

Endless opportunities

David Innis has built a successful management franchise with the help of cleaning specialist Dublicheck

Dublicheck franchisees come from all walks of life and David Innis, who has spent time as a recruitment consultant, travel rep and insurance salesman, is living proof that a variety of previous employment skills has been more than useful when running his Dublicheck franchise.

"I knew I wanted to do something where I could be independent, as it is what I was used to doing," David says, who worked abroad as a rep for Thomas Cook in his early twenties and, before he came across one of the UK's premier cleaning franchises, had been out on the road selling insurance for five years. "It was a case of realising that a franchise was a more suitable model to deliver a long-term, independent business for me."

Advantage

A background of business studies at college, followed by stints in the travel, recruitment and finance industries, meant David was well placed to think about starting his own business, but a franchise offered one extra, obvious advantage. "Within a franchise, you have more support and therefore more confidence in your chosen business," David says.

He and his brother-in-law went to a franchise show at Birmingham NEC in March 2013 and shortly afterwards the two of them invested in a Dublicheck franchise, sharing the chosen franchise level of £15,000. Having spent two years in recruitment, the business development side of the franchise was something David felt instantly at home with and he now has a team of five cleaners working for him in the busy city of Birmingham, some large contracts in the offing and a turnover of £50,000.



Dublicheck franchisee David Innis



David's brother-in-law subsequently sold his share of the business to David - a development he was not phased by in the slightest: "I was like a dog with a madly wagging tail realising how many opportunities there were out there and having to curb my enthusiasm."

David says it took him around nine months to see just how many opportunities there were in the area. "Now I realise the opportunities are endless," he explains, adding: "Everyone cleans and everyone needs cleaners."

That's not to say franchisees can win new contracts whenever they like. As David is the first to admit, setting up a business that grows steadily requires excellent business acumen.

He says: "I've got two great new business opportunities coming my way

at the moment, but I can only say yes to one of them. The focus is to keep building and not to overextend."

Options

Potential Dublicheck franchisees can choose from a number of different options offered by the company. They can follow the route of some of Dublicheck's management franchisees and grow a substantial business where employees perform all the work - which is what David is doing - or invest in a smaller business and do the cleaning work themselves.

David is one franchisee who was clearly thinking ahead when he made the decision to invest in Dublicheck. "It was the prospect of a consistent cash flow that clinched it for me," he reveals. "With many of the other franchises I

THE BENEFITS OF DUBLICHECK

- 20 years' experience.
- Low cost entry.
- Invoicing and cash collection.
- Recession proof utility business.
- Low overhead requirement - can operate from home.
- Dublicheck is a UK company that's wholly owned by its founder and chairman.
- Dublicheck has been awarded the 20th fastest growing private company in the UK by Virgin Fast Track and The Sunday Times.
- Professional white collar management franchise or operational franchise.
- Everywhere you look buildings need cleaning.
- Over 100 franchisees in the UK.
- 92 per cent customer retention rate.
- Hundreds of fantastic franchisee testimonials.
- A massive market that keeps on growing.

For more information call
0800 317236, email
franchise@dublcheck.co.uk or
visit www.dublcheck.co.uk.
FREE INFO NO: 4048

was looking at, you had to go out and look for your next customer very quickly, whereas with Dublcheck the business is such that you set it up and it practically runs itself. Not having to constantly chase leads was a very attractive prospect."

Dublcheck founder Carol Stewart-Gill says the ability for franchisees to choose their own level of investment is one of the reasons so many people decide to join the company.

"With Dublcheck you can earn as little or as much as you want, as there is no upper limit on the number of contracts

you can operate," she explains. "Dublcheck has a guaranteed growth option should you wish to purchase more contracts or you can obtain contracts yourself."

With his interpersonal skills, obtaining new contracts has never been a problem for David. But it is probably the most recent change in the way he is going about his business that promises even more lucrative opportunities in the future.

There is no need to have premises as a Dublcheck franchisee, so most franchisees operate from home in order to keep overheads low during



Dublcheck founder and chairman Carol Stewart-Gill

WHAT DUBLCHECK'S FRANCHISEES SAY

"In 2011 I took my turnover up to £250,000 and I've achieved 10 per cent growth year on year, even through this so called recession."

Larry Bainbridge

"When joining Dublcheck I was attracted to its guaranteed turnover promise and I'm pleased to say the proof is definitely in the pudding."

