

YOUR GUIDE TO SELECTING A **FRANCHISE**

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A close-up portrait of Mark Kendall, a middle-aged man with short brown hair and blue eyes, wearing a light blue button-down shirt under a dark suit jacket. He is looking directly at the camera with a slight smile. The background is blurred, showing what appears to be an office or workshop setting.

**"Owning a
Signs Express
franchise has
been the
best move
I've made."**

Mark Kendall - Signs Express, Southampton

"I have pride and satisfaction as my own boss with the added benefit of being part of a national brand. Through training and support I am able to focus on growing my business and have the flexibility to spend time with my family and enjoy life!"

You're making some big decisions.

- What excites you?
- What is affordable?
- What support will you get?

At Signs Express we can't make the decision for you but we can offer our help and expertise to make sure it is the right one for you.

A GREAT START





A GREAT START

You already recognise the advantages of owning a franchise. Unlike starting your own business you have the benefits of an established brand name, a structured process to help you on your way and proven communication to drive customers to your door.

The question is of course: Which franchise? Committing your life and resources to a new business is both an exciting and daunting prospect. It may be your first time running a company or working in an unfamiliar industry, so it is important you select a franchise which is well proven, the training thorough and supports you not just in the early days but for the years ahead.

With over 20 years of successful trading and more than 70 centres covering 90 territories in the UK and Ireland, we can offer you the ideal introduction into running your own Signs Express franchised business. Our training team will give you the confidence and capability to manage every aspect of your new business. Our location specialists will ensure you are happy with a new area or help you to make the most of an existing one.

By joining Signs Express as a franchisee you will have entered the world of signs and graphics. Our business offers creativity and variety to you and your customers.

YOUR FUTURE & A TYPICAL DAY



YOUR FUTURE

Starting a business often means trying to second guess what is to come. Even the best plans are altered by events so Signs Express can reassure potential franchisees by putting the proper processes and support mechanisms in place.

It is a long term commitment. Over 70% of our centres have been open for 10 years, so we can offer you some long term reassurances too.

The very nature of the signs and graphics business means your projects could extend from a simple van graphic to a rebrand across 100 buildings & locations. As your business becomes more established, so does the potential to generate larger clients and higher earnings; whether recruited centrally via our national account programme or via your own local customer base.

Your premises can become an investment too, a tangible asset that can form a part of your own pension planning. Further on, if you decide to optimise the value of your business and sell it as a going concern, Signs Express also has a wealth of experience in the resale process.

Your future will still depend on you. Your drive and determination, belief in your abilities and enthusiasm for hard work coupled with your man management skills and business awareness. You also recognise that Signs Express has a reputation founded on the expertise of every centre and its owner. We work with you to make the best decisions by supplying the information and insight you need.



YOUR TYPICAL DAY

There are very few businesses like the Signs Express business. Your days will be very varied.

Your day may start with a telephone call, or an enquiry from our website that generates 1000's of enquiries per year. A factory needs new health and safety signs and the directional signage is out of date. A school is desperate for temporary signs and banners for an open day. A local plumber's van needs a graphic. A hospital needs new door nameplates. A restaurant requires window graphics and a new pavement sign. Graphics as large as a building down to the size of a post it note, back lit, unlit, installed on a wall or a post, the possibilities are endless.

Running your own Signs Express centre gives you the opportunity to grow your business by offering imaginative designs coupled with the ability to exceed your customers' expectations. Each site visit is a chance to be innovative and begin a long standing relationship with that customer. Every member of staff you employ will be given the chance to develop existing skills or discover new ones.

It also gives you the opportunity to organise your life and balance work with home.

There's perhaps only one problem with a typical day at Signs Express, it's trying to find one! We work with you, helping you to make the best decisions by supplying the information and insight you need.



YOUR TRAINING

You may have little or no experience of signs and graphics or running a business, or you may have plenty. Signs Express believe training is a vital factor in helping you grow your business.

