

HOW TO WIN AT
**FRANCHISE
DEVELOPMENT
MARKETING**



Mainland

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01

THE IMPORTANCE OF “WHY YOU/WHY NOW” IN TELLING YOUR BRAND’S STORY



IT’S THE VERY FIRST THING A FRANCHISE CANDIDATE AND CUSTOMER NEEDS TO SEE ON YOUR WEBSITE, IN YOUR STORE AND IN YOUR BRAND STORY. YOUR WHY YOU/WHY NOW DEFINES YOU AND THE REASON WHY YOUR TARGET SHOULD INVEST IN YOUR BRAND, PRODUCT OR SERVICE.

When landing on your franchise website, ask yourself one question: Do you define the why you/why now?

While simple, the question is a key evaluation tool when looking at your franchise brand as a franchise candidate. Then, the evaluation should go far beyond your digital landing page. Why should anyone care about your brand? And why is now the time to act? Those two questions must be addressed clearly and consistently at every touch-point with your target audiences.

Before deploying its story and amplifying it across channels, franchise brands need to start with the Why You/Why Now. The Why You/Why Now ensures all marketing efforts are guided by a

sense of purpose and strategy that allows brands to build and measure against growth goals. If done honestly and effectively, uncovering the Why You/Why Now will require a deep dive into the core of your brand, your leadership team, culture and core values. In the end, your Why You/Why Now must revolve around the transformation of your franchisees’ personal and professional experience.

By creating this message on the front end, brands will have more purpose throughout the whole journey of their storytelling. For example, at Mainland, we define the Why You/Why Now for a brand, build owned assets around that messaging, then deploy it through PR and amplify it through paid assets so the right people will find the story. Mainland can package it all together to define a message that we are confident will resonate with key audiences in key markets. Finally, we look at analytics to figure out what worked and what didn’t, so all of that storytelling can have a greater purpose.

CHECKLIST:

- ☐ **Define your brand’s Why You/Why Now:** Why should someone care about your franchise over the competition, and why is now the time to take action? Build a storytelling strategy that accurately reflects the brand’s franchise development goals.
- ☐ **Owned:** Develop the copy, imagery and other content marketing assets to best tell your brand’s Why You/Why Now story.
- ☐ **Earned:** Take those stories and pitch them to the most relevant and far-reaching news and media outlets, including national news, trade publications, local media and digital influencers.
- ☐ **Paid:** Amplify the impact of those stories and media placements through digital advertising and other paid marketing.
- ☐ **Data:** Dig deep into the results of the Why You/Why Now campaign to gain insights on what stories and methods had the greatest impact.

02 DEVELOPING YOUR GOALS AND PROJECTED OUTCOMES



WITH THE RIGHT TOOLS AND STRATEGIES, BRANDS CAN BREAK THEIR TO-DO LIST INTO ACTIONABLE STEPS TO REACH THEIR GOALS.

While franchisors may have a general idea of their sales goals, many don't know their ideal outcome when it comes to PR, digital marketing, creative content or social media. If you haven't accurately defined the goal of these tools, what's the purpose of having them?

Setting goals up front will help give more purpose to what you're trying to accomplish with creative content and storytelling to reach your projected outcomes.

DEFINING THE RIGHT FRANCHISE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

So, how do you create your goal? In the world of franchise development, the usual goal is simple: Grow the franchise. But creating strategic growth goals should be about more than just hitting a certain number of units signed.

Start with defining the growth outcome you hope to achieve. Use this framework of questions to help you create a plan:

- Number of Desired Units
- Number of Franchisees (if greater than unit sales)
- Projected Marketing Budget
- Marketing Budget / Number of Deals (this will give you a sense of what you can spend per deal)
- Number of Existing Franchisees Who Can Expand

Last Year's Data

- Budget
- Number of Deals
- Cost Per Deal
- Number of Existing Franchisees Who Expanded

The right goals should be focused on optimizing growth while keeping an eye on **unit-level economics** (increasing those will help drive franchise sales). To find this balance requires strategic analysis of which areas are positioned to grow and the marketing resources that will be needed to get there.

That is why franchise development marketing goals need to be more about finding the right people who will succeed in the long-term, rather than just making a quick sale. Whether it be a goal to develop the best **franchise development website** possible or to create **localized content** (written, PR, video, social) that shares their story in target markets, the projected outcome should be getting in front of ideal candidates and convincing them to join the brand.

USING PROJECTED OUTCOMES TO CREATE A PLAN FOR GROWTH

At the front of any franchisor-agency relationship is the question “What is the ideal outcome or purpose?” Picture where the brand will be in a few years, and then work backward to create an outline for the tools that will be needed to get there.

Your purpose could be anything from simply boosting your business' visibility to finding more prospects to buy into the franchise or even building a strategy to exit the business down the road. Now that you've defined that, we'll build the structure underneath it using our **conveyor belt** approach:

1. **Strategy & Consultation:** We'll get to the bottom of Why You/Why Now.
2. **Owned:** We'll create assets to share your story. This includes things like stories on our publications (like 1851Franchise.com), videos, social posts and websites.
3. **Earned:** Here's where our media relations team secures coverage to add credibility and create a larger audience.
4. **Paid:** We boost your storytelling using paid digital marketing. We'll really dial in to your target market, audience and persona to make sure they're seeing what we've created.
5. **Data, Analytics & Reporting:** Finally, we'll provide comprehensive data and analytics to help you better understand what works and what didn't.

When this has all been put into action, you can look back to your original goal to determine whether you've accomplished what you set out to achieve.

Remember, franchisors aren't going to meet all of their goals the first time around. Setting the right growth goals takes time, communication and practice. As brands reach new milestones and learn what winning looks like for them, they will be better positioned to create the kinds of franchise development marketing tools that will help them build an achievable plan for success.

CHECKLIST:

- ☐ Understand the tools at their disposal and use them to set goals for their ideal outcome.
- ☐ Define the financial outcome they hope to achieve.
- ☐ Focus on optimizing growth.
- ☐ Create an outline for how they'll use the items in their toolkit by following our conveyor belt approach, and then put it into action.
- ☐ Look back at their original goal to analyze what worked best.

