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FRANCHISES FOR VETERANS, STAY AT HOME MOMS AND ASPIRING ENTREPRENEURS

September 8, 2006

Greetings Prospective Entrepreneurs,

Welcome to another inside edition of Franchise Interviews. Franchise Interviews is an up close and behind the scenes look at franchising. The summer certainly went by fast! This edition of Franchise Interviews features an interview with an exciting franchise opportunity called WSI. We will also introduce you to VetFran, list the top 20 franchise opportunities in the United States according to Entrepreneur Magazine, hear an interview with Marty McDermott, President of Franchise Interviews, and get some tips on financing your franchise.

Enjoy!

Marty McDermott
President of Franchise Interviews

VetFran - Franchises for Veterans

A Message From Dina Dwyer-Owens, CFE
Chair, VetFran

It is because the community of franchising wishes to honor those who have so bravely served our country that a special program called VetFran was created. With the cooperation of the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, the Veterans Corporation and the U.S. Small Business Administration, and with outreach initiatives to our country's military and veteran organizations, the program continues to expand. Nearly 200 participating member companies have agreed to help qualified veterans acquire franchise businesses by providing financial incentives not otherwise available to other franchise investors. Veterans will get the "best deal" from these companies.

[For more detailed information on VetFran, click here:](#)

Franchise Interviews Meets With WSI

Introduction

A franchise that I have been following since 1999 is WSI. What I have noticed about WSI is the tremendous growth of the organization.

WSI, headquartered in Toronto, Canada, is ranked as the #1 Home Services Business in the world and the 4th fastest-growing International Internet marketing services. WSI has also been listed as one of 50 top companies in the 2006 Entrepreneur Magazine's Annual Franchise 500.

With systems that have been developed, utilized and proven by over 1500 Internet Consultants in 87 countries worldwide, WSI delivers thousands of Internet marketing services solutions to small- and medium-sized businesses annually.

It definitely cannot be called a typical job or run of the mill franchise - it's a franchise that offers its members more. WSI's franchise is about being involved in a rewarding conception and a fulfilling profession that gives its members the opportunity to own a business that is so much more than the typical franchised restaurant or service business. It's about getting into franchises in Internet marketing.

Our interview this week is with Ron McArthur who is the President of WSI. Ron gave us some great information on the history of WSI, the WSI franchise system, a typical day as a WSI franchisee and much more. We hope you enjoy it as much as we did! Thanks Ron.

Franchise Interviews - Where are you joining us from today?

Ron McArthur - I am joining you from WSI's headquarters in Toronto, Canada. It is in this office we have over 100 staff supporting our 1500 plus Consultant offices in over 87 countries.

Franchise Interviews - How long have you be with WSI?

Ron McArthur - Almost three years now and it has been an exciting and enriching experience to help our franchisees and customers leverage the Internet to enhance their profitability.

Franchise Interviews - Describe your job with the WSI organization.

Ron McArthur - I am the President of WSI. As such I oversee all of the company's sales, operations, marketing and technical support.

Franchise Interviews - How would you describe the WSI system?

Ron McArthur -The WSI system is a proven Internet Marketing approach to serving the Internet Solutions needs of small and medium-sized businesses the world over. We train our franchisees how to effectively use our tools, technology and techniques to help SMEs make more money on the Web, by following the WSI ABCs. Our consultants provide A- Affordable technology, B- Build targeted traffic and help our clients C- Convert more customers online.

Often times our Consultants meet business owners that have websites – but say they are not working the way they had anticipated. Our Consultants take the owner through the WSI Lifecycle systematic approach to correcting issues, and more importantly obtaining more customers. In 2006, WSI launched an enhanced Lifecycle System™ Version 3.0. This fifth generation of WSI's proven system has incorporated learning over the past few years and leverages the changing needs of our customers to have more targeted traffic and convert more customers - our franchisees using this updated approach are experiencing increased financial performance faster. This means their customers are benefiting faster as well, with more return on their Internet investment.

