

FOX

THE NEW NAME IN
MOWING & GARDENING



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Fox Mowing & Gardening

The New Name in Mowing & Gardening



Fox Mowing & Gardening is a leader in its field, providing a range of lawn mowing, gardening, pruning and landscaping services across five states and one territory. Launched recently in 2013 by Phil Maunder, the company has 44 franchise owners spread across South Australia, Victoria, New

South Wales, Queensland, Perth and the ACT.

Phil Maunder brings with him 25 years of experience in the lawn mowing and garden industry, having been a Jim's Mowing franchise owner for fifteen years. As the Director of Fox Mowing

Mowing & Gardening



& Gardening, Phil devotes his time to motivating and providing support to franchise owners. He is also deeply involved in looking after the company's marketing efforts.

Since its inception less than three years ago, Fox Mowing & Gardening has grown rapidly and currently averages

AT A GLANCE

WHO: Fox Mowing & Gardening

WHAT: Fox Mowing & Gardening is Australia's new name in Lawn Mowing & Gardening Services

WHERE: Australia

WEBSITE: foxmowing.com

over 1,200 leads every month. It has already quoted on 29,000+ jobs and its franchise owners have a reputation for being highly motivated and committed to offering excellent and responsive customer service.

Fox Mowing & Gardening has put a great deal of time and effort into making sure its State Managers are the right fit for the business. All the company's State Managers have come from the industry and bring a combined 50 plus years of experience to the business.

High level of expertise in gardening

Fox Mowing & Gardening has specialised in its field and its franchise owners have gained tremendously from the personalised training that has been provided to them. Phil Maunder says, "What our franchise owners in



the field do are mowing and gardening work. Most of them are involved in soft landscaping which includes new gardens. About 20% of our franchisees are also involved in hard landscaping which includes small retaining walls and that kind of work.

“One of the major key points of difference we have is that we sell only one type of franchise and that is mowing and gardening franchises. There will never ever be a Fox Antennas or Fox Cleaning or Fox anything-else. We specifically want to be in mowing and gardening because that is what we know.

“Anybody else operating across Australia is selling multiple franchises. So for these people the model is franchising itself. They are not particularly franchising a particular product or a particular service. So that is a key point of difference. The potential franchise owners can see that and we don't pretend to be experts at something we are not good at.”

Focussed marketing activities

There is a great need for making clients aware about Fox Mowing & Gardening's activities. Even 10 years ago it was possible for an independent

contractor to set up a gardening business. All that was required was to put an advertisement in a couple of local papers and do some leaflet drops. Over a six month period, a dedicated contractor could build up a business of a respectable size.

In the current market, if an independent person tries to set up a gardening business by advertising in the local paper, it is highly unlikely that it would result in more than one or two jobs. Fox Mowing & Gardening spends a large part of its budget on advertising and marketing. It has an elaborate website, which is constantly upgraded.

The company also concentrates on internet marketing and utilises search engine optimization techniques to increase traffic to its website. Fox Mowing & Gardening uses a number of online directories and websites like Scoopon and Groupon to popularise its services.

In an effort to get customers, Fox Mowing offers big discounts for business sourced through these sites. They pay the franchise owners more than the amount collected from customers. This extra expenditure is justified by the visibility that the company gets.

There has been a sharp increase in the level of business through Fox Mowing's

website. This is due to the emphasis on search engine optimization and the use of Google AdWords. Based on this success, the company plans to increase its expenditure on these activities.

Traditional methods of advertising are used in a limited way. It has been seen that newspaper advertisements do not generate many leads, especially in the cities. Due to this reason, print advertisements are restricted to rural areas or other territories where the franchise owners get a good response from this form of publicity.

Low-investment business opportunity

At some point in their careers, many people decide that they want to work for themselves and build a business. Becoming a franchise owner with Fox Mowing & Gardening is a good option as the entry cost is low and hence the amount at stake is limited.

If the entry cost is \$200,000 or \$300,000 it can be a barrier, but an individual who wants to become a franchise owner of Fox Mowing needs to invest only \$20,000 to \$25,000. Many people consider this as a stepping stone to some other business. A number of franchise owners have opted for this line as it gives them an option to work outdoors.

It is a fact that in this industry salaries are very low. Golf course greenkeepers and those who work in parks or gardens for a Council are usually paid low wages. While there may be some exceptions, the number of franchise owners from this line of activity is increasing. The advantage they enjoy is that they can get into business for themselves while staying in the same industry.

As Fox Mowing & Gardening is a relatively new operation, which is not even three years old, franchise owners have an opportunity to become a part of the business in its initial stages. There are still several prime territories available for allotment giving new entrants the scope to build up a strong base of customers.

Why franchise owners prefer Fox

Fox Mowing's franchise owners are spread across practically the whole country. Each of the franchise owners has an adequate number of regular clients who keep them occupied for most of the time. In fact, many of them need to turn away business.

Fox Mowing's franchise owners enjoy a number of advantages. They are allotted a significant territory size at the initial



stage. Over time, this allows them to establish a large client base. When this happens the franchise owner has the option of selling off parts of the territory to make a handsome capital gain. Alternately, additional employees can

be recruited to service the increased level of business.

In the effort to provide franchise owners and customers with the highest level of service possible, Fox Mowing has invested a great deal of time and money



in developing a customised software package to manage operations. This franchise management tool has been a great improvement over the off-the-shelf software that was previously being used.

Earlier the company's system took all of two minutes to process a new lead. Now that the software has been tailored to suit the business, it takes just 30 seconds. This has resulted in large productivity gains and allowed the company's personnel to devote more time to marketing and customer acquisition activities.

Seeing the positive results provided by improved software, Fox Mowing is planning another technical upgrade to further enhance the system's capabilities.

Training for franchise owners

A personalised training program is devised for each new franchise owner. It is ensured that by the end of the training period all the required skills have been imparted to each new franchise owner.

Describing the approach of Fox Mowing to training, Phil Maunder says, "As someone gets involved in this business, they find that it is pretty simple. They

contact us, we provide them information and the costs and prices and so forth. We interview them and they spend one or two days out in the field with one of the franchise owners and we set up the training for them.

“We have got a couple of guys that are ex-golf course greenkeepers. They do not need much training in the actual work to be done. But they may need help in acquiring jobs, customer service, looking after clients and marketing and so forth.

“Others may have come from a middle management background where they do not need much help as far as book-keeping or customer service is concerned, but they need quite a lot of help in the systems and in the actual day to day job.

“They need expert help on how to prune trees and bushes and how to garden quickly and so forth. We tailor the training package to suit individual needs depending on the skill set that they are bringing.”

Prospects and scope for growth

Fox Mowing plans that by 2023, within 10 years of its launch, it will have a total of between 200 and 250 franchise

owners. It already has about 44 on board and there is no reason why it should not be able to meet this target.

From the date of its inception, the company has very successfully adopted online marketing techniques. Its website is the source of a large portion of its business. The coming years will see more leads being generated through this source as Fox Mowing is constantly upgrading its web presence.

The company’s online portal is currently being renewed for the third time. After the current revamp is complete it will become more interactive and allow customers to book jobs and pay online.

Having had a strong start, Fox Mowing & Gardening is poised for great success in the years ahead. Its business model has attracted a number of franchise owners who have enjoyed a rewarding relationship and have built up a lucrative enterprise in the process. The company is well on its way to realise its vision of becoming the best franchised lawn mowing and gardening business in the country.

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