03

BUILDING A FRANDEV MARKETING BUDGET



DIAL BACK, ASK WHAT YOUR FRANCHISEES ARE WORTH TO YOU AND THINK BEYOND IMMEDIATE MARKETING COSTS TO LONG-TERM DEAL VALUE.

Not all franchise marketing budgets are created equally. When establishing a franchise development budget, there are a few things to consider, including starting with a blind budget, looking at the deal holistically and thinking about how much you're willing to spend to get the right franchisee candidate in place.

BUDGET \$25K PER UNIT: HERE'S WHY.

In the 2021-2022 time frame, a typical sales budget is \$25,000 per unit. So if you want 10 deals in the next year, you would set up your budget by multiplying $10 \times \$25,000$, which is \$250,000. Some may look at that number and wince. First, that's not going to apply to every sale or every franchise unit. Second, here are two compelling reasons why it's a reasonable figure.

1. If you use a franchise broker network, that's what you'll pay.

Currently, the typical cost of using a broker is in the neighborhood of \$25,000. The benefit of paying a broker is that you're working a deal that's coming to you. You're not spending money and time chasing leads that may or may not pan out, but it is still money from your budget.

2. You need to think long-term: Determine the deal value.

So is that \$25K a good allocation of resources or not? Here's one way to find out: You can calculate the amount of revenue you'll get from royalties in the first year and beyond. Subtract the initial \$25,000 budget from the deal value, and you'll have your answer as to whether it was money well spent. In other words, don't think about the immediate expense — think about the long-term revenue. Also, if you're prospecting the right way, you'll be able to work with those interested in multi-unit ownership, which gives you a bigger bang for that initial \$25K.

STUDY LAST YEAR'S BUDGET

While that \$25,000 is a generic, rule-of-thumb budget, another way you can determine your specific marketing budget needs is by simply looking at what you spent last year divided by how many deals came. That gives you a number to start with. The goal, however, should be to improve on that number and shave expenses by utilizing the leads and data you developed last year.

GOOD NEWS: YOU DON'T NEED ALL THE MARKETING CASH AT ONCE

One way to budget for franchise development is to create a rolling budget. That means every time you sell a franchise, you put a portion back into the development budgets, allowing you to build on that sale's momentum. It's also possible to extend the timeline of your budgeting by planning 18 months out, rather than a single year. Doing so provides a bit more wiggle room for your budget because the marketing you do today may not pay off for another three, six or even nine months.

LOOK AT TARGET MARKETS & DATA

It's important to examine your target markets very carefully to see where you need a lift. You may have to shift how you deploy those dollars. Also, study the traffic to your franchise development website. Where is the interest coming from? Where are the actual applications coming from? You can track those data points to understand where and how to deploy your budget.

CHECKLIST:

- ☐ Create a blind budget as a starting place.
- ☐ Consider the long-term deal value and how much you're willing to spend for the right candidate.
- ☐ Create a rolling budget so every time you sell a franchise, you put some of the funds back into your development budget.
- ☐ Leverage your past data to get to a new budget.
- ☐ Look at your target markets carefully.

04

DEFINING YOUR TARGET PERSONAS & TARGET MARKETS



LEARN HOW FRANCHISORS CAN FIND AND REACH AN AUDIENCE THAT WILL HELP THEIR BRAND GROW.

When growing a brand through franchising, the first step is establishing the brand's Why You/Why Now. Why is this the brand to join, and why is now the time to get on board? These are the questions every brand will have to answer through franchise development marketing.

Many franchisors build the right franchise development marketing tools — whether it's **social media content**, **pay-per-click ad campaigns** or PR — but they might not be targeting the right people in the right areas. As part of defining the Why You/Why Now, franchisors need to create ideal candidate profiles and establish which markets are primed for growth.

HOW TO DEFINE TARGET PERSONAS

Different from traditional audiences, a **target persona** takes data and insights gathered from those who have already shown interest in a brand, segment or even competitors and uses that information to outline the most likely leads.

Establishing a target persona profile will help brands establish a more personal, value-aligned relationship with their prospects. Profiles should include:

- Financial requirements
- Desired experience
- Business and strategy portfolio
- Core competencies required
- Any other attributes deemed essential for the brand

Brands can start to define these characteristics by interviewing their existing network of stakeholders. This will provide insight into who is likely to thrive within the franchise, as well as what draws someone to the brand in the first place. Ask questions about where their research started, where it led them and where they may have veered off course from a brand they were originally excited about.

Once franchisors know how their stakeholders are arriving at the brand, they can be much more precise with their marketing. By accurately defining a target persona, franchisors will save valuable franchise development marketing funds that might have been wasted on **unlikely candidates**.

HOW TO DEFINE TARGET MARKETS

The next step in franchise growth is deciding where to focus expansion efforts. Similar to target personas, target markets should first be defined by examining previously successful examples called validating markets. If validating markets don't exist, franchisors should select markets best suited for their brand or business model and develop them as future validating markets.

Brands should determine how the demographics of their target market (population, income, education, etc.) match up to their targeted personas. And franchisors must do thorough research on potential competition in the targeted markets.

On the consumer side, franchisors also need to ensure there are enough qualified households to buy the product in a particular market.

Other factors that can determine a good market for franchise growth include:

- The labor force in that area
- The current economic outlook
- **Vendors** or distributors in the target market

Additionally, if a franchise is just starting to grow, it's wise to focus expansion efforts around the brand's headquarters to ensure each owner has access to the necessary support.

HOW TO START MARKETING TO THE RIGHT PEOPLE

When it comes to franchise development, the pathway of least resistance is marketing to the right people in the right markets with magical content/storytelling that hits an emotional chord with the candidate and pushes them to form fill. Clearly, though, it isn't always that easy. So, here are some steps to set-up your franchise marketing strategy:

- Identify your personas: This can be done with gut (35-54, high net worth) or can be accomplished by pooling your franchisees and finding similarities in their stories. You can also hyper target personas (colleges, professions) – so that when marketing your content, the message resonates with a very specific audience.
- Picking your growth markets: Most successful franchisors try to grow in concentric circles, as there is value in brand recognition one town over. Others rely on data (Google Analytics is a fantastic tool), where they see what areas of the world people are coming to their development site in, and increase spend in those markets.
- Then, fill up your content funnel: Introduction to franchising, introduction to your segment, introduction to your brand, due diligence, counter content and wins should all be a part of your content marketing flow.
- Then, spend \$\$\$ using the above data and assets.