Signs Express has a training programme generally accepted to be one of the most comprehensive in the franchise industry. Developed with over 20 years of experience, the residential programme helps franchisees develop the skills necessary to open their own business with confidence.

This business requires a number of disciplines. From spotting opportunities and developing relationships to evaluating and advising on the correct materials to be used on a project. You will be shown production

techniques to help you understand the processes involved as well as recognise the roles of your staff.

The training course covers; business development, materials and suppliers, local marketing, day to day operations including pricing, HR and employment issues, health & safety, accounts and IT.

As a business committed to delivering expertise it's not only the initial training that is available to you. There are online training resources as well as more traditional training courses available to give you and your staff all the help necessary to demonstrate expertise to your customer. With over 70 business owners and approximately 500 staff around the group there is a wealth of experience to draw upon.



YOUR INVESTMENT & FINANCE

The initial investment for a new start business includes all set up costs and working capital. The investment is quite substantial as is the potential for major returns.

To help you understand the details of this investment we enclose a breakdown of everything from premises, production equipment, furniture, tools, franchise licence, and working capital.

Bank funding is available if needed and we can help with the arrangements too. Our reputation and standing with the banks has never been better, even in challenging

economic times. Typically you will need 40% of liquid funds available for the banks to consider funding the balance.

We will assist you with your business planning and introduce you to the banks which then gives you a choice in terms of the most suitable rates of interest, accessibility and personal preference.

NEXT STEP



YOUR NEXT STEP

If you are excited about our business and the opportunities it can give you, we would like to hear from you. Whether you live in an area where we don't have a local centre or you live close to an existing Signs Express business, please complete the enclosed application form as re-sale opportunities are occasionally available.

After completing the application form we will organise a personal discovery day to ascertain whether we suit you and you suit us as well. We look forward to hearing from you.

PRELIMINARY ENQUIRY FORM

PERSONAL

Mr/Mrs/Miss/Ms: First name/s:

Surname/s:

Address:

Postcode:

Home telephone: Business telephone (with discretion):

Mobile telephone: Email address:

Date of birth: Marital status: Dependent children: Ages:

Please state the names of anyone else who would be active in this business:

AVAILABILITY

If you were to proceed with Signs Express, when would you want to set up in business?

In which locations are you interested?

Do you, or your spouse, (or anyone else to be active in this business) have an ongoing interest in any other business?

FINANCE

Please indicate the source of your investment:

Available capital: £

Bank loan: £

Other source: £

Value of house: £ Amount of mortgage: £

WHERE DID YOU HEAR ABOUT SIGNS EXPRESS?

I understand that this questionnaire is for general information only and is in no way binding upon either Signs Express Limited or myself. I do, however, supply the above information to the best of my knowledge and ability and recognise that Signs Express Limited relies on this information to assess my suitability as a franchise owner. I further undertake not to disclose any information supplied to me for the purpose of evaluating this franchise to any other party than my professional advisors, nor will I use such information to compete with Signs Express Limited or any of their franchise owners.

Signature: Date:

THANK YOU FOR COMPLETING THIS CONFIDENTIAL QUESTIONNAIRE. PLEASE RETURN WITH AN ACCOMPANYING CV TO THE FRANCHISE RECRUITMENT TEAM.

MEET THE FRANCHISEES

MARK KENDALL

Signs Express, Southampton

Mark Kendall took over Signs Express (Southampton) as a franchise resale, for a career change. In two years he has almost doubled the turnover of the centre.

"Owning a Signs Express franchise is the best move I've made."

What appealed to Mark about franchising?

"I had never really considered franchising as I didn't know much about it, so went along to a franchise show to learn more. It was there I heard that the Signs Express franchisee in Southampton was looking to emigrate and so the business was for sale. As we talked, the possibilities of the sign industry became clear to me. I realised that my breadth of contacts was a ready-made potential client base. People from all walks of life need signs."

How has changing industries worked for Mark?

