

### Noteworthy Events

#### INDEPENDENCE DAY



July 4, 2016

#### WEST COAST FRANCHISE EXPO



October 6-8, 2016  
Denver, CO

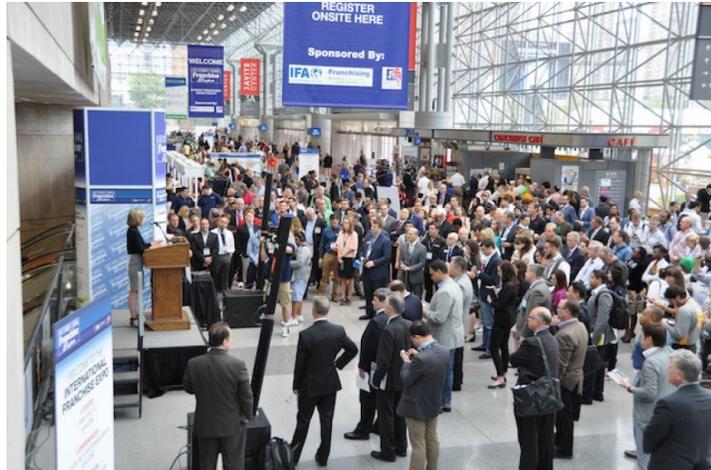
#### FRANCHISE EXPO SOUTH



January 12-14, 2017  
Dallas, TX

## Are you fit to own a franchise?

"The Profit" host Marcus Lemonis dishes on his foodie franchise and offers tips for aspiring franchisees.



Crowds gather at the International Franchise Expo – June 17, 2016

The International Franchise Expo (IFE) is underway at the Javits Center this weekend, where aspiring entrepreneurs are considering opportunities at the over 400 franchises — Ben & Jerry's, Cinnabon, Crunch Fitness among them — represented at IFE. For those with "Shark Tank" fantasies, you might want to check it out.

But taking the helm of a local franchise isn't glamorous — or easy, says Marcus Lemonis, host of CNBC's "The Profit" and co-owner of The Simple Greek franchise. Lemonis, who gave the keynote speech at the expo, spoke to us about how to turn your franchise fantasy into a reality.

### When franchise owners are looking for new franchisees, what do they look for?

You want to make sure that the franchisee has a real passion for what you're doing. Some people get into business because they think it's a get rich quick scheme, or they think it's the next big hit that they don't want to miss out on. And what I prefer is that people got involved in things they really believed in. I happen to have a Greek father, and like Greek food, and so that was my interest [in The Simple Greek.]

## **What questions should aspiring franchisees ask owners before signing on the dotted line?**

To me, the most important question that a franchisee should ask is, “How are the other [franchisees] doing, and how’s the relationship? Sometimes people make the mistake of not making that a priority. Are they signing up with an organization that’s going to be there in the long run?”

## **Marketing plays a key role in getting a business noticed. Where should franchise owners begin?**

Understand that the business is a local business, not a national business. Get to know the people within a four, five mile radius of your business, and execute on that first before you try to do anything outside of that, whether it’s a gym or a home cleaning concept. Understand your neighborhood.

## **On “The Profit,” you whip floundering businesses into shape. What’s the one mistake across the board you see among struggling entrepreneurs?**

That they don’t put enough value into the people. Realize that when you buy this concept, you still have to hire a great manager, or a great staff. You have to train them properly.

## **What factors do new franchise owners often overlook when they’re starting out?**

Besides understanding the people, for me it’s really knowing your numbers. When you go into a business, and you ask them questions and they know nothing, they don’t have the facts right, they don’t understand what makes things move, they just don’t have a real good sense of their business — that’s a big problem.

## **The modern entrepreneur has taken on a rock star persona, and yet we know many businesses struggle or even fail in the first year. What are some pitfalls of owning a business that aspiring entrepreneurs should be aware of?**

Losing money. Watching the business fail. Having to lay people off. The embarrassment of failure. Doubting yourself, and really questioning what value you’re adding to the business. Business is a huge responsibility, and it requires you to make the right decision because you have everybody else’s fate in your hands. You make the wrong decision, and people lose their jobs and they can’t make their car payment or their mortgage payment. For me, that’s what keeps me up at night.

## **What are some common misconceptions about owning a franchise?**

I think often people buy a franchise, and they sometimes think that you’re going to get this business in a box and everything is going to turn out. But it requires work, and staying very connected to the business. I’ve seen so many success stories of people buying franchises of average concepts and really making them work because they put that extra muscle, that extra elbow grease into it to make it as good as it can be. Every franchisee is in control of their own destiny.

# Molly Maid tests app in effort to retain, reward employees

By Rachelle Damico



Meg Roberts, president of Molly Maid Inc., in her Ann Arbor office.

Customers are only one potential audience for a company's mobile app.

Meg Roberts, president of Ann Arbor-based home cleaning franchise **Molly Maid Inc.**, approached her franchise advisory council last year about using a mobile app to help decrease employee turnover.

"I think a lot of minimum-wage jobs in the service industry are having trouble hiring and retaining people," she said. "We need to retain those precious employees longer — they're harder to find and they're harder to keep."