By understanding who they are targeting and why, franchisors will be better prepared to reach the right prospects and grow in the best markets for their brand.

CHECKLIST:

- ☐ Interview your existing network of franchisees, asking about their backgrounds, goals, personal interests, how they researched the brand and what ultimately convinced them to join.
- ☐ Gather data and common traits regarding existing successful franchisees.
- ☐ Establish a persona profile that incorporates the most common traits.
- ☐ Look at existing “validating” markets to learn which geographic and demographic traits support the brand.
- ☐ Create marketing content that appeals directly to your target personas.
- ☐ Use targeted marketing to put your content directly in front of the audiences you want to reach in the markets you want to grow.

05 BUILDING A FRANCHISE DEVELOPMENT WEBSITE



LEARN THE COMPONENTS THAT MAKE YOUR WEBSITE THE MOST IMPORTANT ELEMENT IN YOUR FRANCHISE DEVELOPMENT TOOLKIT.

Your development website is a critical part of the franchise sales process for a very simple reason: It's how you'll generate the most leads.

Where do people go these days when they want to find out more about you or your business? They're not going to call you or knock on your door. They're going to use the internet — and it's up to you to build a narrative for them to follow and guide them on their journey to becoming a lead.

Here are a few key elements necessary to make your franchise development website a success.

CREATE A SEPARATE URL FOR YOUR BRAND

Your company has a website, but you also have franchise brands. Be sure to create a separate URL for each brand.

The best reason to have a separate franchise website is that it's the best way for a brand to control its own story and attract leads. Having franchise information on a main company website can be confusing to navigate and make it difficult to find the right answers. Having its own URL gives the brand space to flex its franchising muscles and give users the best possible experience.

From a practical standpoint, having a unique franchise website makes analyzing traffic and marketing efforts much easier. Plus, you can create specific campaigns that point people to the information they need and landing pages that retarget to your brand website.

Many brands choose to use a **microsite** for their franchise website, which is a section of the main website that stands alone. It has its own subdomain and navigation, so it feels like a separate entity, but it's still contained under the umbrella of the larger company.

CREATE CLEAR, EASY-TO-NAVIGATE SECTIONS

The website is meant to facilitate the research of the buyer, so the sections you build should be clearly labeled and easy to understand. The sections should provide information that answer fundamental questions about the brand and the franchise opportunity.

Key sections or pages to include in any franchise website are:

- Brand Mission & Vision
- Who We Are (about the team)
- Why Our Product Stands Out (include some industry data)
- How We're Growing & Why We Want You as a Franchisee
- Cost to Open a Franchise & Your Earning Potential
- Testimonials from Other Franchisees

Once you build these fundamental basics, guide the user around your brand site with additional content that helps them feel comfortable with investing in your brand. Some examples might be a blog page, a page to put all your brand's PR or even embedded social feeds.

You play the tour guide. Give potential leads the tools and let them do the research. Once they've had their questions answered, they're ready to move to the next step of the franchise sales process.

CREATE AN INQUIRY FORM AND CALL TO ACTION

The overall design and layout of the website should match the company's branding, present the information in a clear and simple way and effectively guide users to a call to action.

The form is the most critical part of your page's layout. Again, if you didn't have a separate URL for your brand, that would complicate things on your form — the important call-to-action for your leads. The buyer journey is different for everyone, and they should be presented with all the information specific to your brand before encountering a form to fill out for more direct contact.

On your form, you might include some text to encourage leads to book an exploratory call with someone on the team, and you could offer a PDF download with brand and investment information as incentive.

Connect your form to free online appointment scheduling software, like [Calendly](#), to book leads automatically.

As you develop the website's layout and design, always keep in mind that it should include all the tools necessary for a visitor to do the research on their own and easily get in touch with you when they're ready to take things to the next level.

SEO TIPS FOR FRANCHISE DEVELOPMENT WEBSITES

When it comes to writing content for your website, start with the basics. You can go down the endless rabbit hole of Google algorithms later. If you haven't already, come up with your buyer personas (people who you want to visit your website and buy your franchise), and think of the keywords and phrases they might use to find you.

Use a keyword tool like [Moz's Keyword Explorer](#) or [Google's Keyword Planner](#) to get a sense of how popular those terms are and what the competition looks like. Then, incorporate these terms into your content organically. Blogs are a great way to increase the volume of content on your site and create content around these keywords.

Over time, you'll see traffic to your site and conversions increase because you're creating needed content that establishes you as an expert in your industry. And who doesn't want to go into business with an expert?

IMPORTANT STEPS TO REMEMBER

Your brand website is so important, you'll want to constantly tweak it and make adjustments to keep things looking fresh. Without an updated website, you're relying on the rest of the internet to tell your story. And if you're not telling your story and guiding users to your Why You/Why Now, you're not going to be satisfied with the leads that come through to your website.

CHECKLIST:

- ☐ Send users directly to your brand page with a separate URL from your main site.
- ☐ Make your website sections clear and easy to navigate.
- ☐ Include additional content, like blogs, PR or social media.
- ☐ Make sure your website's layout is a journey to a call to action.
- ☐ Create a clear, effective form.
- ☐ Keep your brand website updated and looking fresh.

06

ALIGNING YOUR BRAND MARKETING



ARE ALL OF YOUR COMPANY'S BRAND MARKETING EFFORTS TELLING THE SAME STORY? HERE'S HOW YOU SHOULD APPROACH YOUR BRAND MARKETING STRATEGY TO MAKE SURE IT ALIGNS WITH EVERY OTHER ASPECT OF YOUR BUSINESS.

While the terms “content strategy” and “brand strategy” are often used interchangeably, there are important distinctions between them — most importantly, brand strategy involves constructing a plan to achieve a big idea, and content marketing is the tool you use to execute that plan. And the two must work together.