"My business management, sales and team leadership skills have laid the foundations for building a successful Signs Express centre; the team around me are the technical experts on the production side of things. Being part of a franchise provides peace of mind as support is always available on all aspects of running my business. As well as head office, the network of more than 70 franchisees provides plenty of first hand experience to draw on."



**Signs are our business,
make them yours.**

0800 731 2255

franchise.signsexpress.co.uk

SECURE AN ESTABLISHED BUSINESS

As well as new territory availability, every now and then an established Signs Express centre becomes available to buy.

These unique opportunities pave the way for entrepreneurial individuals to join the Signs Express network by purchasing an existing business with an established customer base and instant rewards.

Most franchisees who sell are looking to retire but in some cases, the franchisee has reached their financial goals and wants to pursue their further ambitions.

Advantages of buying an existing franchise:

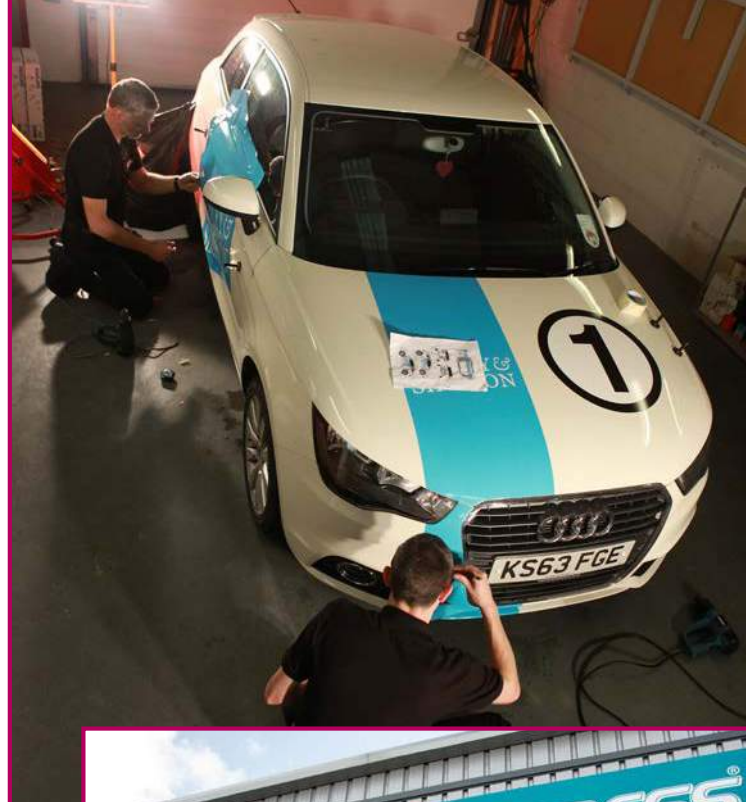
- Income from day one
- The ability to generate profits instantly
- An already established customer base
- An up and running unit with fully trained staff
- Access to company records to help with financial projections
- Established supplier relationships
- A trustworthy reputation

"The response from customers has been brilliant. I've recruited extra staff to help with the increased work load and tripled turnover."

Steve McMurray, Signs Express (Falkirk)

To find out if there is an opportunity in your area call: 0800 731 2255

Signs Express Limited Franchise Headquarters,
The Old Church, St Matthews Road, Norwich NR1 1SP



Sx SIGNS EXPRESS®

The timeline of a successful franchisee.

Anne and Dave Hitch bought Signs Express (Peterborough) in 2001. The centre, under its original owner was under-performing but the new owners invested in it as they could see the potential in the Peterborough territory.

Franchisees Anne and Dave built the business over 13 years and made their exit in 2014 having grown and sold a very successful business.

The business was now beginning to show its full potential. With more space required, larger premises were located. A modern purpose built unit was purchased with the knowledge that once the business was sold, this would guarantee an income stream.

Anne and Dave buy Signs Express (Peterborough). The early months of the business were spent developing relationships, building up the customer base, re-training the staff and starting to build their own team.