Graham Coulston Herrmann

"The personal benefits of owning our Dublcheck franchise are fantastic. We have a three year old daughter and, as we work from home, it offers excellent flexibility."

Jolanta Lavernova

"Since I became a Dublcheck franchisee my work/home life balance has improved a great deal. I spend more time with my wife Sue and see more of my six grandchildren - time is precious."

Len Donnelly

the early stages of their business. However, David has recently invested in business premises, giving him a branded presence on a busy high street.

"It was an old takeaway shop that is now an office and I've gone into partnership with a friend and colleague who is offering a removals service from a different part of the premises," he explains.

"I now have a shop window, complete with Dublcheck approved branded signage, which will give me a very obvious presence on the high street. I've already had a number of walk-ins and I'm about to enter the area of student lettings, so I'm preparing to be particularly busy, as landlords always want properties cleaned."

The support of Dublcheck head office has been a plus during this time, with David saying he appreciated the legal support from the team when dealing with new contracts - in particular, with the fast paced world of letting agents.

Mentor

Franchisees never feel alone, as the Dublcheck Mentor Support Programme means people starting out or moving up in the business are allocated an experienced and successful franchisee to act as a guide during their progression, Carol Stewart-Gill adds.

David's wife Hannah is due to have their first child towards the end of the year.

"Hannah is an incredibly successful recruitment consultant and she would be great for the business," he laughs. "It would be a dream to have her on board and, who knows, maybe this could happen one day." **WF**

THREE ACTUAL AUDITED DUBLCHECK FRANCHISE ACCOUNTS

Case A (this business is managed with 95 per cent of the cleaning done by employed cleaners)

	Turnover	Net Profit	% Profit
Year 1	£63,000	£17,000	27%
Year 2	£104,000	£33,000	31%
Year 3	£128,000	£54,000	42%

Case B (this business is 50 per cent managed and 50 per cent hands-on cleaning)

	Turnover	Net Profit	% Profit
Year 1	£25,000	£6,000	24%
Year 2	£38,000	£20,000	52%
Year 3	£45,000	£25,000	55%

Case C (this business is 100 per cent hands-on at the start, moving to 95 per cent in year three)

	Turnover	Net Profit	% Profit
Year 1	£17,000	£8,600	50%
Year 2	£18,200	£9,500	52%
Year 3	£25,000	£10,300	41%

Earn as much as you want

Peter and Denise Howell were attracted to the Dublcheck cleaning franchise because it's a low risk opportunity with a guaranteed turnover scheme

Dublcheck has not only managed to maintain its position as one of the UK's fastest growing companies over recent years, but to actually achieve an increase in turnover throughout the recession - no mean feat in the current economic climate.

When Peter Howell was made redundant from the logistics company he worked for in 2012, he saw in Dublcheck an opportunity to utilise his management skills with a

well established business that was clearly thriving. He even got his wife Denise on board as well.

Right choice

Two, with a turnaround in the economy there would be a potential increase in cleaners required and, three, after talking to the team we felt this was the right choice for us."



Carol Stewart-Gill, founder of Dublcheck

Founded in 1993 by Carol Stewart-Gill, Dublcheck is one of the best known cleaning franchises in the UK. Providing premier cleaning services for offices, showrooms and health facilities throughout the UK for over 20 years, the company is recognised as one of the leading franchised commercial cleaning organisations, and has hundreds of highly successful franchises operating across the UK.

Peter had been a technical manager for a logistics firm for over 20 years, before the downturn in the economy made him one of the many victims of the recession. Meanwhile his wife Denise, who had set up her own sandwich shop six years previously, was finding the recession eating into her profits as more and more regular customers disappeared.

Peter took redundancy in the middle of 2012, aged 51, and Denise also decided to take the plunge and move onto pastures new. Before the end of the year the husband and wife team had decided to become part of the Dublcheck franchise network.

Peter says the Dublcheck franchise seemed to provide a low risk opportunity, as well as offering challenging management roles: "We decided that we were looking for a business that could utilise both my management experience and Denise's customer focusing experience.

"We also wanted a franchise that would give us an initial boost, as we had no experience in franchising. We wanted a business that could also grow as we did. Dublcheck was the ideal franchise for us as it fitted into all categories."

The couple joined Dublcheck at the end of December 2012, with a view to starting their business in early 2013. As promised, Dublcheck fulfilled its guaranteed level of turnover, which was well within the agreed term for the couple, with £50,000 as the starting turnover. The guaranteed turnover model offered by Dublcheck was undoubtedly a plus point for both Peter and Denise.