How many of your company's marketing projects — whether it's your website, social media, PR, marketing, POS material, sales material, follow-up emails or newsletters — are dialed into the same focused strategy? A good marketing team will ensure that all of those projects are telling the same story and complementing each other.

Aligning your marketing strategies is critical to effectively selling your brand, but that's only the start.

WHAT NOT TO DO: THE DECLINE OF DILLY DILLY

According to Forbes, presenting a brand — and its story — consistently across all platforms can **increase revenue by up to 23%**. Our brains are hard-wired to look for personal connections and consistency, not to remember different stats, facts and selling points across different platforms.

Consider the case of **Bud Light's "Dilly Dilly" television marketing campaign**.

As a result of the campaign, the phrase "Dilly Dilly" completely replaced "Cheers!" as the anthem for how you salute someone when you're about to have a drink. But where Bud Light failed with their brand marketing was in consistent execution. Although there were 300,000 Google searches, and 66,000 hashtags for the phrase, a year after the campaign Bud Light sales were down by more than 6%.

When you looked at their social media, PR or website, they weren't telling the "Dilly Dilly" story. Instead, they spent money in each of these categories, but they didn't align the same message into each of those categories. Therefore, today, Dilly Dilly is mainly a forgotten campaign.

The bottom line: Make sure you integrate a consistent story into every single aspect of your brand marketing, or your "Dilly Dilly" will become a "Dilly Don't."

MAKE SURE YOUR MARKETING STRATEGIES ARE NOT ONLY ALIGNED, BUT INTEGRATED

Now take a look at a marketing campaign done right: Dos Equis' **Most Interesting Man in the World**, featuring a suave, Ernest Hemingway-esque man describing various feats of his past, always ending with him stating the signature sign-off: "Stay thirsty, my friends."

Before the campaign, Dos Equis was a relatively unknown Mexican import beer that's been around for a long time. The brand plastered The Most Interesting Man in the World on every possible touchpoint with their customer.

The result? **The Most Interesting Man in the World** was a constant presence and message of the brand. The brand became a household name in the U.S., while sales skyrocketed 22% at a time when other imported beer brands were in a sales decline. Today, even though they've put those campaigns to sleep, The Most Interesting Man in the World is still part of today's popular culture.

When you're trying to integrate your brand marketing with your other strategies, look through all of the items that you're already spending money on and you've already put energy into and try to dial it all into one exact focused campaign. Now, you're leveraging your budget to make sure it has the highest impact from a brand standpoint, and your marketing is far more strategic and consistent.

Our most important marketing advice: Focus on making sure all of your materials connect, integrate and elevate what you're trying to accomplish.

CHECKLIST:

- ☐ Collect all the assets you are using to reach potential customers, from email to billboards to brick and mortar signage.
- ☐ Do these messages align with each other? Do they align with your brand's?
- ☐ Every piece of marketing material needs to be focused on the same message you need to get results.
- ☐ Using a strategy of Owned, Earned, Paid Search, you can create a brand strategy that allows you to tell and amplify your brand message.
- ☐ Measure and benchmark your efforts, and adjust accordingly.

07

FRANCHISE MARKETING BASICS



FOUR-WALL MARKETING? LEVERAGING ASSETS? GET FAMILIAR WITH SOME FRANCHISE MARKETING BASICS, INCLUDING THE TERMS AND TOOLS YOU NEED FOR LEAD GENERATION.

So you're ready to start deploying your budget and get in front of buyers who are qualified and ready to buy. So let's go through a few different types of leads that exist out there. The first step in creating a successful marketing plan to reach those buyers is knowing the different types of leads and how to reach them. Here are some of the basic types of leads and how to reach your intended target.

1. DEAD LEADS

The "rocks" are potential franchisees who have already inquired into your franchise system, but they eventually lost interest, and you labeled them as cold.

But why did they turn cold? Most likely, you haven't given them a Why You/Why Now. At Mainland, we help establish the Why You/Why Now, a strategy that determines what the most important thing is about your brand, and why people should care about it. Then, we build out the owned assets of your campaign/story, amplify credibility through PR, maximize the audience size through paid and then measure the data.

Bottom line: Don't give up on those cold leads. First, create the Why You/Why Now. Second, figure out why that will resonate with a potential buyer. Third, create compelling content through the use of storytelling to help provide the insights that answer those fundamental questions, as well as creating a connection with the audience.

An easy first step in accomplishing these tasks is to simply put a newsletter to those past inbound inquiry leads. If you want to continue to engage, you can create a webinar that helps explain why your brand stands out or provides other relevant, useful content. From there, you can create a fireside chat where you can personally convey your message to a franchise.

As you build up this library of assets about your story, you now have compelling ways to reach your dead-end or cold lead database.

Once you send that email, you suddenly have three key insights that you can leverage to achieve your next goal.

- You can see who opened it
- You can see who clicked through to your website
- You can see who engaged with your content

While you will find that most of these leads have moved on, there is usually a select audience of people who have demonstrated interest in your message. That gives your sales team the "trigger" event they need to make follow-up calls to convert that interest into a sale. Whether the leads follow through with it or not is to be determined, but now you have insight.

2. CURRENT ASSETS: EXISTING FRANCHISEES

The next biggest lead bucket: Your existing franchisees. What they think matters and can help you tell your story to new franchisees. Successful franchisees sell franchises.

Your franchisees should be aware of your franchise leads and help you with those marketing efforts. For instance, you could create content to help tell their stories: What are they saying

about their experience with the brand? Are they saying they're still hungry to grow? How has their support been? What is the first-person experience of successful franchisees?

Engaging these franchisees in questions like these — whether through articles, videos or other media — allows the franchisee to share their love for the brand, helping reinforce your value proposition for those who have expressed interest in your brand. Now, you're building out materials within your current franchisee base.

3. THE NEXT EASIEST BUYER: FOUR-WALL MARKETING

You already have potential franchisees within the four walls of your business: Your customers. That's because customers already have an affinity with your product or service, and if they are considering an investment opportunity, they should be aware that you have one for them.