Our WSI Internet Solutions Lifecycle™ System is comprised of six critical phases, each one supported by proprietary tools and methodologies. Following the Lifecycle™ system ensures quality, control, and success at each stage of every project, creating a complete Internet marketing plan that is measurable and targeted to any category of business. This patent-pending system is exclusive to WSI, and is delivering results to our franchisees and customers.

Franchise Interviews -Describe the history of WSI.

Ron McArthur -WSI stands for 'We Simplify the Internet', and we were founded by businessmen who realized the need for business solutions for small and medium-sized businesses (SMEs). As large corporations had sizable budgets to invest in the Internet, SMEs wanted to invest in affordable solutions that delivered return on their investment. Affordable solutions that worked was a large gap in the marketplace that WSI wanted to fulfill. As such, we began delivering Internet Consulting services, including website development, document management systems, e-commerce and e-learning programs and design. WSI entered the marketplace in 1995, and by November 1996, the company had started its franchising initiative. WSI entered the British market in April of 1998 and spread to the USA (our largest market) in January of the following year. Today there are more than 1500 franchisees in 87 countries, making WSI the largest

company of its kind.

Franchise Interviews -Can you tell us a little bit about the industry?

Ron McArthur -WSI continues to research the Internet space to ensure we are filling the gaps for our SMEs by providing them with products and services that best meet their needs – and we deliver these Internet Solutions in a clear, concise and most importantly simplified manner. The current Internet marketplace has huge gaps in the Internet Marketing sphere and our franchisees are filling these gaps for their customers using the proven WSI Internet Marketing system. Given the SME marketplace is exploding internationally as in the European Union alone, the current number of SMEs exceeds 4 million – our franchisees have huge market potential for their products and services. SMEs present an enormous opportunity for WSI Consultants. We will deliver affordable modular website solutions rich in functionality and design, and help them attract targeted traffic with SEO and PPC strategies. But, most importantly, we will ensure their website is set up to convert MORE customers and we will know we have delivered with excellent web analytical reporting.

Franchise Interviews -What is the training like for new franchisees?

Ron McArthur -WSI provides world-class, ongoing training for its franchisees that includes a four-to-six week online course, followed by one week of intensive training at our company's headquarters in Toronto, Canada. Following this, each franchisee goes through our QSP (Quick Start Program) and a 90-day one-on-one coaching process conducted via telephone, email and web conferencing. Further training and mentoring sessions are conducted by successful WSI Internet Consultants, who travel the world to teach and assist franchise business success to fellow franchisees.

Franchise Interviews -Describe a typical day as a WSI franchisee.

Ron McArthur -WSI Internet Consultants enjoy a professional lifestyle enriched with freedom, independence and control, therefore, a working day for a WSI Consultant is never 'typical'. A Consultant's role is ensuring their clients realize the full profit potential offered by Internet technologies. Consultants analyze prospects' business processes and identify how those processes can be improved by using WSI's Internet technologies. This includes website development, e-Commerce facilities, Internet marketing, and more. Based on their plan of action, Consultants produce personalized solution proposals to clients as they manage business-specific

projects and deliver solutions.

Franchise Interviews -What advice would you give to aspiring entrepreneurs looking to buy a franchise?

Ron McArthur -Research, research, research: one can never do enough leg work when deciding where to invest their money. Many potential franchisees get blindsided when they are making their selection with fast food franchises or franchises that already have a large following. There is also a lot of competition amongst these types of franchises and the market is more mature. WSI is unique because while there are some competitors, the market is rapidly growing and changing. WSI plans to stay ahead of our competition by doing exactly what we asked our franchisees to do before entering this business - research and understand customers' needs today, and anticipate their needs going forward. WSI does just that: we research and understand our customers and recognize that this is a fast-paced industry in which we need to adapt our solutions to ensure our franchisees are successfully meeting their customers' needs. Because the Internet has become so critical to the success of businesses of all sizes and categories, business owners all over the world require the innovative services that WSI Consultants provide.

