

# Sister act



## Encouraging Women into Franchising is addressing the imbalance between men and women in the franchise industry

**D**uring the past decade there has been a significant imbalance between the number of men and women in franchising. The NatWest/British Franchise Association survey recently highlighted that women now account for just 23 per cent of franchisees in the UK. The survey also revealed that over the last two years only 17 per cent of new franchisees have been women.

With lower levels of risk involved than traditional start-up businesses, franchising is a viable option for women who are looking to build a more financially secure and rewarding lifestyle for themselves.

### Options for all

There are many different types of franchises for women to choose from. Some will allow franchisees to build

businesses around their children and family lives, whereas others are full-time and involve managing teams of staff. In franchising, there's a type of business opportunity to suit everyone's needs.

Many women also possess ideal franchisee traits. They excel in the same skills as men due to the nature of their home life and working experience, so why are so few women choosing to become franchisees? Is there a way to help more women enjoy the rewards of being a business owner?

Encouraging Women into Franchising, established in 2008, aims to support women who are looking for a route into the franchise industry. Its remit is threefold:

- To encourage women to consider buying a franchise.

- To encourage businesswomen to franchise their existing operations.
- To help franchisors attract more women to their networks.

EWIF is a not-for-profit organisation run entirely by volunteers who provide advice and guidance to anyone wanting to become part of the franchise industry. By providing advice to help prospective franchisees identify the type of franchise they would be most suited to and explaining what is involved in becoming a franchisee, EWIF is looking to change the face of the franchise sector.

### EWIF Awards

It also organises events throughout the year to enable women to come together and share their ideas. The EWIF Awards is the organisation's

The EWIF Awards ceremony takes place on May 24 at the NatWest Building, 280 Bishopsgate, London. Visit [www.ewif.org](http://www.ewif.org) for more information.



wasn't expecting to win. It felt amazing to actually win the award. It was so nice for me and my team to get recognition for all the hard work we put in.

"I'm very focused on support and systemisation, so I ensure we always help our franchisees in whatever way we can. They may own their own businesses, but I want to ensure they feel part of a family. I'm passionate about making it as easy for them as possible and this includes developing a bespoke customer management system."



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Woman Franchise Employee of the Year 2015 Award. She is passionate about her job and works hard to help the franchise grow and develop.

"It was wonderful to win the award and be recognised for the hard work I put in for a company I love," Rebecca says. "I don't do the work for the recognition, I do it because I believe in diddi dance and want nothing more than to help the franchise grow and expand as best it can."

"To know what I am doing could win me an award is a great accomplishment. I would like to think I won the award because of the passion I have for diddi dance."

"I work all hours to keep customers, franchisees and head office happy and believe that showed both in my application for the award and in the work I do every day." **WF**

### Employee achievements

The EWIF Awards also celebrate the achievements of female franchise employees, who work tirelessly to support their networks.

In 2015 Rebecca Dushcl, who's employed by diddi dance, won the

biggest event and brings together the most successful women in the franchise industry in order to celebrate and recognise their successes.

This year will be the sixth annual EWIF Awards and, once again, NatWest is the lead sponsor. For the first time, EWIF has opened the awards up to men as well as women. Men are now welcome to enter the Service Provider of the Year Award, which recognises their contribution in encouraging more women into franchising and their services in the industry.

Jenni Bradford from Professor Poopenshtinken's Magical Maths won the New Woman Franchisor of the Year 2015 Award. Her business has expanded during the last few years and always goes the extra mile to support its franchisees.

"When I found out I was nominated for the award, I was over the moon," Jenni says. "I was up against some other phenomenal businesswomen, so I