Therefore, you should use any touchpoint possible as an opportunity to reach these potential customers with relevant messages. That may mean a van's wraparound banner, invoices or a leave-behind pamphlet for service calls.

When you start looking within your four walls, you're going to find people who are one inch away from buying your franchise; they just need to be educated on the Why You/Why Now.

4. LONG LEADS

This category of the lead includes people who are at the beginning of your sales funnel, which may require six months to a year of nurturing to convert. They may have just become aware of your brand — or even your category. Your job is to increase awareness of your brand and move them toward the consideration stage. This may involve looking to where your competition is expanding or has already sold out.

These people are already qualified as a prospect and are ready-to-buy individuals. However, they may also be considering your competition. That means your content (via search, SEO and PR) must get in front of them in order to convey your brand's value proposition, and they will keep you in their consideration set.

It sounds complicated, but when you break it down into dead leads, current franchisees, four wall marketing and long leads, you can manage your budget in a way that will impact your franchise growth and take your brand to the next level.

CHECKLIST:

- ☐ Determine your brand's Why You/Why Now.
- ☐ Deploy that message to cold leads through compelling content.
- ☐ Engage with your existing franchisees.
- ☐ Reach your customers through four-wall marketing.
- ☐ Convert your long leads through compelling content.

08

USING YOUR FRANDEV MARKETING TOOLS TO GENERATE LEADS



FROM RETARGETING COLD LEADS WITH WEBINARS TO REACHING LONG LEADS THROUGH SOCIAL MEDIA, THERE ARE SEVERAL DIFFERENT TYPES OF LEADS, AND EACH CATEGORY REQUIRES DIFFERENT MARKETING TOOLS.

When you're ready to deploy your development budget and get in front of qualified prospective buyers in target markets across the country, it's important to understand what tools you have at your disposal and who those tools are designed to attract.

Here are some of the various categories a lead might fall into, as well as how to utilize franchise development marketing tools to reach them.

COLD LEADS

First, it's important to "pick up the rocks" to see if you can get any movement from people who have already inquired about the brand. These are leads that requested more information but fell off at some point and were labeled as "cold."

There are several reasons why leads may fall off, but often it's because the franchisor didn't give a clear Why You/Why Now — telling franchisee prospects what is happening with the brand and why they should care.

A newsletter is a great way to deliver the Why You/Why Now by driving cold leads into a piece of content on the brand's website. Other development tools that can be used to reignite interest in these cold leads are webinars, CRM retargeting or even fireside chats where executives chat with the prospect.

By building up these assets about the story that you're now deploying out to your cold leads, now you can get some insights. You can see who opened it, who clicked through to your website and who engaged with your content. While that might not be a giant list and most of them may be cold, a percentage of them might not have been ready to buy and now you're reengaging with them. Now your sales team can do follow up calls based on that data and hopefully, turn cold leads into active buyers. One of the hardest steps in franchising is getting a prospect to raise their hand and say they want to be a franchisee, so even if a "warm" lead turns cold, it is important to follow up.

Cold Lead Checklist:

- ☐ Deliver the Why You/Why Now in a newsletter.
- ☐ Create a webinar.
- ☐ Begin CRM retargeting.
- ☐ Launch fireside chats.

CURRENT FRANCHISEES

The biggest lead bucket in your franchise are your existing franchisees. Ask yourself: Are your current franchisees still hungry to grow? What are they saying about the brand? Are you giving them the tools they need to grow? Are your franchisees sharing info about their success to friends?

Franchisees sell franchises. Whether it is through a PR campaign, a validation phone call or digital content, having the right stories in place and aligning them with candidates is a major tool in the development process. If a franchisor can leverage the validation stories of those successful and passionate franchisees on the referral side, they will be able to build out content marketing materials and share them with those prospects.

Current Franchisee Checklist:

- ☐ Give your franchisees the tools they need to grow.
- ☐ Build data about franchisees within your system who are scaling to understand and share how they found success.
- ☐ Leverage franchisees to talk about how much they love the brand and why they love the brand.

FOUR-WALL MARKETING

Within the four walls of your operations, you're likely to find your next potential buyer. These are people who already have an affinity and love for the brand and who are much more likely to buy than those who have no reference for the concept.

To create development marketing assets that will reach these prospects, franchisors need to analyze the touchpoints that are connecting with customers on the ground. For example, it may be a van with a logo on it, a pamphlet that is sent out to customers post-service or even an invoice. Using these resources to reach prospective franchisees and drive leads can be a powerful way to find and educate those people who are only an inch away from investing in the brand. **A strong franchise development website**, especially one that is connected to the consumer site, can also be one of the most powerful tools in this regard.

Four-Wall Marketing Checklist:

- ☐ Use your own brick and mortar location as an advertising platform.
- ☐ Put a logo on your van.
- ☐ Send out post-service pamphlets.
- ☐ Include a logo and website on your invoice.
- ☐ Use your website to tell your brand's story.

LONG LEADS

Finally, it's essential to nurture long leads, or those qualified buyers who are currently in the pipeline and are looking at your category, but are also talking to competition. These leads are often brought in by franchise portals, which offer an easy-to-access database for candidates to find the brand. Many prospective franchisees turn to **franchise portals** to begin winnowing their search. According to **research done by Franchise Update Media** in 2019, nearly one in seven franchise leads (13.2%) come from portals. Still, while portals can bring a lot of leads, the infrastructure needs to be in place to drive those leads to conversions.

In order to create this infrastructure and stand out in the category, franchisors need to leverage **SEO and Google Analytics** and pay-per-click ads, as well as **social media and digital marketing**. There will also be leads on the farther side of the funnel that probably won't convert for six months to a year, but franchisors still need to give those prospects a reason to shift their career down the line.

Long-Lead Checklist:

- ☐ Utilize a franchise portal.
- ☐ Leverage SEO and Google analytics.
- ☐ Invest in social media and digital marketing.

Once franchisors have divided their leads into these categories and created the development marketing tools around them, it is time to deploy **drip campaigns** based on the individual prospect's behavior. Cold leads should be sent follow up materials, current franchisees should be informed about the desire for growth, leads within the four walls should be reached through marketing and long leads in the funnel should be convinced the concept is better than the competition.

