

Flawed Strategic Thinking That Drives Serious Franchisee Leads to Disqualify Brands

The leading reason we've found driving serious leads to disqualify brands is a lack of strategic thought, time and attention given to various aspects of franchisee recruitment. As an industry, franchisee recruitment methodology is mired in tactics over 25-years old. It takes serious reflection and change for brands to adapt to emerging 21st Century franchise buyers and their very different expectations.

Here are five inter-related company cultural and brand strategic issues that, if ignored, cause serious leads to disqualify your brand from consideration.

1. Recognize franchisee recruitment is a business in its own right

As they begin to scale, brands often struggle with franchisee recruitment. That's because the knowledge and experience to do it well aren't part of the operations or customer excellence skill sets of most owners and investors.

Franchisee recruitment is actually a business within a business. Recognizing this, and then properly staffing, funding and executing around a set of realistic goals can put you on a pathway to success.

Unfortunately, too many brands often try to fix a faltering franchisee recruitment program with band-aids; neglecting the thought needed to find the root causes of problems, not just surface symptoms.

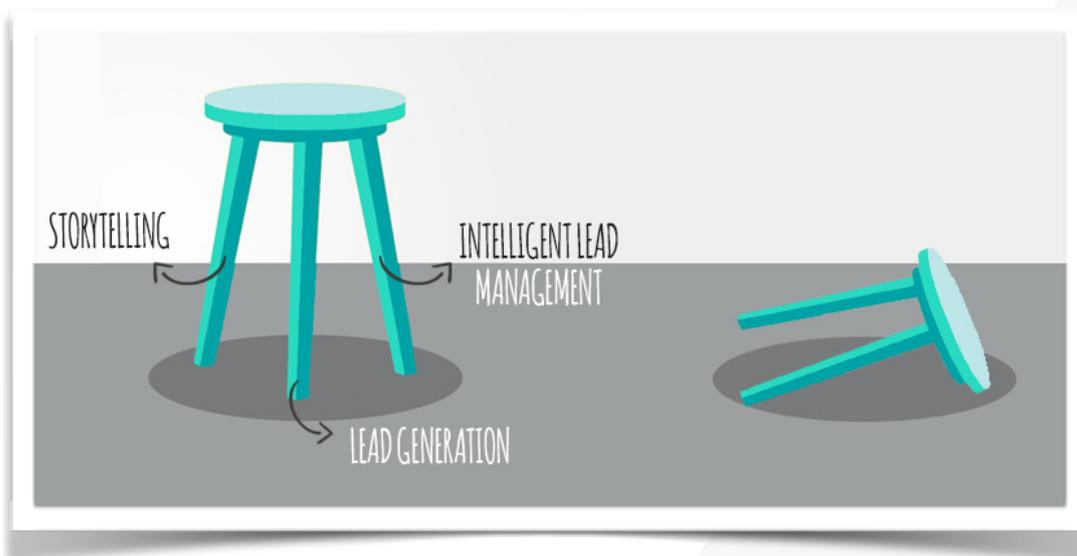
Why...because it's easy. Tactical solutions make everyone feel good. "Look what we're doing." In fact, re-imagining a 21st Century version of franchisee recruitment requires digging deeper.

To meet the challenge, brands must harmonize three strategic areas critical to franchisee recruitment:

- ▶ **Storytelling**
- ▶ Finding and Nurturing Serious Leads
- ▶ Intelligent Lead Management

Think of each of these areas as a leg on a stool. If the legs aren't aligned, then the stool teeters and totters making it useless.

Do nothing and watch serious leads disqualify you.



2. Inertia Kills Brands

Many brands become paralyzed by the breadth and depth of change needed to adapt to the changing macro environment of franchisee recruitment. The smaller the brand, the more daunting the challenges.

Smaller brands aren't often blessed with tens of thousands of dollars laying around to "experiment" or try something new; so, fear stifles decision-making.

But time kills deals. Time also kills brands unwilling to adapt. It's time to step up and either hire or develop the skills to upgrade franchisee recruitment methodologies. The market isn't waiting. Brands that grab an early mover advantage will prosper; while laggards will fall by the wayside.

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3. Lack of Expertise

The skill sets needed to address both franchisee recruitment technology and people's evolving behavior isn't sitting across the room in most brands. Many brands have consumer marketing pros or agencies supporting franchisees. However, these same highly-talented people are inexperienced in the "black arts" of franchisee recruitment and the psychological journey a serious lead embarks on in the Internet Age. You hired them to drive traffic into your stores and restaurants; not recruit franchisees.

Giving franchisee recruitment insufficient support or forcing recruiters to work with meager lead generation budgets or whatever software is around or cheap is commonplace.

That's a lazy approach and speaks to a lack of understanding of how to successfully grow a franchisee recruitment powerhouse.

Ownership and leadership need to step up and either acquire or outsource the knowledge needed to reliably scale the business.

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4. The Internet Upends Traditional Notions of Franchisee Recruitment

Every generation from 1995 forward has been reshaped by the Internet. Consumers complete almost 75% of brand research for high-end goods and services on the web before making a call or a visit. Your storytelling needs to meet a higher standard of excellence or these serious leads will disqualify you. So, ask yourself, do we tease, do we hide information or do we educate on our website?

Text messaging has rapidly changed the franchisee recruitment communication landscape. Today's serious leads comfortably text back and forth with your recruiter before engaging. What does that do to old-fashioned "dialing for dollars" models?

Your brand franchise website is now expected to tell your whole story. It's not just a brochure anymore or a link from your consumer website. This forces brands to dig deeper to articulate their competitive differentiation. A test: if you can put your brand name on a competitor's website, then something's wrong.

All brands are coming to grips with ever rising lead generation costs. Can we harness the vast potential of social media and online advertising to create an affordable qualified prospect? Can these newer channels become a game changer or just more expensive channels to get leads? How do these leads convert compared to other channels? Stay tuned.

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5. Leads Now Have the Power

Leads control the research process. In fact, 75% of their research is already done before first contact. Serious leads expect complete and transparent information about brands. So, a solid story and a dedicated franchisee recruitment website are now table stakes with serious leads. These serious leads engage when they're ready; not before. So you encourage them to do that by delivering a brand education experience that gets them emotionally and rationally invested in your franchise opportunity.

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Franchise Pipeline Solutions (FPS) automates finding you serious franchisee leads. Guaranteed.