Proven marketing and business models are also an important part of the decision-making process. Potential franchisees should require turnkey operations that are tried, tested and true. Also, the length and style of training that is offered is crucial. Some franchisees pay their franchise fee, get their franchise, and are left to fend for themselves with little support or communication from the franchisor. At WSI, we offer intensive training and ongoing marketing and operational support, and franchisees have access to assistance 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. As a part of the global WSI network, no one is left to fend for themselves; we operate as a family unit every step of the way.

Franchise Interviews -What characteristics do you think make successful entrepreneurs?

Ron McArthur -Although our franchisees come from various professional backgrounds, Consultants predominately have backgrounds in sales, marketing, consulting, management, IT and general business. The skills, knowledge and experience from these industries are applicable and comparable to the category of business that WSI Consultants perform. All of their knowledge and proven experience combined with following our system and hard work are the keys to a successful WSI franchisee.

What we look for in potential franchisees is the ability to follow a proven system for success, the willingness to work hard, a dedication to fulfilling the needs of clients, and, most importantly, a personal drive to succeed. We carefully pick our franchisees based on their experience and entrepreneurial spirit. We help them hone their skills and experience and empower them to be the partners that SMEs require to succeed at e-business. Our franchisees join the WSI family with the shared mission to educate their clients and increase their profitability.

[Visit WSI's website for more information](#)

Franchise Interviews -Realize The Dream Of Financial Independence, with the premiere franchise resource.

Funding is a key element in the start-up phase of most businesses and franchises are no exception. Since the total investment required to start a franchise or business opportunity can range from under \$10,000 to several million, potential franchisees will often seek financing to form part of their investment

The necessity of financing is not just about getting the business started. It is vital for the franchisee that you have the funds not just to start the business but to provide cash flow through the early stages so that you can expand your business. Most franchisors will look very carefully at a number of key factors when assessing potential franchisees. These will include management or marketing experience and your fit with the company but will also involve an assessment of your financial capabilities.

One of the difficulties when considering starting a franchise is assessing exactly how much you can afford to invest. Many potential franchisees will come from employment and will be attracted to franchising because of the track record, experience and brand presence of the franchisor. It is such things that result in the lower failure rate of franchised start-ups. Luckily for you, many lenders are also attracted by those same factors. Many franchisors, because of their track records are known to lenders in their industry and are comfortable with franchisees securing financing for a portion of their investment. This can be in many forms. It may include the leasing of vans or equipment and funding for the entire project.

Loans are initially declined for many reasons. They usually stem from the borrowers inexperience and lack of knowledge of the loan process and criteria. If you have limited experience in applying for a business loan, you may experience the following.

- * Uncertainty of loan requirements - Do you really understand the bank or financial institution requirements to successfully get your loan approved?
- * Poorly packaged loans - Do you have the knowledge and ability to professionally present a loan package worthy of full consideration?
- * Inability to talk to loan officers - do you understand the guidelines and concerns that underwriters have in evaluating the merits of your loan application? Do you know the people you are talking to?
- * Wrong source - Banks are always willing to look at your application, but will they approve it? Can you possibly know or understand their written and unwritten priorities and ever changing policies or guidelines?

[For more information on financing your franchise, click here:](#)

Anita Campbell of Small Business Trends Radio Interviews Marty McDermott

This time, Marty McDermott, the President of Franchise Interviews was interviewed by Small Business Trends Radio on the ABC's of franchising. Thanks Anita.

[Listen to the Interview, click here:](#)

Entrepreneur Magazine's Top 10 Franchise Opportunities

Top 10 Franchises for 2006

1. Subway
2. Quiznos Sub
3. Curves
4. UPS Store, The
5. Jackson Hewitt Tax Service
6. Dunkin' Donuts
7. Jani-King
8. RE/MAX Int'l. Inc.
9. 7-Eleven Inc.
10. Liberty Tax Service

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