Franchise Operations Manual

The nuts & bolts of your franchise

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Introduction to the franchisor

Your success as a business owner has always depended on execution of good procedures based on good policies. The success of your Franchisees depends on execution too. Your operations manual *contains everything they need to know* to successfully execute good policies. Your operations manual *ensures consistency* between franchises and in doing so *protects your business' profitability* and good name.

When you create an operations manual, you clearly define your business operations. You know your business better than anyone, but when you finish making your operations manual, you will be amazed at how many areas you know so much better than ever before!

For the Franchisees, the manual offers standard operating procedures (SOPs). No matter where they are, their customers will have a consistent experience. This is one of the things that make places like Bed, Bath & Beyond or Borders so successful; that consistent customer experience will do the same for your business. No matter where they go, if your customers see one of your franchises, they'll know what to expect. Familiarity breeds comfort.

Here we use an example of a typical operations manual for a fictitious company. Save a copy of this document into another file for editing purposes; then change everything company-specific in the example into what you need for your own company. You can use this template again and again! In each chapter we offer you goals, questions to ask yourself in advance, information you should review, and required materials, if any.

Stick-note-guides Or How to use your Operations Manual

- As things change – and they do – so must the manual, so it must be written to be changed.

- New Franchisors will have a lot to learn. The manual should help them, so it must be written to be read. If franchisees can't understand it, they may ignore it – **a recipe for disaster!**

- Anything left to your franchisees discretion will lead to confusion, so it must give all the details. Don't leave anything to chance.

- Not everything is the same everywhere you go, so it must reflect differences in geography and culture. You will probably need location-specific content (e.g. maps, emergency contacts, etc.) in each individual manual.

- Franchising is a litigious industry, so it needs legal review. Make sure you have an experienced attorney review not only your manuals, but your franchise agreements and UFOC as well.

This operations manual is followed by important "Stick-note-guides": remarks, hints and tips regarding the correct filling and understanding of the operations manual. All remarks aimed towards the franchisor are in this blue color.

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