Molly Maid has 450 franchisees nationwide. It is the second-largest franchise brand of Texas-based parent company **Dwyer Group Inc.**

Roberts said the franchise tends to lose employees within the first four to eight weeks of their hiring. She believed a rewards-based app would be a way to engage and maintain its mostly millennial employee base.

Team members at Molly Maid created a project plan for the app that listed objectives, goals, budget and timing. Then they began to vet vendors.

"I would hope anyone who's vetting a vendor for something that's both marketing- and technology-related has an employee on staff with technology expertise and a marketing leader working in

tandem," Roberts said.

The company chose Indiana-based **Bluebridge Digital LLC** because it was cost-effective and could be customized for specific franchisee needs.

Cost was low because the app didn't have to be built from scratch and instead is built upon the vendor's custom framework.

"It can be pretty expensive to build an app from the ground up," Roberts said.

The app cost about \$10,000 to customize, which Roberts said allowed Molly Maid to pilot a program without making a six-figure investment for an app that is still being tested. Franchisees will pay \$150 to \$200 to use it, depending how many employees they have.

"We look at that and say, 'How much does it cost for our franchisee to hire an employee and how much business does it lose if they're short on employees?'" Roberts said. "Easily a franchisee will say it will cost more to find a new employee every month."

The mobile app will allow Molly Maid employees to receive rewards for participating in training sessions delivered through the app.

"They might not sit down and read a training manual, but they will very likely watch a quick 15-second video that reminds them of proper safety or training," Roberts said.

The app also has social capabilities, such as checking in with fellow employees, sharing information or giving shout-outs to employees who did a good job. Employees may get a monetary or recognized award — such as a bonus, scholarship drawing, or a pizza party — for doing well or posting the most positive comments about co-workers.

Local Molly Maid business owners can use the app to poll employees to see what type of reward they prefer.

The mobile app will launch in July and will be tested for six months among 10 Molly Maid locations that range from 10-100 employees to measure results and determine how successful the app will be.

"Consider how important it is to make sure your employees are happy," Roberts said. "When you're thinking about where an app makes sense for your business, don't only think of your customer as the absolute end user, but think about the other people along the way who helped facilitate the growth and success of your business."

## Philadelphia a top city for women entrepreneurs: Report

By Kenneth Hilario

The number of women-owned firms in the United States has significantly grown in the last few years, and Philadelphia has proven to be a top city for women entrepreneurs, according to a new report.

Nationally, the number of women-owned companies has seen a 45.2-percent increase between 2007 and 2016, a large leap compared to the 9.2-percent increase in all firms, according to a report by American Express Open.



While Pennsylvania is not among the top five states in terms of growth in women-owned businesses in American Express' report, another report by Small Business Trends finds Philadelphia specifically is among the top cities for women entrepreneurs.

Philadelphia came in at No. 9 on the website's list of the top 30 cities, based on data from the U.S. Census Bureau's 2012 Survey of Business Owners, which American Express also used in its own report.

There are about 40,906 women-owned companies in Philadelphia, according to the report, primarily in health care, construction, technology and staffing services.

Philadelphia's "neighborhood revitalization efforts, skilled workforce, centralized location and corporate support initiatives are draws for businesses," according to Small Business Trends.

Ally Piccolomini and Monica Estes in 2014 began franchising Nashville-based home-staging company Showhomes on the Main Line for the Philadelphia metropolitan area, and they both say the Philadelphia region has been supportive of women entrepreneurs.

The business partners are at different points of their careers — Piccolomini is a "young adult with energy and ideas," and Estes has "achieved what I'd wanted to achieve in the corporate world," according to Estes, who said it gives the company diversity.

"There's always been a challenge associated with setting up a business in Pennsylvania," Estes said, "but Philadelphia itself is open to all types of people from a variety of different backgrounds."

The local tax infrastructure is a challenge, Estes said, but in terms of the wealth of opportunities available, the region is "very friendly" due to the diversity of its industries.

The reason Philadelphia ranks so highly for women entrepreneurs is due to a number of other reasons, Estes said, including the education level, wealth in the area and its geographical location in the mid-Atlantic region.

"The reason Philadelphia ranks so highly is because of the confluence of those things," Estes said.

Another trend Philadelphia is seeing is more women in top-executive roles, particularly. At least six women in the past six months have become hotel managers in or near Center City hotels.



## Root Beer Baked Beans

Whether you're cooking burger, ribs or chicken this 4<sup>th</sup> of July, these Root Beer Baked Beans will be a great side dish! Below is the recipe with a 5 minute prep time and makes 4 servings.

### Ingredients:

3 bacon slices  
1 small onion  
2 (16-ounce) cans pork and beans  
1/2 cup root beer (not diet)  
1/4 cup hickory-smoked barbecue sauce  
1/2 teaspoon dry mustard  
1/8 teaspoon hot sauce

### Preparation:

Cook bacon in a skillet over medium heat until crisp; remove and drain on paper towels, reserving 2 tablespoons drippings in skillet. Crumble bacon.

Sauté diced onion in hot bacon drippings in skillet over high heat 5 minutes or until tender. Stir together onion, crumbled bacon, beans and remaining ingredients in a lightly greased 1-quart baking dish.

Bake beans, uncovered, at 400° for 55 minutes or until sauce is thickened.

Let your light outshine all the fireworks today and every day.  
Enjoy your freedom, thank a vet!