

*Growing a successful business
that fits into your life*



LITTLE
IMPRESSIONS

The distinctive Little Impressions look – here a single hand on a terracotta mount, box framed in oak.



Creating your own work/life balance



When I was bringing up my children I did not want to go out to work – I wanted to be at home for them. But I also wanted my own business and to make money!

My husband encouraged me to use my artistic skills and to create a business that I could run alongside the inevitable household tasks, school runs, term times and holidays.

I had to find an idea that would be both interesting and profitable, and could be combined with home life. It had to be creative, and something I could do in the limited space of our home without interfering with its looks and layout.

In other words I was looking for the ideal of a business I could balance with my life.

When our own children were babies I made casts of their hands as Christmas presents for my husband. He had always loved them – and suggested that I could do them for other parents. That's how I started casting impressions of hands and feet (even the occasional paws!).

I had difficulty in finding deep box frames to set off the casts – so I learnt to frame and had some oak milled to my own specification.

The idea worked. And after a few trials to find the best materials and processes, I was ready to launch into my local community. With some samples displayed in local shops and a few stories in the press, the phone started to ring and before I knew it, a steady stream of people were making appointments to bring their children for a 'Little Impressions' casting.

Over the years, the business grew. I was able to conduct it, literally from my kitchen table. And by limiting my appointments I could combine it with family life. Working about three days a week and taking school holidays off, I generated between £25,000 and £30,000 a year.

After 10 years in business we felt the time was right to expand and decided that franchising would provide the ideal format for a network of dedicated owner operators to run a creative and rewarding business from home or a studio.

The pilot franchise, launched to prove the viability of the concept, grew at a far faster rate than my original business. And since our official launch in October 2001 we have opened new franchises at the rate of approximately one per month.

Behind the franchise program are experienced business people with strong track records in the art and framing business, franchising, intellectual property and marketing.

We have established relationships with companies that provide equipment and materials at preferential rates and group deals with complimentary businesses that can refer clients to our franchisees.

Little Impressions is a well positioned, home based franchise operation with an established reputation and image. We are ready to help you build a business in your area.

We hope you will find the following information useful and informative, and look forward to receiving your enquiry and welcoming you to see Little Impressions in action.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "fiona.north". The signature is written in a cursive, lowercase style.

Fiona North
Founder
Little Impressions

Little Impressions – the market

Even in the UK, an advanced Western Society with only replacement level birth rates, 800,000 babies are born each year. This gives us a potential market of some 4 million 0–5 year olds and a total market of 8 million 0–10 year olds. At even a conservative 5% conversion rate, all our franchisees have a viable business within a manageable – and local – home base radius.

Think of all those parents, grandparents and godparents who would love sets of Little Impressions for Christmas, birthdays, christenings, Mothers' and Fathers' days.

And once customers have taken their first Little Impression, virtually all of them come back with their second, third and fourth babies.

When it comes to our children, most parents don't think about the cost. But Little Impressions cast and frame sets are priced competitively, at a level that is discretionary but won't break the bank.

This is a proven – and constantly renewing – market.

Little Impressions – the franchise

Customers cannot fail to be impressed by the professionally designed and manufactured Little Impressions castings and frames and the professional workshop equipment designed to fit your home or a suitable property.

The concept is bright, attractive and professional. The work area is prepared, and equipped in readiness for the launch of the Little Impressions business in your chosen territory.

The Little Impressions operation clearly addresses a market need for the service. The benefit of this opportunity is now available to suitably qualified individuals.

Little Impressions – the organisation

Little Impressions is owned and managed by successful business people. Our team includes ex-franchisors who have over 25 years of franchising experience behind them.

Our headquarters are in South London where all central functions including accounting, marketing and operations are based.

Our web site – www.little-impressions.com – already incorporates overall product information and direct links to each franchise – providing swift and useful service information for our clients, indicating their nearest franchisees and the range of services we provide.

And we intend to develop further interactive services including a 'firewalled' intranet for the exclusive use of franchisees. This will enable the fast dissemination of up-to-date information through the network of franchisees and provide news and training updates. Ultimately, the introduction of e-commerce will create new opportunities to maximise the closeness of our franchisees to their clients.

The franchise opportunity

By acquiring a Little Impressions franchise, you will be investing in a tried and tested business and will have the rights to develop an identical system in your own exclusive territory. You will have access to intellectual property, manuals, training, marketing, public relations and merchandising techniques. You will have the continuing support of the franchise development team as well as benefiting from our purchasing programmes.

