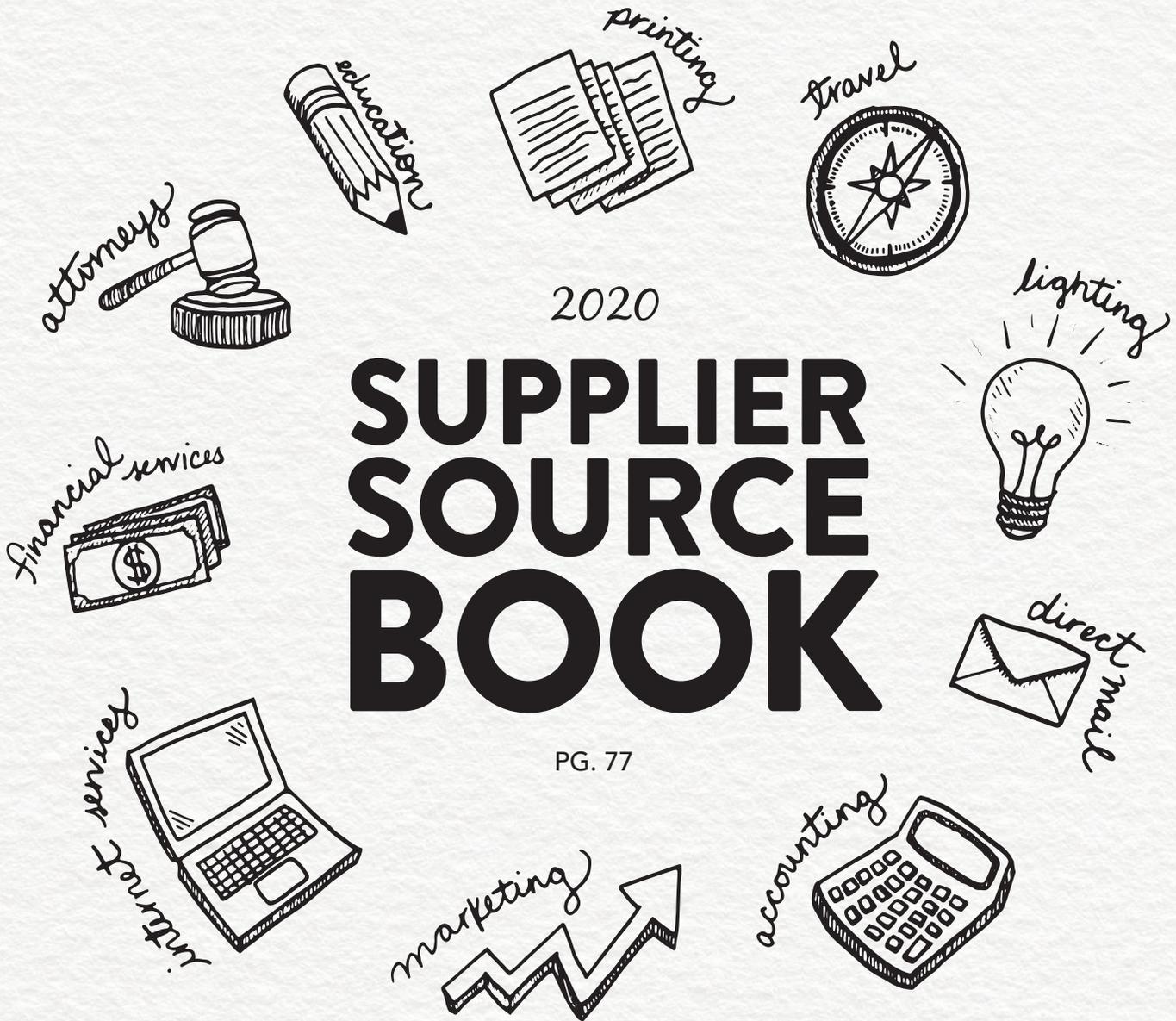


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WHY INTERNATIONAL EXPANSION IS KEY FOR CHILDREN'S FRANCHISES

By Bette Fetter, Young Rembrandts



So, you've found the "secret sauce" — a thoughtful and meticulous formula that's made your business the success it is today. You built on this success when you decided to franchise your concept and now, your company has dozens, maybe hundreds of units across the country. While it's easy to continue to follow this mode of operation, you aren't satisfied with relying on what's already worked — you're looking to spice up the sauce.

The thought of franchising internationally is intimidating, even for a business that's doing well in its home market. While it does present new challenges, entering the global sector is an extremely valuable way to expand your franchise opportunity by leveraging the pool of consumers, talent and knowledge in a foreign country.

In 1988 when I founded Young Rembrandts, I never thought that 31 years and nearly 100 franchise units later, the team and I would be opening our first franchise location in India and bringing our step-by-step drawing process to children in Mumbai. Below, we will talk through three elements of international expansion: The benefits of going global, finding the ideal master

franchisee and why international expansion is key for children's franchises.

The Benefits Of Expanding Internationally

The obvious benefit of global expansion is that your business is exposed to a larger market, meaning you have the opportunity to bring your program, product or service to a region where it might not exist. For example, Young Rembrandts franchisees Rachna Jain and Puja Mallik, who co-own their location in Maharashtra, Mumbai, were drawn to the brand because they felt the concept filled a void in their area.

"Our daughters participate in a lot of after school activities, so when we came across Young Rembrandts, Puja and I were immediately intrigued. We recognized the need for a program like Young Rembrandts in India," said Jain.

Another benefit to international expansion is the breadth of knowledge you will receive from operating a location in another country. It's easy to get stuck in the same line of thinking when all of your franchise units are in the U.S. Incorporating ideas inspired by different cultures will add a freshness to your domestic units and allow your brand to evolve beyond its previously defined limits. Your international franchise owners will also provide a vast amount of knowledge, as they'll be the people on the ground at your new locations.

Finding The Perfect Fit

When we began entertaining the idea of international expansion at Young Rembrandts, we knew our initial focus had to be on choosing the right person for the job. We needed a master franchisee — someone who had the capacity to operate at least one unit



growing, is a fairly new concept. When another country is interested in investing in a franchise like Young Rembrandts, it's a reflection of the growth in that region.

There was a time when children's education was not the priority. In the U.S., it wasn't even required for children to attend elementary school until 1918. As of recent, we've had a higher demand for western education programs in foreign countries, which is a positive indicator of the education level in those countries. It's one thing to invest in your educational system, but another to bring in additional development programs like Young Rembrandts that take a historically untraditional route to early childhood development.

By expanding children's franchises on a global scale, you have the ability to sculpt the next generation of leaders. For our team at Young Rembrandts, our ultimate goal is to help children develop the skills they need to be successful. At the end of the day, international growth increases the number of children we are able to positively impact, making it one of the best decisions a children's franchise concept can make. 🌍

successfully before building a team of sub-franchisees. They had to have the characteristics of a traditional franchise owner, a keen understanding of their local market and lucrative business practices. They were going to test the parameters for Young Rembrandts in their country, and on top of that, would become the home office and main source of support for in-country franchisees.

In addition to being business-minded, this person had to be our biggest cheerleader. If we were going to enter an intercontinental business partnership, we had to know that the franchisee had a genuine passion for helping children and advancing the arts. It needed to be someone who would bring on similarly enthusiastic people to expand our brand in that country and would make Young Rembrandts an integral part of early childhood education.

The Journey Itself

U.S.-based restaurant concepts have been franchising internationally for years, and it's no surprise that food dominates the franchise industry. The children's activity industry, while



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