

Franchise expo prepares for 2010

The looming 2010 FIFA World Cup is also fuelling South Africa's current economic and this positive trend is reflected in a sold out International Franchise Expo (IFE 2007), indicating that franchising is at an all-time high, according to the Franchise Association of Southern Africa (FASA).

The buoyancy of our economy is reflecting in the results of a survey conducted by The Standard Bank Franchise Factor (copyright Bendeta Gordon, Franchise Directions, September 2006) which shows that the number of operating franchise systems in SA have grown by 49% since March 2004, with 154 of the current 470 systems having been established during the research period.

This lifts the total number of franchised outlets from 20 834 to 25 874 (a 24% increase), resulting in a concomitant 48% increase in turnover generated to R188 billion (2004: R127 billion). The sector has also added close to 400 000 jobs to the economy.

It is allegedly a well-known fact that 80% of franchising concepts in SA are home-grown concepts – a result of sanctions and isolation. Now it seems SA is on the global map, with international franchisors showing interest in finding master franchisees to develop their concepts throughout the country.

At IFE 2007, the US Commercial Service will be holding a seminar promoting various US brands whilst Australian franchisor Action Couch will be exploring entering the local market. Also exhibiting this year is consulting franchise group OneBiz from Portugal, a Lebanese clothing franchise and food franchise group Hotbrands from the Middle East.

With The Standard Bank Franchise Factor showing a marked increase in the different sectors in franchising the expo will also reflect that diversity with the following sectors being strongly represented (FASA members will be specifically highlighted).

By far the largest sector, visitors to IFE will have a wide range of available business opportunities to choose from – from restaurants to fast foods, from retail outlets to pubs. As the third largest franchise sector, retail franchises will be represented by a wide range of business options – from the bigger retail outlets to the vending options.

Other sectors to be covered include:

- entertainment, health and beauty
- real estate services
- automotive products and services
- building, office and home services

To assist visitors to IFE to make the right choice, there will be a variety of service providers that will help with everything from funding, consulting to insurance and legal services.

The Small Business Finance & Investment Expo will run concurrently with IFE and is designed to highlight efforts to provide financial solutions and investment support to entrepreneurs and SME's in the emerging

markets and to promote small businesses and broad-based empowerment addressing issues such as access to finance, access to markets, capacity building and linking small businesses to opportunities deriving from the 2010 FIFA World Cup.

FASA, together with Nedbank Business Division, will sponsor the Speaker's Corner which will run talks on various subjects pertaining to franchising and funding.

For those wanting to attend a more in-depth seminar on franchising – from the perspective of acquiring a franchise or starting a franchise – FASA will be running two seminars at the Sandton Convention Centre conference rooms alongside IFE.

Visitors to IFE can pre-register online at www.fasa.co.za and pay only R30 entrance fee. Normal entrance fee at door is R40 per person. The expo runs 3 - 5 May, 10am – 18pm.

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