Continuing to thrive, Signs Express (Peterborough) added King's Lynn to their territory. The centre is a finalist in the BFA franchisee of the year awards and also won a Special Achievement award at the Signs Express convention.

Anne Hitch reaches the finals of the EWIF (encouraging women into franchising) awards. Initial contact is made with a client that had a specialist requirement country wide for braille and tactile signs.

Having demonstrated their expertise in this field they become the preferred supplier. Investment is made in specialist equipment for the production of braille and tactile signs, extending their in-house capabilities and improving profit margins.

This leads them to win the Signs Express award for innovation at the 2013 convention. To cope with demand, a new team member is recruited specialising in vehicle graphics.

After years of planning and working towards their exit strategy, Anne and Dave Hitch exit the business having sold at their desired price.

"I am sad to leave Signs Express and will always look upon my time with them fondly. It was a great experience owning a franchise with them and support was always on hand, I learnt so many new skills and no day was ever the same! However, I am looking forward to new challenges and know that I am leaving behind a strong and successful business which I am delighted to say has made me a lot of money over the years! I wish Signs Express (Peterborough) every success in the future." Anne Hitch - Former Director, Signs Express (Peterborough).

FRANCHISE PACKAGE BREAKDOWN

A TYPICAL ESTIMATE FOR START UP COSTS:

PREMISES (BASED ON AN AVERAGE SIZED UNIT 1400 - 1500 SQ FT)	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PREPARATION & FIT OUT COSTS • PROFESSIONAL FEES, SOLICITORS, BANK, SITE SURVEY THIS COST IS SUBJECT TO VARIATION DUE TO BOTH SIZE OF UNIT AND TO WHAT IS IN THERE ALREADY (FOR GOOD OR BAD)	£22,000
EQUIPMENT	
• SIGNS EXPRESS APPROVED WIDE FORMAT PRINTER, LAMINATOR, SOFTWARE	FINANCED
• VINYL CUTTING PLOTTER, APPLICATOR	INITIAL PAYMENT £2220
VEHICLE	
• RENAULT MASTER - CONTRACT HIRE INITIAL PAYMENT	£780
FRANCHISE LICENCE FEE PAYABLE TO SIGNS EXPRESS INCLUDES THE FOLLOWING:	£20,000
SIGNS EXPRESS TRAINING PROGRAMME IN NORWICH	
FOOD & ACCOMODATION WHILST TRAINING	
COMPUTERS INC LAPTOP WITH NETWORKED PRINTER	
PHONES, LINE CONNECTION	
TOOLS, ACCESS & FIXING EQUIPMENT	
DESKS, TABLES, CHAIRS, FILING CABINETS, BINS	
4 METRE WORKBENCH, POS WALL DISPLAYS	
SOFTWARE: SAGE, ACCOUNTS, SIGN SOFTWARE AND OFFICE.	
CORPORATE CLOTHING, SIGNAGE, INTERNAL DISPLAYS	
STATIONERY, LETTERHEADS, COMPLIMENT SLIPS BUSINESS CARDS	
RECRUITMENT ADVERTISING	
PROMOTIONAL MATERIALS, DIRECT MAILERS, CORPORATE PROMOTIONAL MATERIALS	
SMALL STOCK OF MATERIALS	
TOTAL START UP REQUIREMENT:	£45,000 PLUS WORKING CAPITAL
EXAMPLE OF FRANCHISEE FUNDING ARRANGEMENTS (INC WORKING CAPITAL)	
FRANCHISEE CASH INPUT	TYPICALLY £35,000 TO £45,000
BANK LOAN	TYPICALLY £50,000 TO £60,000
TOTAL	TYPICALLY £85,000 TO £105,000

The implications of VAT are fully incorporated in the working capital requirement. Signs Express does not take any commission from contractors or suppliers.

Signs Express Limited Franchise Headquarters, The Old Church, St Matthews Road,
Norwich NR1 1SP franchise.signsexpress.co.uk 0800 731 2255



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