

Lights, cameras and awards reign at FASA

The Franchising Association of South Africa (FASA) recently celebrated its annual Awards for Excellence in Franchising. The sector contributes around 10% to the country's GDP, generates a turnover of R302 billion and employs more than 323,519 people, with 90% of franchises developed locally.



FASA Award winners

This comes on the heels of a survey conducted by FASA and sponsored by Sanlam, which reflected a thriving and growing industry with 627 franchised systems, just over 31,050 franchise outlets and 17 franchise business sectors.

"Given South Africa's current unemployment rate of around 25%, the franchise sector is key to driving future economic growth and creating employment opportunities. Global and local statistics are undisputed proof that franchising is a much lower risk investment with only a 10% failure rate in franchising as opposed to up to 90% in independent businesses," says John Baladakis, FASA's chairman.

Winners

The categories honoured at the FASA Awards, sponsored by Absa, include:

Franchisor of the Year - OBC Chicken & Meat

This most prestigious award celebrates the success of the franchisor who has made a significant impact in the marketplace and who has, through effective business management and marketing, achieved outstanding financial results and a significant growth in his sector.

Ask anyone at a taxi rank, township or CBD who OBC Chicken & Meat are and they will say 'Ekhaya Lenkukhu, The Home of Chicken.' For thousands of people who criss-cross the country, commuting via taxis, going shopping in CBD's or returning to their homeland to visit family and friends, the sight of an OBC Chicken & Meat retail store is a welcome sight to those who know and love this supermarket brand. OBC Chicken has been a part of the South African landscape for the past 28 years, its bright stores not only supply fresh and frozen chicken products but also have expanded their range to include meat, fish, processed meat, dairy products and selected groceries.

Runners-up

- Cash Converters
- Car Service City

Franchisee of the Year - Lara Oelofse of Mike's Kitchen in Springs

This Award honours a franchisee's success in running his/her own business and contributing to the overall success of the franchisor. These franchisees form the backbone of any franchise concept and are the 'face' of the franchise brand.

The Springs Mike's Kitchen, under the ownership of Lara Oelofse, a dynamic, humane and professional woman, continues to outperform her peers. She has been a consistent achiever year after year relying on a combination of her canny operations abilities and technical skills balanced with being a strong brand ambassador who consistently markets and promotes the brand.

Runners-up

- Reon Kockjeu of On-Tap - East London
- Alecia Eksteen of Placecol, Silverlakes, Pretoria

Newcomer Franchisor of the Year - Midek Paint Direct

This category honours the innovative entrepreneurship of new entrants into the franchise fold. It celebrates those entrepreneurs who are in tune with shifts in demographics, lifestyles and workplaces and who throw that first stone that will undoubtedly cause the ripple effect in consumer markets and be the next big franchise brand.

Midek Paint Direct is a trusted supplier of choice, delivering on customer service excellence and consistent quality paint delivered through their current franchised stores. With a five-year plan in place to achieve 2% of the decorative paint market, which amounts to 100 million rand, Midek Paint and Midek Paint Contractors are set to make their mark in the marketplace.

Runners-up

- Sherpa Kids
- Bodytec

Franchisor: Leading Developer of Emerging Entrepreneurs - Hot Dog Cafe

This award encourages the development of emerging franchisors and on the need to empower, the small business sector and encourages the franchise ethic in emerging markets.

Hot Dog Cafe, a franchise company that is streets ahead in forging a pioneering path in BEE transformation, won the award. The proven Hot Dog Cafe model promotes entrepreneurial culture, skills development and the creation of jobs.

Qualifying previously disadvantaged candidates are given the opportunity, by way of various funding initiatives, to be trained and given skills to not only enter the ranks of the formally employed but more importantly are given the opportunity to become entrepreneurs with the ongoing guidance and support within the franchise environment.

Job Creator Franchisor of the Year - Car Service City

The Job Creator of the Year Award recognises those franchisors who, through the expansion of their franchise brand by way of their network of franchisees, contribute extensively to job creation. The franchisor's efforts in the transfer of skills and training are also paramount as is their entrepreneurial encouragement and job creation through enterprise development.

Whether it's the mechanics working on the cars, the car washers and workshop assistants or the ad-hoc jobs given to those that hand out leaflets at traffic intersections, the support given to the almost 1,000 employed at Car Service City outlets forms the foundation of their business success. Skills development, performance rewards and participation in a safe and a healthy working environment are all part of the Car Service City ethos.

Runners-up

- Hot Dog Café
- The Brazen Head

Brand Builder of the Year - King Pie

The objective of this award is to give recognition to the companies that elevate and grow their brand through the successful implementation of sound marketing strategies. The focus is on innovation and effective marketing rather than the size of the brands' marketing budget.

With a brand promise that in the 'King Pie Kingdom everyone is Royalty' the marketing strategy is to a target market that requires convenience, wholesome food that makes everyone's lives easier in an affordable, satisfying and convenient way. This is achieved through a highly developed and well-researched brand strategy, which includes call to action, national promotional campaigns every seven weeks, which are supported by above the line advertising in defined media channels.

Runners-up

- Car Service City
- Placecol

Hall of Fame Award - Raymond Ackerman of Pick n Pay

FASA's Hall of Fame award honours individuals who, in some form or another, have made a valuable contribution to the franchise industry and to FASA. It ranges from franchise consultants who have help put franchise brands on the map to lawyers who have gone out of their way, without compensation, to represent the interests of franchising at FASA at government and legislative level. FASA's nominee for this year's Hall of Fame Award is a man who has vigorously defended the entrepreneurial spirit of franchising at every turn and has made at current count 450 franchisees successful and often extremely wealthy business owners.

Twenty-one years ago, the story goes, Raymond Ackerman of Pick n Pay turned down the opportunity to play golf with Ernie Els so he could visit a new franchisee of a successful Dutch supermarket, the Dutch chain had just given an outlet to an employee because it was not working as a profitable corporate store.

Raymond Ackerman built on that win/win formula of finding a solution to reach customers in areas that are perhaps difficult

to trade in or needing specialist managers matched to communities in predominantly smaller units. While also helping individuals and staff (of which 100 of the 400 franchisees are BEE franchise owners) become successful Pick n Pay franchisees.

"Imagine integrating franchising into a corporate conglomerate set in its 'corporate ways'. The change of culture, the balancing of franchise versus corporate ideology; understanding and managing complete opposite personalities, that balancing act that so many companies would have failed at yet Pick n Pay succeeded, thanks to the beliefs and ethics of Raymond Ackerman.

"From a humanitarian point of view Raymond Ackerman as a man and as a leader cannot be matched and that kindness has many a time landed in a franchisee's lap," commented Baladakis.

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