



THE POWER OF AMBIVALENT THINKING

By Jeff Johnson

After nearly 40 years in franchising, it is nearly impossible to be in a social situation without being asked some variation of, "So what do you know about (insert franchise name here)?" This question is almost always followed by, "I ate there/shopped there/saw an ad for it, and really liked it!" My response is (also, almost always), "But what do you know about how they treat their franchisees?"

Franchise excellence requires meeting and/or exceeding both the consumer's and the franchisee's expectations!

Behold the power of ambivalent thinking! It is far too easy (and too common) for someone considering an investment in a franchise opportunity to fall in love with a product, an ad campaign, or a sales pitch, and extrapolate it into an assumption of franchisee success. Unfortunately, this is often an incorrect assumption, resulting in disappointment, disillusionment, and (in a worst-case scenario) financial distress. Entering into the due diligence process with a healthy dose of ambivalence can be very wise, indeed!

As we at the Franchise Research Institute are fond of saying, "It's not just about the hamburger (end product or service)." The surest measure of a franchisee candidate's potential success is an *actual measurement* of the satisfaction of the franchise company's existing franchisees. Do not confuse this with a few hand-picked testimonials. In this era of readily available consumer reviews (such as Angie's List and many online shopping sites), it seems especially surprising that anyone would enter into one of the most (if not *the* most) significant investments of money, time, and emotion of their lives without considering this aspect of due diligence.

Yet, those who wouldn't buy a car, microwave or TV without reading consumer reviews may buy into a franchise opportunity, using emotion rather than taking the time to speak directly with as many franchisees as possible to find out the answer to one simple question: "knowing what you now know, would you buy this franchise again"?

The Franchise Research Institute®, founded in 2002 is the original auditor of franchisee opinions and for over two-decades has provided franchise

executives with quality research data using science-based research methodology. Our clients include many small and emerging franchise brands as well as many Roark Brands including Inspire Brands (Arby's, BWW, Dunkin/Baskin, Jimmy John's, Sonic and Inspire International) as well as BrightStar Care, Express Professionals, H&R Block and many others.

You can learn more about what we do at the Franchise Research Institute by visiting [our website](#) or you can email me at: Jeff@FranSurvey.com

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