The franchise package includes the preparation and supply of a fully equipped workshop. Assistance in the setting up and launch of a Little Impressions franchise in your community is provided. The franchise also includes the rights to expand the business further.





A pair of hands, in Little Impressions' exclusive limed oak box frame – beautifully presented on a wedgewood blue background.

800,000 babies are born in the UK each year. Think of all those parents, grandparents and godparents – all those birthdays, christenings and Christmases.





The steps

1. Application

The Little Impressions franchise opportunity involves getting to know each other and developing a strategy for a successful business in your market.

First we must learn more about you. As the rights to operate under the Little Impressions brand are for a considerable term, it is vitally important that both you and we are confident in each other's ability and commitment to making the business grow and prosper. A franchise relationship is a very personal partnership.

The enclosed confidential franchise application form will give us a clear indication of your circumstances and ability to meet the investment parameters as well as give us an insight into your background before we first meet. Please return it, together with a signed copy of our confidentiality agreement.

2. The Meeting

After we have received your application and confidentiality agreement, we will contact you to answer any initial questions you may have. If the business is still of interest, we will arrange a visit to your home or proposed business premises to assess how Little Impressions will fit into the space available and we can answer more detailed questions that you might have. We will then arrange a visit for you to see Little Impressions in action. Should we decide to proceed with a franchise at a later date, we will reimburse the cost of reasonable travelling expenses.

During the visit, you will see Little Impressions operating, meet our franchise management and even talk to our customers about the Little Impressions experience. We will provide you with all the appropriate information to help you in your decision making process.

We will also be able to find out more about you and your plans for the future and both parties will have the opportunity to see if we can work successfully together.

We are not only looking for people who share our vision of Little Impressions but also for people who have the commitment to build their own successful business.

3. Setting up Your Franchise

After the initial meetings and disclosures, should we decide to proceed, a Franchise Agreement and business plan will be drawn up. We will also research your planned territory and assist in the evaluation of your potential market.

A training course will be provided for the key personnel who will be operating the business in your territory. Copies of all manuals and materials necessary for the running of your business will be provided.

It is crucial to the premium positioning of Little Impressions that all franchisees, and any staff who are making casts, have successfully completed our training course and that they are able to produce casts consistently to our standards.

Group purchasing power

Franchisees benefit from our purchasing power negotiated in the UK. Materials are purchased at wholesale rates well below that of comparable competitive products. This helps give our franchisees a greater profit margin and helps absorb royalty costs.

Product development

As part of the Little Impressions network, you will participate in the benefits of our central design and development resources. Our staff are constantly looking for innovations to extend the range of products and services we can offer.

Ongoing service and support

After your Franchise is launched, there will be ongoing service and support. The agreement provides for at least one visit per year and additional visits as required. Franchisees will be invited to the annual conventions and regional meetings to stay abreast of the latest developments.

Equipment & design

As part of your investment in the Little Impressions franchise you will be supplied with materials and equipment that have been designed and tested over ten years. Many items carry the distinctive Little Impressions logo and we continually seek to develop our products further.

We can also assist in the design and fitting of dedicated workshops if that is your preferred operating route.

In addition to strict quality control, a consistent image is one of the critical success factors in the development of a franchise system. Marketing material will carry your local and our national telephone numbers, e-mail address and the national website information.

Marketing, advertising & public relations

Since launching Little Impressions we have developed numerous techniques to bring in new business and your franchise training package will include comprehensive information and a marketing manual to assist in the launch and ongoing promotion of your business.

Together with branded letterheads, compliment slips, business cards, stickers etc, the launch pack includes a CD-ROM containing colour and black and white advertisements ready for local press.

As new ideas are developed, you will be provided with copies of everything produced for the purpose of developing more business.



Franchisees are provided with a starter pack of branded stationery, sample advertisements and business cards – everything you need for a professional launch.

Franchising is a very personal relationship. We are looking for people with the ability and the commitment needed to build their own successful businesses.

Little Impressions
that last forever
hands & feet casts by Fiona North

Unique and highly detailed castings of your children's hands and feet, beautifully framed in a fully lined oak box frame.

For parents, grandparents, godparents, uncles, aunts, they make a perfect gift and give a lasting memento, a Little Impression, captured forever.

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Marketing material includes everything from posters to post cards.



The next step

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