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NEXT GENERATION IN FRANCHISING



Healthy Choices

Massage Addict franchisee Jordan Fox blends health and wealth for business success

BY GINA MAKKAR

With an entrepreneurial spirit and a desire to make a positive impact without the confines of traditional nine-to-five environments, the new generation of business owners are leaving their mark on franchising.

Jordan Fox is one such entrepreneur. When he graduated from the D'Arcy Lane Institute of Massage Therapy in London, Ontario, he knew he wanted to open a multidisciplinary clinic that would offer massage alongside a variety of health services. After practicing for several years, he began researching options, and learned that Massage Addict, a nationally recognized franchise brand with an anchor in massage, was expanding its offerings to include reflexology for a multidisciplinary approach. He was intrigued. "I knew that was just the beginning," says Fox.

He approached Massage Addict about starting a franchise location in his local town of Essex, Ontario, and learned that an established clinic was available in Windsor, 20 minutes from home. He knew it was meant to be.

A system that's got your back

Fox says he chose franchising because he wanted to capitalize on seven years of massage therapy experience by partnering with a proven and successful concept that would allow him to expand his skill set. Massage Addict was just what he was searching for, having grown and evolved to include new and exciting treatments that reflected the multidisciplinary approach Fox wanted.

Armed with the right industry experience, Fox sought out a financial partner with business knowledge to help springboard his success. He approached his parents, Steve and Victoria Fox, 30-year veterans of their own financial planning business. "I needed a financial partner, and they were looking for smart investments." He presented his parents with a business plan, and in September 2018, he became the owner of Massage Addict in Windsor. Not long after, he expanded and opened a second location in Tecumseh. "I've always had the support of Steve and Victoria when I needed it, although their primary focus continues to be their financial planning business," he says.

As it did for so many business owners, initially the COVID-19 pandemic clipped the wings of Fox's business. Four months of closed doors created stress and uncertainty, and he says there were days when it was difficult to remain hopeful. "Thankfully, having the support of the franchisor made things much easier. We kept our heads up, used the time to clean, organize, and freshen up the clinic with some paint and deep cleaning. We kept in constant communication, supporting our teams and helping them navigate their own challenges of the pandemic. This strengthened our relationships and brought us even closer together."



Massage Addict quickly adapted its concept by creating content for both clients and therapists that could be accessed remotely, such as stretching routines and tips to bolster health after remaining at home and indoors for an extended length of time. In addition, Massage Addict partnered with Dexterity Professional Development to provide free, and unlimited access to an online repository of learning modules which allowed therapists to remain active and expand their knowledge and skill set from home, positioning them for greater success when the restrictions eased, and they returned to work.

Despite the challenges initially created by the pandemic, Fox's Windsor clinic continued to grow, with all six treatment rooms in constant use. When the unit next door became vacant, he quickly jumped at the opportunity to expand the footprint and double the capacity to accommodate the growing clientele. "This allowed us to overcome the limited space without having to move locations," he notes.

Healthy growth

Along with the success of the Windsor clinic, Fox and his team have been enthusiastic about the continued milestones the brand is achieving.

Massage Addict opened its 100th location in 2020 at the height of the pandemic, and continues to grow across Canada, with noted expansion plans in British Columbia, Alberta, and Quebec. As the pandemic wound down, a renewed interest in self-care became a primary focus for the pandemic-weary as they looked for ways to manage pain, stress, and anxiety.

"We've been able to celebrate many milestones with Massage Addict, such as the addition of acupuncture and chiropractic services," says Fox. "It's been an abso-



lute pleasure growing with Massage Addict in becoming a multidisciplinary clinic. We're now proud to offer massage therapy, acupuncture, chiropractic care, and reflexology."

Of the many benefits of becoming a Massage Addict franchisee, Fox says one of the most integral is the support of the system. "It helps guide you through the challenges you're going to face, and their model is proven to be successful, with over one hundred locations." Fox says he sees the brand's growth not only in terms of size, but diversity as well. "I see the business growing and become even more stable by having multiple revenue streams and continuing to expand the services we offer."

It helps that as seasoned professionals, the franchisor team has often already encountered and developed solutions to navigate and overcome challenges that arise and can quickly provide proven solutions. "It's kind of like artificial intelligence. It's a system that continues to learn and grow, getting more efficient and smarter the longer it exists," says Fox.

While his massage therapy training focused on providing safe and effective treatments, Fox says, it didn't equip him with the skills for building business success. The franchise system helped close that gap by providing the framework and guidance needed, marrying the best of both worlds. Through monthly calls with a franchise business consultant, Fox reviews and identifies areas that need improvement and develops strategies to put plans into action.

With support in place, Fox can continue to grow his business while practicing the massage therapy that he loves and collaborating with like-minded individuals. Even more support comes from other franchisees within the system, who share their experiences and best practices with one another. "It's an amazing feeling to be able to support new franchisees and have the support of franchisees that have more experience than I do."

A new generation of wellness providers

As a young person working within a franchise system, Fox says the experience has provided many learning opportunities that often present themselves as challenges. "There are lots of areas where I didn't have experience in dealing with challenging situations. This is where the franchise system provides support or the opportunity to learn and grow. Having the support of a franchise allows me to overcome most of the business challenges that I may not have thought of."

The success doesn't stop after the doors open. In addition to providing massage therapy care, Fox often spends his days building relationships with RMTs, acupuncturists, chiropractors, reflexologists, and other health professionals. He also frequently evaluates the business to identify successes and improvements to ensure that he continues to foster a positive work environment and provide the best in care to clientele.

Fox's advice for potential franchisees? Trust the system. "It's a system that's already proven to be successful. You have a team to help you learn and guide you along the way."

He adds that building strong relationships and listening to and actioning feedback from the team and the franchisor is critical to success. "Work hard for your team, and they will work hard for you," he says. He also suggests providing feedback to the franchisor. "Diversity is crucial, and everyone brings something unique to the table. Your feedback can help the brand grow and will likely benefit many people!" 🍁



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Massage Addict

