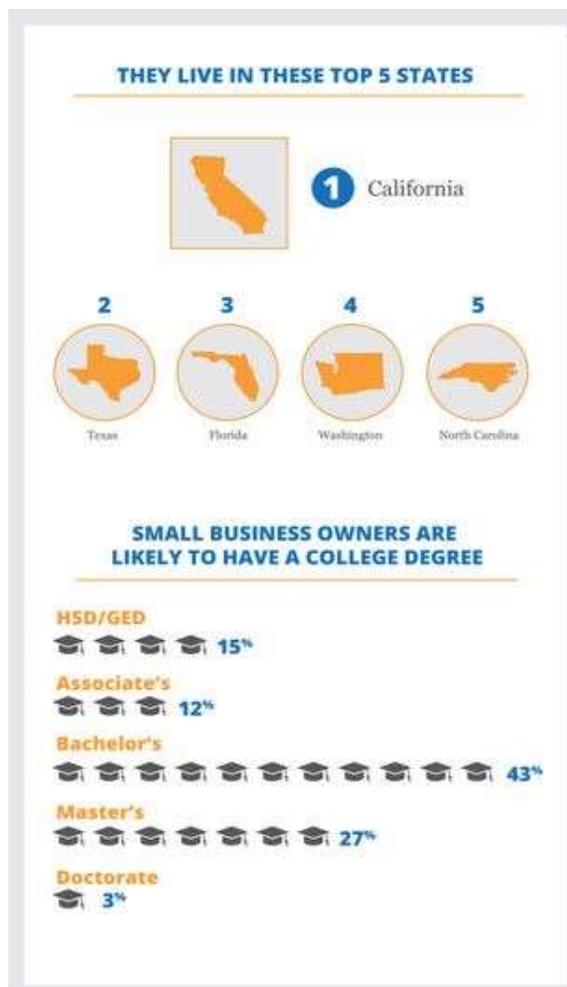
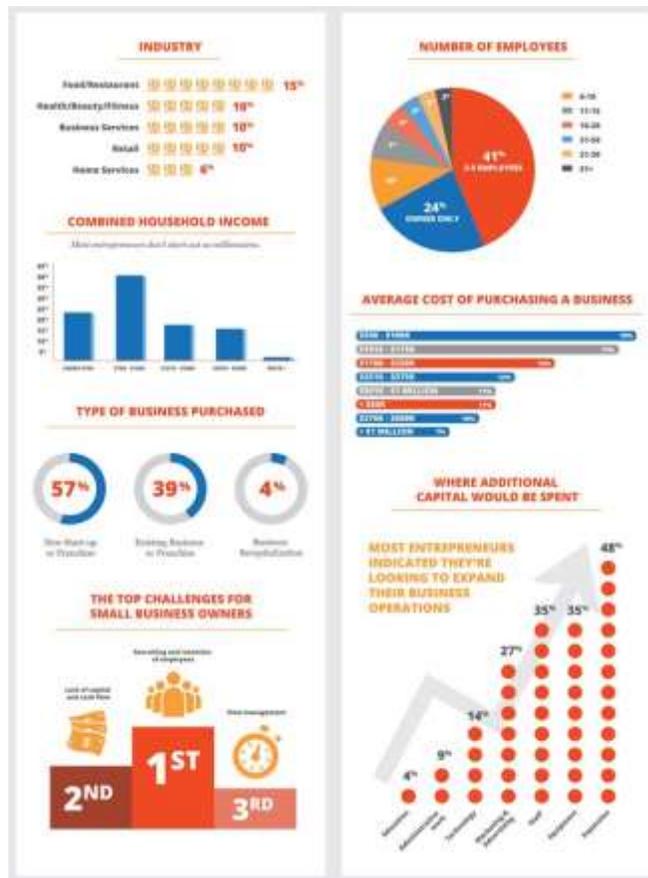
## Guidant Financial

Guidant Financial recently surveyed more than 1,000 of its small business owner clients to create a comprehensive State of Small Business Report. This report paints a picture of current small business trends, including who today's small business owner is, as well as a look at the companies they run. From income to education, and industry to location, here's what you need to know about who today's business owner is, how their businesses are performing and what struggles they're facing.