Market leader

"Dublcheck has the experience and stature you would expect from a



Peter and Denise Howell joined Dublcheck in December 2012 as franchisees

market leader and, unlike many of our competitors, we operate a guaranteed turnover scheme," Carol explains.

In addition, she points out that franchisees are given the tools and knowledge they need to uphold the values of the Dublcheck brand, which to date has resulted in a 90 per cent-plus client retention rate. Franchisees receive an initial training course, ongoing training and support, access to branded uniforms, products, sales and marketing tools, and stationery. All invoicing and cash collection is managed electronically by Dublcheck - allowing franchisees to concentrate on developing lasting client relationships.

Peter says he was pleased with the initial training and documentation, adding that the company's support includes a mentoring system, central invoicing service and an intranet facility. The change in direction for the couple is slowly starting to reap rewards. "Our current turnover is now up to £67,000," Peter adds proudly.

Peter is just one of many franchisees who has made the switch from a management role in a large private company to becoming his own boss. As one Dublcheck franchisee says: "Facing redundancy in my 50s was unsettling. A management franchise was ideal because

For more information call
0800 317236, email
franchise@dublcheck.co.uk or
visit www.dublcheck.co.uk.
FREE INFO NO: 4048

it enabled me to utilise my previous management experience. I love the fact that the harder my team and I work, the higher the rewards."

It is a sentiment echoed by Peter, who enjoys being able to use his experience as a technical manager: "I think Dublcheck is suitable for all types of franchisees, either hands-on, managing or a bit of both. You can enter into the franchise system at any level and it was an advantage having 20 years' experience to fall back on - although the biggest change for me was the physical aspect of the job. It made a big change not to be stuck behind a desk the whole day."

Start small

Franchisees can start small, with the minimum turnover package of £14,000 per annum for those who want to run their business while retaining the security of their current job. Or they can purchase up to £500,000 of annual turnover (with no upper limit) if they want to run a substantial managed business.

The variable investment levels offered by Dublcheck give franchisees the flexibility to run either a hands-on business, a partly managed venture with some hands-on duties or a wholly managed business, depending on their skills, ambitions and work-life balance requirements.

As Carol emphasises: "With Dublcheck you can earn as little or as much as you want, as there is no upper limit on the



Franchisee Len Donnelly wins a trip to Las Vegas

number of contracts you can operate. Cleaning is a massive industry to be in."

In fact, cleaning is the UK's largest single industry, with the commercial cleaning sector being worth more than

£3 billion. In the current environment of financial uncertainty, any business with guaranteed turnover, guaranteed profit and guaranteed growth sounds like a pretty good bet. **WF**

FRANCHISEE SUCCESS STORY

Peter and Pru Davies weren't necessarily looking to set up a cleaning franchise when they sold the greengrocer's business they had run for 12 years - so it might come as a surprise to find they are still running the successful Dublcheck enterprise they first invested in 19 years later.

Peter says: "We went to a few franchise exhibitions and came across Dublcheck. What appealed to us was that the company provided the initial contracts, so we would have business right from the start and would be able to start work immediately."

After setting up their franchise with the support and guidance of the Dublcheck team, Peter and Pru found immediate success.

The couple started off with a low level of investment, with their business turning over a modest £12,000 per annum, and they soon built up a regular, loyal clientele. Today they are happy with the level they have reached of around £6,000 per month of business.

"It may not sound like a great leap from where we started, but it's perfect for us," Peter explains. "Where we are at now is

just right for us. We've put two children through university, we can go on holidays and buy a nice car when we need to."

Peter, now 57, prefers instead to keep the size of his business exactly as he and his wife want it, so they can focus on their stress free, happy lifestyle. The couple's franchise currently has an annual turnover of £77,000, which Peter says is more than enough for him and his wife.

The other point Peter makes is that he never feels under pressure by Dublcheck to perform or get new clients.

"Dublcheck are good in that they do not keep pushing you to hit certain targets or goals," he says. In fact, Peter's communications with the company - which is thorough when necessary - is minimal, with emails when required and support readily available if needed. The fact the company takes care of invoicing is welcome, but these days the business almost seems to take care of itself, Peter says.

"I've still got clients who signed up with me when we first started," he explains. "There aren't many clients you can say that about."