



▶ Franchises account for 40 per cent or all retail sales in Canada.

So you want to be an entrepreneur?

▶ Opening a small business can be made easier by going franchise route

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What do Comfort Keepers, Survivor Bootcamp, Post-Net, Reliable Independent Living Services, Canadian Tire and Cora Breakfast and Lunch all have in common?

They're franchises, which account for 40 per cent of all retail sales in Canada and 10 per cent of the GDP, and employ more than one million Canadians, according to the Canadian Franchise Association (CFA). They attract a diverse group, from former franchise employees and corporate executives, to

new immigrants, young entrepreneurs, and women, like Cora Tsoufidou — part of a growing demographic, according to a 2008 national survey commissioned by Gowling Lafleur Henderson LLP.

Divorced with three teenage children to support, Tsoufidou opened her first restaurant in Quebec in 1980. She sold the popular eatery to work at a large establishment where she honed her skills.

In 1987, she debuted Cora Breakfast and Lunch; other locations soon followed. In order to grow her business, build her brand and "teach others her winning recipe," she

chose franchising as her business strategy.

The first franchise opened in 1994; today there are more than 115 across the country with annual sales of more than \$125 million. Tsoufidou credits her success to "initiative, perseverance, self-confidence and boundless energy."

What's The Next Big Thing?

Here are two growing sectors:

- Senior/Home Care Services: Thirteen percent of the Canadian population is aged 65 and older, and this population expected to double over the

next 20 to 25 years, says Arif Abdulla, marketing and PR director for Nurse Next Door, Canada's fastest-growing home care franchise. This is a largely unregulated, competitive industry, says Abdulla, that demands a 24/7 commitment.

- Business Consultants: Includes everything from coaches to brokers that serve businesses and help them grow or operate better. Gemma Business Brokers president Maurice Muise says B2B franchises offer a professional services opportunity, life/work balance and growth market as boomers start retiring.

How do you find your own recipe for success?

"Making sure the franchise is right for you is essential for success and fulfillment," says Lorraine McLachlan, CFA president and CEO. Here are just a few questions she suggests you ask yourself. For more tips for potential franchisees (those buying franchises) and franchisors (those selling them), visit cfa.com.

- What motivates me? Potential revenue, challenging work, people, service, recognition, safety, security?
- How much structure, support, supervision or feedback

do I need? New franchisees tend to offer more flexibility with rules; more established ones tend to have more rigid systems and operating procedures.

- How much money do I have to invest? Licensing fees can run from \$5,000 to \$75,000-plus. Other expenses usually include royalties.
- How many employees do I want?
- Do I like being on the front lines and dealing with customers?
- What's my job experience? Look for a business that fits with your expertise. ● METRO

top franchises

The biggest players in Canada:

- ▶ 1. Tim Hortons — 2,902 locations; \$50,000 franchise fee
- ▶ 2. Subway Subs of Canada

— 2,457 locations; \$15,000 US franchise fee; 2 weeks training

- ▶ 3. MTY Group (23 different brands, including Country Style, Cultures, TCBY, Thai Express and Yogen Früz) — 1,538 locations; \$20,000, \$40,000 franchise fee

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