



# 10 MUST-HAVES *when choosing a* FRANCHISE MARKETING AGENCY

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We know that you have a lot on your plate as a franchisor! Not only do you have to be focused on running a profitable business, providing top notch customer service, and attracting potential franchisees, but you're also expected to promote your franchise through marketing and public relations.

The most significant concern for any growing franchise brand is to ensure that your marketing effort is simultaneously targeting potential franchisees as well as potential customers while maintaining a unified brand message.

In order to provide top quality products or services to your customers, you have to have franchisees to distribute these products or services locally. And to get franchisees, you have to (you guessed it) market your franchise.

**When choosing a digital marketing agency**, it is vital that you select a firm that understands your unique business needs and works to custom-tailor a marketing plan that meets your brand's objectives and aligns with your message. Ultimately, a franchise marketing agency should **focus on six areas of your franchise development strategy**:



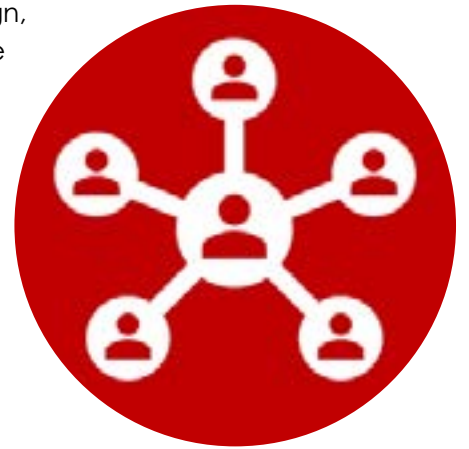
1. Confirm your goals
2. Conduct competitive research and analysis
3. Understand your audience(s)
4. Craft a message
5. Validate your position in the marketplace
6. Generate qualified leads

**This e-book highlights ten key things to look for when choosing a digital marketing agency for your franchise.**

look for a company that

## **UNDERSTANDS FRANCHISING** NOT JUST BUSINESS

From public relations to SEO to social media to graphic design, there's no shortage of marketing companies that are a mere click away. While agencies provide the aforementioned services, there are unique aspects to franchise marketing that require specialization. While most businesses are only interested in targeting future customers or clients, franchisors have to think about not just marketing to potential customers, but also to potential franchisees. While a local business may develop a hyper-localized strategy that works great in their target market, franchisors also have to think about whether or not the strategy will be replicable in their franchisees' markets.



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## **UNDERSTANDS YOUR BUYERS' JOURNEYS**

As mentioned in the first item, selling a franchise is a lot different than selling a menu item, a gym membership, or even a high-ticket B2B agreement. The journey from potential interest to new franchisee is a long one. You need a franchise marketing agency that understands how to get prospects' attention during the Awareness Stage, how to build rapport and gain trust in the Consideration Stage, and how to present relevant information in the Decision Stage.

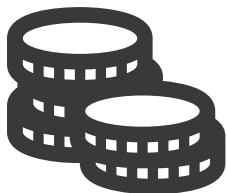
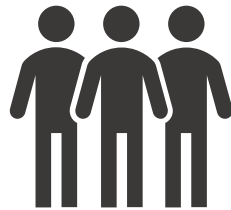




*look for a company that can*

## **DEVELOP YOUR BUYER PROFILE**

Just like no franchise system is the same as others, neither is any franchisee candidate just like another. However, in order to market to a certain buyer, you must be able to articulate what a particular buyer's persona looks like. A potential franchisee buyer profile for a kickboxing franchise will look very different than that of a home healthcare franchise. A good marketing agency should be able to define key traits of your target buyer: demographics, motivating factors, pain points, online habits, and what constitutes value when selecting a franchise. For some buyers, the potential for growth is more important than an established brand name, but for others, minimizing the risk level might be the ultimate deciding factor.