Our survey revealed that [baby boomers](#) are well represented in the league of small business owners, with the largest group of our respondents in the 50 - 59 age range. However, there's no perfect age for entrepreneurs. Year over year, we saw an 84 percent increase in entrepreneurs age 30-39. This may indicate that younger generations are looking to become their own boss earlier in life.

Small business owners come from a wide variety of backgrounds and lifestyles, including their educational background. A large majority of our small business owner clients had some college education, but it was more common to have not attended college than it was to have earned a doctorate. Eighty-two percent of Guidant's survey respondents had an associate's, bachelor's or master's degree, but 15 percent had only a high school diploma or GED. And an even lower percentage had a doctorate degree (3 percent).

Business ownership is a busy yet fulfilling lifestyle, and our clients are excited about the future. In fact, most entrepreneurs indicated they are looking to expand their business's operations. When we asked about how additional capital would be spent, the most popular answer was growth. Business owners also indicated they're hoping to [acquire additional staff](#) and new equipment.





## Social Media Trends for Franchise Brands in 2017

An article by [Manalto Social Media Management](#)

The New Year is now upon us, it's time to reflect on our social media achievements for 2016 and look forward to what we want to accomplish in 2017! (A social media marketing New Year's Resolution, if you will) Whether you conduct a full audit, or take a look back at your monthly statistics – analyzing the past year of social media will only help you to succeed in 2017. Look at what went right last year by searching for your best posts, as well as take a deeper dive into what didn't, and note what may not work with your audience. After analyzing and planning for what you want to accomplish in the New Year on social media, take into consideration these top trends for franchises!

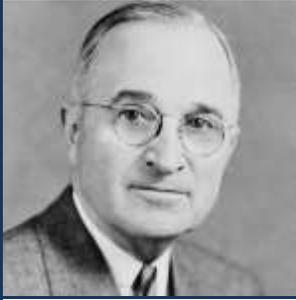
**1. Social media is becoming more experience driven.** To create that experience your clients are looking for, things like live video (now with options for Facebook, Twitter and Instagram), 360 images and multiple image posting can make your customers feel they are genuinely there with you and a part of the action. Live videos can be a fun and effective way to engage with your audience. Since all live video platforms are still pretty new to users, everyone is still experimenting – so not to worry if you're not an expert just yet! This genuine experience creates a more favorable opinion towards your brand, and in turn, helps to build that relationship and, hopefully, create a loyal customer.

**2. Personalization should be a priority.** Reaching your target audience with the right message needs to occur in order to stay relevant. Personalizing your messages and advertisements to cater best to your clients is not something to overlook or take lightly. Facebook ads allow for specific targeting to reach the clients who have been on your website, advertisements based on their interests, geographic location, career and many more specific criteria, based on your needs. When scrolling through Facebook or other third party websites, your clients want to see relevant and interesting information that is valuable and personalized to them.

**3. Social commerce is gaining steam.** This is becoming more mainstream and creating an even easier and more streamlined shopping experience for social media users, as well as businesses alike. Facebook currently has a new marketplace for consumers, but it is not yet available for businesses. Instead, brands can create ads with easy shopping opportunities, carousel ads, "buy now" options and more. Instagram has created a "Shop Now" feature that takes customers directly to purchase the item from their Instagram feed. Pinterest has been offering buyable pins for some time now, allowing their customers to purchase items without ever having to leave their site. They also notify a user via email when something they have previously pinned becomes available for purchase. This convenience is starting to become more of an expectation, where applicable, so adding a level of social commerce to your social marketing mix may be smart to evaluate in the new year.

As we move into 2017 it will be interesting to see how these trends evolve and what new and innovative ways are discovered to reach target audiences and stay at the cutting edge of the franchise industry!

# Name That President!



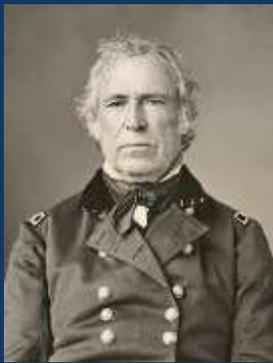
1.



2.



3.



4.



5.



6.

1. This President was VP when the President before him passed away.
2. Known as “The Father of the Constitution”.
3. Gave up prestigious military career to save his family peanut farm.
4. Mexican War Hero
5. “The only thing we have to fear is fear itself”
6. Was so overweight that he got stuck in a White House bathtub

Answers: Truman, Madison, Carter, Taylor, Kennedy, Taft