

THREE WAYS TO STAND OUT AMONG COMPETITION



Chad Altier

With thousands of franchising options available, it's common for there to be similar, competing concepts within any given industry.

When considering a franchise in which to invest, don't give in to a big fish just because they're taking up the most space in the pond. The little fish

can pack a major punch against their competition when solid systems are in place and executed properly. No matter your decision, it's important to select a franchise that best aligns with your goals as an entrepreneur.

If you decide to go with one of the smaller players, you'll need to determine how to drive awareness to your business and positively stand out amongst the competition. This can be done by aligning yourself with a brand willing to support you from the start, adding value to your product or service, and focusing on customer service.


Pick a Brand That Will Support You

As a franchisee, it's important to select a brand capable of supporting you from the onset – regardless of its size. While you're your own boss, one major benefit of joining a franchise system is having the franchisor there to fall back on for guidance and support. A good franchisor should offer ongoing training and help you overcome any obstacles encountered in building your franchise.

Training programs and support systems are important to consider when selecting a franchise as they are crucial to your business success, especially if you're one of the smaller players in an industry. The level of assistance varies with each franchisor, so think about your quintessential level of support, and ensure it matches what your franchisor can provide.

Add Value to Your Product or Service

Once your franchise is open, hit the ground running and try not to focus on the competitive nature of the business. Did a larger competitor come to town? Don't worry – make what you do even better and find your niche in the community. Do this by creating new customers rather than stealing from the competition. Advertising, networking, referrals, and strategic alliances are all ways to drive new customers to your business. Be at the forefront of market growth. You are in control of your business and your success. Let your competitors worry about catching up with you.



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In today's business environment, the ability to add value to your product or service is an absolute necessity, as it's important to your customer. Don't just replicate what your competitor is doing and cut the price. Instead, add value. This can be done through quality, design, speed and high standards of excellence. The problem with only selling for price is that it'll prevent you from having any degree of high margin sales, and that's where your profitability, long term growth and success live. Rather than arguing how your product or service is different, add value to it and showcase that value to your customers. Adding value requires creativity, innovation and a willingness to out-work the competition. Selling the way you always have will allow the price to rule, and you'll probably find your competitor passing you up by adding value.

Maybe you and your competitor offer the same value for your product or service, but they're not marketing their value. Take advantage of that absence and own it in yours. Even though it's not different, if you're the one advertising that value, customers will notice. Go above and

beyond customer expectations, and stand behind everything you do for them. It'll pay off for you and your business.

Focus on Customer Service

For smaller players in a big industry, customer service will make or break your business. It needs to live at the top of your business' priority list, and every sale or service must be tailored to the customer's liking. It's difficult to cater to every person's individual needs, but knowing your business' niche market will allow for success. Know who your customer is, and always strive to exceed their expectations.

Specifically in the service industry, customer service is of the utmost importance. Instead of selling a product, the "sale" is the service performed. As a service provider, your customers will expect you to have the solution to their problem. Thus, it's important to equip your employees with the knowledge to provide clear, helpful answers to customers.

When someone performing a service does an inadequate job, the issue is likely his or her skills or abilities. Service providers should be able to separate themselves from the work they do so as to properly and fairly address problems and concerns.

Getting into an industry where there is established competition is nothing to sweat. Choosing to invest in a franchise simply because it's the biggest player doesn't guarantee you'll be successful. Do your research, and consider your options and what's important to you. Once you get your business up and running, focus on making it stand out as best you can.

Chad Altier is CEO and co-founder of iDropped. A mobile device repair company, iDropped repairs damaged iPhones, iPads, iPods, Galaxy devices and laptop computers. As technology advances, the company strives to adapt and continually learn device repairs. iDropped is committed to providing the best service, quality products and repairs and offers a one year guarantee on all parts and labor. iDropped was founded in 2012 and is currently seeking franchise partners to develop in the Northeast part of the U.S.

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