By breaking down leads into these four categories and developing marketing tools in response, you'll be better able to deploy your budget in a way that is impactful to franchise growth and will take your brand to the next level.

09

USING YOUR FOUR WALLS TO EDUCATE BUYERS ABOUT YOUR FRANCHISE OPPORTUNITY



EVERYTHING ABOUT YOUR BUSINESS IS A MARKETING OPPORTUNITY, ESPECIALLY THE FOUR WALLS WITHIN YOUR BUSINESSES' PHYSICAL SPACE.

In franchise development, brands should always look under rocks and for pathways of least resistance – why? Franchising is freaking hard.

You are trying to convince someone to invest their life's savings, perhaps quit a job, take a leap, and own a brand where they really don't have control. Tough, right?

Where toughness decreases is within your four walls – in front of fans of your brand.

Look at your store or mobile truck. What story does it tell? Does it introduce the opportunity to be an owner/operator? Does it help you showcase the fact that someone has bought in?

Most brands simply rely on "franchising" or "franchises available", yet, many people don't even

know what that means. This creates an opportunity to leverage your franchise owners, their stories, and your brand's buzz/press to create additional interest in your opportunity.

HOW TO TELL YOUR FRANCHISE'S STORY THROUGH YOUR FOUR WALLS

When a client, customer or potential franchisee walks into one of your existing franchisee's units, what do you want them to see first? What do you want them to hear? How do you want them to feel? Have you educated them that this is an owner-operated business? All of these questions directly relate to your marketing.

Four-walls marketing is fairly simple conceptually, especially when it comes to franchise development. It's because it's simply about letting the people who interact with your business know that the franchise opportunity exists. And you have so many ways to do just that. Your candidates interact with you in countless ways, from the signs on the wall to the receipt they take home with them, to the email they receive about your next big sale. Each is an opportunity to educate them on the franchise opportunities with your brand.

And it's not just brick-and-mortar franchises that use a four walls approach to marketing. Service brands have ample opportunities to let their best customers know that they can have a deeper connection with the brand as an owner. Think of the wrap text on a van, a printed invoice or even a leave-behind pamphlet about franchise opportunities in strategic markets.

Each touchpoint between your brand and a potential franchisee is an opportunity to tell your franchise development story. Ask yourself what kind of owners are you looking for, what makes your brand stand out from the crowd and why do so many people in their community turn to the franchise as a path to business ownership?

Once you start connecting the markets that you want to get the greatest amount of scale in, you can start looking at your four walls a little bit differently and introduce franchising in a productive way.

CHECKLIST:

- ☐ Determine what you want people to see within your four walls.
- ☐ Tell that story with each touchpoint between your brand and potential candidates.
- ☐ Introduce franchising into your four walls.

10

HOW PR CAN ELEVATE YOUR FRANCHISE DEVELOPMENT MARKETING



CREATE AWARENESS AROUND YOUR BRAND TO ATTRACT HIGH-QUALITY LEADS WITH STRATEGIC PR EFFORTS DESIGNED TO TELL YOUR BRAND STORY AND KEEP YOU IN THE SPOTLIGHT.

Should you use public relations as part of your franchise development marketing strategy? The short answer is “absolutely.” But setting expectations is critical to your brand’s success. Doing so requires an accurate understanding of what PR is and, perhaps more importantly, what it isn’t.

PR is lead awareness, not lead generation. Introducing PR to your marketing plan doesn’t automatically mean you’ll sell 20 franchises the following week. But it will put your brand in the spotlight, boost credibility and increase traffic to your website, where you can generate leads.

So, what makes a good PR story, and how can we use that to elevate your franchise development marketing? Here are a few key points to help you create buzz that keeps your brand at the center of attention.

PR-WORTHY FRANCHISE STORIES & WHERE TO PITCH

Here are some franchise topics likely to pick up PR traction:

- **Signings:** Stories about new franchisees show you're growing as a brand and help introduce the brand to new markets.
- **Grand Openings:** Use openings as a moment to create excitement around the brand.
- **Existing Franchisee Stories:** Brands don't sell brands, people do. Get to know your franchisees, so you can use their stories to humanize the franchise and emphasize why these people bought into your brand.

Trade publications are great places to pitch your brand stories. Every industry has one, and these publications are usually one degree separated from your target audience.

National media, although typically more challenging to pitch successfully, is an important part of any PR strategy. Try to get into the national media on a quarterly basis. Giving your brand those "As Seen On" moments will have a positive impact on your credibility.

DECIDING TO USE PR FOR YOUR FRANCHISE BRAND

It's no question that PR has value in a franchise development marketing strategy. But maintaining a consistent presence in the press is critical to drive leads to your brand. Unsurprisingly, we've found that our clients' franchise leads increase when their name is in the press on a regular basis, and their leads decrease when the PR efforts stop.

Partnering with an agency like Mainland gives you access to experts and resources you might not have in house. Doing so equips you with a full team ready to strategically tell your story, amplify it and repeat over and over again to generate awareness and interest in your brand.

CHECKLIST:

- ☐ Put your brand in the spotlight with stories about signings, grand openings or existing franchisees.
- ☐ Boost credibility through media coverage in places like trade publications and national press.
- ☐ Increase traffic to your website, where you'll generate the most leads.

11

HOW CONTENT MARKETING CAN ELEVATE YOUR FRANDEV MARKETING



INTEGRATING CONTENT MARKETING INTO FRANDEV MARKETING IS ABOUT REACHING PROSPECTS WHO ARE MOST LIKELY TO TAKE ACTION IN A WAY THAT WILL HELP FRANCHISORS ACHIEVE THEIR GROWTH GOALS.

Content marketing is an essential tool in elevating franchise development marketing, and while many franchisors have nailed the creation of content, the marketing side remains a major gap.

Whether it be a franchise development website, blog or article, valuable assets often never make it to their target audience: franchisee prospects who are most likely to engage with a brand. A franchisor could create the most interesting piece of content in the world, but unless that blog happens to hit the prospect's news feed, they will never see it. Marketing is taking that content and hand-delivering it to the right people in the right markets.