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## CRAFT A KNOCKOUT MESSAGE

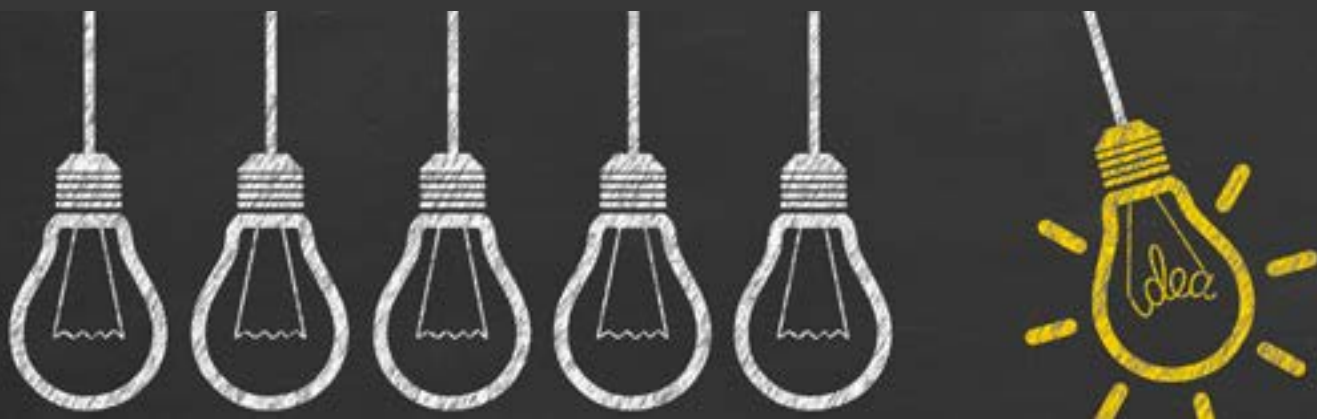


Understanding your target buyer persona is the first step in crafting the message that will ultimately drive your target audience to the call to action, which is to inquire for more information. Undoubtedly you probably have a wealth of information about your franchise, but crafting a message goes beyond facts and statistics -- it must be personal so that buyers take notice and act. Your marketing agency should be able to make the message about the buyer, not about your company. **The message should achieve the following objectives:**

- Provide solutions to problems or pain points
- Explain benefits vs. features (What's in it for the buyer?)
- Highlight key differentiators
- Offer examples and illustrate results (such as successes of current franchisees)

## THE FINAL STEP

*is to strategically apply the message consistently across all channels and ultimately lead to a call to action (typically a form on your website).*





## *look in the company's* **DIGITAL TOOLBOX**

No matter what industry your franchise is in, digital content is crucial in marketing your brand. A good marketing agency should take the time to assess the design, development, and content of your current franchise website and provide a list of recommendations. They should also be able to craft a digital marketing plan using tools such as SEO, social media publishing, digital content (such as blogs, videos, and other interactive multimedia), PPC, and more to develop a customized lead capture strategy that sparks interest and creates an urgent call to action. **Some key strategies that will play a crucial role in your customized digital marketing campaign include the following:**

- Well-optimized website
- Content that solves the searcher's query
- Engaging email campaigns
- Effective ad design
- Well-designed landing pages
- An integrated remarketing campaign
- Effective social media advertising

## *look for an* **SEO/PPC/SOCIAL MEDIA EXPERT**

The agency should develop a search engine PPC and social media ad program, launch it, and measure and refine the campaigns with the goal to optimize over time. In addition to developing an engaging and effective social media advertising campaign that targets many of your audience members where they are online, your marketing agency should craft a local link building/SEO plan and geo-targeted PPC ads in order to establish your competitive presence online.



# LOOK FOR *an agency with* **INTEGRATED PR CAPABILITIES**

Public relations is one of the most underutilized methods to attract new franchisees, and few franchisors understand the very specific (and often tricky) PR process, which involves everything from creating content to targeting media outlets to securing coverage. Our research has shown that if a prospect Googles your franchise name and does not see current content and the free publicity of being featured in news stories, he or she is three times as likely to end their search right there and then. A good marketing agency should be able to craft standout PR pieces to garner media placements, which in turn, target, attract, and drive your target audience to your brand and ensure that your franchise stays current and relevant in local, national, and industry-specific media. **Some examples of PR-related tasks that your marketing agency should be able to handle include the following:**

- Develop/review key message document(s)
- Develop online press kits/press releases/other media materials
- Develop target media lists
- Create strategic pitches for key audiences
- Drive the conversation through proactive vs. reactive strategic media efforts
- Look for ways to leverage key influencers and spokespeople
- Position key messaging in paid media opportunities
  - Wire distribution of press releases
  - Audio news releases
  - Radio market tours
- Integrate ongoing outreach to bloggers, social media and content
- Pitch and follow up with media outlets



# LOOK FOR A CRAFTSMAN NOT A COOKIE CUTTER

Selecting the right media mix is by far the most important aspect of franchise marketing. While none of the franchise marketing tools are extremely complicated in their own right, the trick is putting them together -- without spending 23 hours a day working on marketing. However, there is no one-size-fits-all solution when it comes to franchise marketing. As a franchisor, you need to make sure that even before the agency begins their sales pitch or describes their services, that they demonstrate that they understand your needs. No matter how big or small a franchise is, it is crucial to work with a franchise marketing agency that can help you pick, choose, and prioritize your strategies and customize a plan that focuses on sustainable growth and a lasting brand impact.



## *choose an agency that* **MEASURES EFFORTS** **AND EMPHASIZES RESULTS**

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- Where are our strongest leads coming from?
- Are efforts generating sufficient traffic?
- Is the traffic motivating leads to learn more?
- Based on sales feedback (connection rate, financial qualifications), is the audience correct?
- What is the cost per lead per channel?
- What is our ROI?





## LOOK FOR A LEADER

Franchising a business can be both rewarding and exhausting at the same time. While no marketing company can add an hour (or ten!) to the day, the company should be committed to making the most of your time and getting you maximum exposure and to get your messages across to the people who matter. A good marketing agency will take the time to dig in and get to know you. From performing in-depth SWOT analyses to on-site meetings to setting goals, a marketing company should completely immerse itself in your brand and then use their knowledge and expertise to lead you on the journey of growth and success.

## TOPFIRE MEDIA HAS THE TOOLS

Whether your concern is name recognition, securing customers or franchisees, winning social shares, or enhancing your brand reputation, TopFire Media has the tools, the experience, and the contacts to create a customized program that fits your brand and budget.

**To learn more, call 708-249-1090 or complete the form.**