When a franchisor is setting their franchise development goals, evaluating their progress and analyzing the success of their marketing, they can't overlook the importance of amplifying content. At Mainland, for example, we put franchise development content to work by amplifying it to the right audience through PR, earned, owned and paid assets, which greatly increases the likelihood of engagement.

AMP IT UP

Creating content isn't a one-and-done proposition. It is critical to put content in front of the right audiences at the right times and to keep the conversation going, whether it be through social media, drip campaigns, PR or pay-per-click. For example, AMPing is the process Mainland uses to enhance a client's platform on 1851 Franchise by targeting a brand's ideal audience and creating strategic content for that audience.

Each AMPD campaign is completely customizable and can be a blend of social, news and PPC ad buys designed to drive a long-term content marketing strategy that places content in front of a larger and more targeted audience to ensure that critical information about the business opportunity ends up in front of qualified leads. 1851 AMPD technology is unique in its ability to target a hyper-specific demographic, ensuring that brands are making the most of their investment and getting the content in front of the right set of eyes.

When integrated with a broader franchise development marketing strategy, these types of content marketing tools have the power to make a real difference for franchise brands looking to grow.

CHECKLIST:

- ☐ **Strategy:** Build a storytelling strategy that accurately reflects the brand's franchise development goals.
- ☐ **Owned:** Develop the copy, imagery and other content marketing assets to best tell the brand's stories.
- ☐ **Earned:** Take those stories and pitch them to the most relevant and far-reaching news and media outlets, including national news, trade publications, local media and digital influencers.
- ☐ **Paid:** Amplify the impact of those stories and media placements through digital advertising and other paid marketing.
- ☐ **Data:** Dig deep into the results of the campaign to gain insights on what stories and methods had the greatest impact.

12 USING COUNTER CONTENT TO OFFSET NEGATIVES IN THE BUYING PROCESS



HERE'S HOW TO CREATE “COUNTER CONTENT” TO ADDRESS ANY PROBLEMS BUYERS MIGHT HAVE IN THE SALES PROCESS.

Great content attracts buyers. It does not, however, guarantee that the buyer won't run into problems with your brand in the buying process.

That's where counter content comes into play. It allows you to satisfactorily address buyers' concerns while they're still researching your brand. The trick is to include other people's voices — not just the voice of your brand to help tell your story.

TURN THE NEGATIVES INTO POSITIVES

According to HubSpot, there are **three stages to the buyer's journey**: the Awareness Stage (where the buyer becomes aware of the problem/service they need assistance with), the Consideration Stage (where the buyer determines if you offer the best solution) and the Decision Stage (where you, the provider, become aware of the buyer's decision).

The real battle is in the consideration stage, where 60% of buyers are ready to connect with a sales representative, according to HubSpot's **2021 Sales Enablement Report**. You need to answer any questions your potential buyer has at this point through counter content by turning negatives into positives and to convince hesitant buyers that the investment in your brand is specifically positioned to overcome that specific concern.

LEARN FROM THE ONES THAT GOT AWAY

Let's say you're managing your sales process, and a buyer who is close to the finish line says, "You know what, I'm going to go in a different direction because of X."

But you thought you had it in the bag! No matter why your buyer hesitated, however, you can transform that negative into counter content that will make the buyer feel more comfortable in the sales process.

Counter content anticipates all of the reasons why someone would not buy and transforms them into positives. If you create counter content, you at least give yourself a fighting shot when the buyer is doing their research.

WHY COUNTER CONTENT IS EFFECTIVE

If you can recognize the potential landmines your buyers might face in the buying process, you can create counter content ahead of time that will offset any issues they might have.

Instead of buyers hearing you say, "Look, it really does work!", counter content shows examples of other people — people who used to be in the exact position of the buyer — talking about their success with the brand.

The result is an established, problem-free relationship with your prospects, which will allow your brand not only to grow, but grow with the right people.

CHECKLIST:

- ☐ Make a list of all the possible concerns or objections you hear from potential buyers who are considering your brand.
- ☐ Write down some of your best arguments for overcoming those concerns and the way that your brand is positioned to address each specific objection.
- ☐ Create a list of franchisees who had similar concerns but are now your success stories.
- ☐ Establish a platform — it can be a blog, newsletter, social media, video or other method — in which the current franchisee is able to tell their story, with particular emphasis on early concerns.

13 LOCAL VS. NATIONAL FRANCHISE MARKETING



WHILE THE DISTINCTION BETWEEN NATIONAL AND LOCAL MARKETING HAS BECOME BLURRED, A COMBINATION OF 75% LOCALIZED MARKETING AND 25% NATIONAL/CREDIBILITY-BASED MARKETING IS A SOLID RULE.

Today, successful franchise development marketing is about utilizing data and digital assets to create a localized, yet national campaign.

In the past, the national marketing process was centered around buying space in franchise trades and business trades — such as Entrepreneur Magazine — and creating a blanket ad campaign for the whole country. This would hopefully drive awareness and bring prospects from all over the country to the brand's development website.

Local marketing, on the other hand, used to be more of a hyper-local strategy in which brands would buy local newspaper ads or reach out to a chamber of commerce to help find an ideal buyer in a certain community.

In today's sophisticated digital world, franchisors can get very specific when it comes to the markets they are trying to expand into. So, they deploy the majority of their franchise development marketing budget into those local markets all across the country. In this way, brands can launch a national marketing campaign that's localized to specific target markets.

This is especially effective in markets that have already proven to be successful — franchisors can work in concentric circles, taking successful franchisees and maximizing their stories to drive more expansion in that individual market.

HOW BRANDS CAN LEVERAGE LOCAL AND NATIONAL MARKETING TO WIN

With this localized-national marketing strategy in mind, franchisors can start building out their digital assets accordingly. For example, in the world of franchise development websites, franchisors can specifically build out a whole landing page centered around the franchise opportunities and territory availability in Chicago. Then, when a prospect in Chicago visits the franchise development website, they will connect personally with the opportunity and feel confident that they are the right person for the job.

While there's no one equation that works for every brand, a combination of 75% localized marketing and 25% national/credibility-based marketing is a good rule of thumb to follow. That will help guide you in deploying an optimized balance between national and local marketing budgets.

CHECKLIST:

- ☐ Identify markets where a brand is trying to expand or where a brand has proven to be successful.
- ☐ Create digital assets, such as designated landing pages and franchisee validation content, based on those individual markets.
- ☐ Deploy 75% of the franchise development marketing budget towards driving awareness in those markets through PR, social media, digital content marketing, etc.
- ☐ Deploy the remaining 25% on generating national, credibility-boosting marketing. Dig deep into the results of the localized national campaign to gain insights on what stories and methods had the greatest impact.

14 HOW MAINLAND CAN TAKE YOUR FRANCHISE DEVELOPMENT MARKETING TO THE NEXT LEVEL



MAINLAND'S UNIQUE CONVEYOR-BELT APPROACH TO DIGITAL MARKETING COMBINES STRATEGY AND STORYTELLING TO HELP YOUR FRANCHISE GROW.

Choosing the right partners to help amplify your brand and attract the right franchisee candidates can be a challenge. There's a lot of trust involved in finding someone to represent your brand and tell its story in a unique way.

At Mainland — a full-service content marketing consultancy and technology solution — we're strategists. Our approach is designed to tell your story and accomplish your growth goals at the same time. So how can Mainland amplify your franchise development marketing? Let's dive in.

WHY MAINLAND? WHY NOW?

One of the most effective elements in our strategy is the Why You/Why Now. Why should anyone care about your brand, and why is it important right now? Answering these questions forms the foundation of how we tell your story and share it with the world.

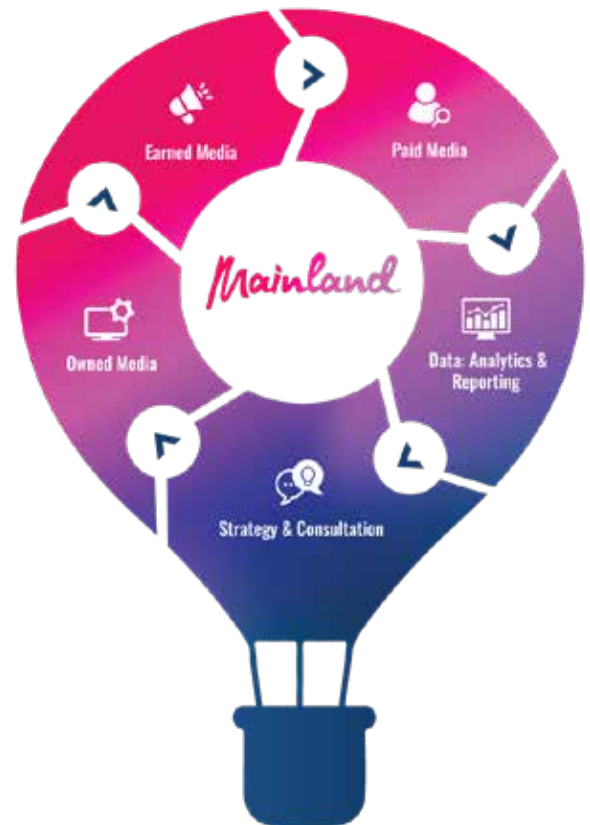
So, why Mainland? We dedicate ourselves to figuring out your Why You/Why Now so that we can build assets with purpose and set ourselves and your brand up for success. We'll ask about your goals and give you real data from the brands we're already working with to deploy on your behalf.

Why should you hire Mainland now? You're probably looking for ways to accelerate your franchise growth, but maybe you have a gap in your marketing plan preventing you from expanding. Mainland can be the partner you need to close that gap and help your brand start generating high-quality leads.

HOW WE DO IT: THE CONVEYOR BELT

Our **conveyor belt** approach allows us to create a comprehensive strategy that we can repeat over and over again to generate momentum for your brand. Here's how:

- **Strategy & Consultation:** This is where we establish brand positioning by answering the questions "why you?" and "why now?" We get to the bottom of this quickly through brainstorming, brand assessments, monthly coaching, sales and marketing strategies and more. The concept of Why You/Why Now is carried through every piece of content and every media opportunity to ensure we're always telling the best story.
- **Owned Media:** Now we get to work creating assets to share that story, such as written content, videos, social media and websites. We then position this content on our various channels and trade publications, like 1851Franchise.com.
- **Earned Media:** Armed with the right owned asset, our media relations team secures earned media coverage to add credibility while also creating a larger brand audience.
- **Paid Media:** We then give these stories a little push using paid digital marketing to expand viewership and engagement. We amplify the content through our proprietary system called AMPD — a blend of Facebook, LinkedIn, Google, retargeting and owned distribution.
- **Data, Analytics & Reporting:** Finally, we'll provide comprehensive data and analytics to help you better understand the ROI you're getting with us.



A TECHNOLOGY COMPANY REDEFINING CONTENT MARKETING

We've created custom publications (**1851 Franchise**, **ESTATENVY** and **Room 1903**) to feature best-in-class journalistic reporting on the news and issues affecting these specific industries.

Each brand that works with us has its own digital newsroom within our publications. A brand's digital newsroom is curated with content we've created to guide your franchise prospects through the sales funnel. Sharing your stories on these platforms automatically gives them the same trust, authority and readership that our publications have.

Every piece of content we create is SEO-optimized to attract the most relevant audience to your brand page, answer their questions and get them one step closer to buying a franchise.

WE WANT TO BE YOUR LAST AGENCY

The bottom line: Mainland is designed to be your last consultant. The investment we make alongside you makes us a partner, not a vendor.

Mainland isn't competing against other franchise agencies. We're at another level. Our account team works in tandem with executive sponsors across our accounts, while our digital team is removed from the process and always follows through to provide the freshest content. It's a seamless process that allows Mainland to function at the highest level, untouched by any other agency.

CHECKLIST:

- ☐ Begin with a strategy meeting to clearly define your brand's Why You/Why Now.
- ☐ Share your story through owned assets like content on our publications, videos, social media and websites.
- ☐ Secure earned media coverage to add credibility and build your audience.
- ☐ Give this coverage a boost with paid media.
- ☐ Provide continuous data analytics to better understand your ROI.



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