

AUSTRALIA'S LARGEST

MOBILE CAR DETAILING NETWORK

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Car Care

Australia's Largest Mobile Car Detailing Network

AT A GLANCE

WHO: Car Care

WHAT: With over 23 years of experience in mobile car detailing Car Care knows how to take care of your car.

WHERE: Australia

WEBSITE: <http://carcare.net.au/>

Car Care started in Perth in 1987 with a single van to visit customer locations. The car cleaning and detailing business did well and the franchise model was launched in 1990. It has since grown to become Australia's largest mobile car detailer with operations in Sydney, Central Coast NSW, Canberra ACT, Melbourne, Brisbane, Gold Coast, Sunshine

are



18 years and there are a number of franchise owners who have been in the system for over 10 years.

Car Care franchise owners are widely acknowledged as providers of high-quality cleaning and detailing services. Customers find their services extremely convenient to use especially as all the franchise owners' vans are equipped with their own water tank and generator. This obviates the need for franchisees to locate taps and power points.

The company is highly conscious of the requirement to help preserve the environment. Its detailers use only bio-degradable products. All franchisees also carry water permits. In case a customer requires a waterless wash facility, it is available, subject to the vehicle condition.

This capability was one of the deciding factors that helped a Car Care franchisee get selected by luxury car manufacturer Audi, to accompany a fleet of cars across the Nullarbor. Despite the rough terrain, the cars were kept in pristine condition by the Car Care franchise owner.

In addition to providing car detailing services, franchisees are also called upon to clean boats, light airplanes,

Coast, Adelaide, Northern Territory and Tasmania.

Operations have also been initiated in New Zealand and currently Car Care has a total of about 85 to 90 franchisees. The business model has worked very successfully for over 28 years. The company's longest serving franchisee has been functioning for

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heavy earth moving and mining equipment and caravans.

The company's franchise owners offer several options to customers that range from a Mini Detail & Polish service to a Pre-Sale Detail, a service that can result in a higher resale value for a car. A Mini Detail is relatively inexpensive, but it still provides a number of services including pressure rinse of the car's interior, vacuum cleaning of its interior and cleaning of the wheels, door jambs and mud flaps.

What does Car Care look for in a prospective franchisee?

Car Care has a very clear idea about the type of person who they want as a franchisee. It is preferable that

the prospective franchise owner has some knowledge about cars. More importantly, the individual should be strong at building customer relationships and converting a one-time job into a regular detailing assignment.

Mike Stringer, the owner of Car Care Australia describes what the company looks for in a franchisee and how the profile of applicants for this position has changed over the years, "We have got a wide variety of people who have become our franchisees and in the recent past their profile has changed.

"We seem to be attracting less trades type people who love cars. Most of our new franchisees over the last year are older and have come from a management type role.



vans and motorbikes on the road.

A Car Care franchisee has a tremendous advantage in that he/she is part of the only national car detailing company in the country. The major motor companies Ford, Holden, Mazda, Honda, Audi and Mitsubishi regularly employ detailing companies for product launches, sporting events, etc.

As they prefer to deal with a single company, Car Care is the only choice as it is present across the entire country. The franchise owner will be required to take up this corporate business and should be capable of handling it.

It is not important whether a franchisee has had previous detailing experience. Only a few of Car Care's franchise owners have done this work in the past. The company provides adequate training and guidance to its new franchisees.

Training for franchisees

The comprehensive training that is provided includes practical training consisting of five days spent in the franchise owner's territory that includes making actual visits to customers. The person undergoing

“We have a number of ex-Supermarket Store Managers with us. They were used to having a lot of responsibility, a lot of staff and they wanted to do something else. They bring with them the ability to take responsibility for themselves. They are self-motivated. The other benefit this type of person brings to the business is they help improve the system as they are used to looking at how to improve things. We provide them with pretty extensive training so that they can function effectively.”

It is essential that a franchisee has the capability to work alone. For a person to make a success of this business it is required that the franchise owner promotes himself and their business. The scope for business is tremendous. It is only limited by the number of cars, truck,

the training is usually surprised to learn that there is more to car detailing than is first apparent.

Specific guidance is provided on how to properly detail a car so that the best results are achieved in the shortest possible time. This will allow the franchise owner to do more jobs in a day and earn a proportionately greater amount.

Car Care's trainers have vast experience in the field and are themselves successful franchise owners. Many of them have spent 12 - 15 years in this line of work and

their experience is invaluable for new entrants to learn the practical aspects of the trade.

In-depth training is provided in operating the generator, high-pressure water cleaner, shampoo machine, buffing machine and vacuum. The trainer also demonstrates the products to be used and the order in which they are to be applied so that the detailing achieves the intended result.

In addition to technical skills, new franchisees are also imparted training in commercial matters. Guidance is given on how to price a job, customer handling skills and the steps to be taken to market Car Care's services in the allotted territory.

The company provides on-going training to its franchisees so that they are in a strong position to maximise their earnings and promote Car Care. Managing business operations is another skill that needs to be acquired.

Towards this end, the company has arranged access to Griffith University's 'Business Essentials' course. This online training course is split into various sections so that individuals can learn at a pace that they are comfortable with.

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Summarising the training facilities that are made available, Mike Stringer says, “Every franchisee gets a week onsite. That means we equip them in their van – that is all included in the franchise. They do not have to buy anything else.

“We have a trainer who travels the country and they have a week in their

van in their territory. We predominantly focus on their skills and processes and how to detail a car to make money as opposed to washing a car as you might wash your own car every weekend.

“Our franchisees obviously have to do it in a particular way that gets them the best result in the least amount

of time. We have different packages so we teach them those packages. We also do top-up training. We also put our people through an essential business tools course.”

Relationships with suppliers

“We have a number of suppliers,” says Mike Stringer, “Australia is such a big country and every state is so far away from each other that a lot of our suppliers are state-based. So where we might have recommended Autosmart in some states for our chemicals, in some states they do not operate so we find an alternative.

“In terms of the chemicals and the equipment we use, we deal with local suppliers. We do not deal with the major manufacturers. We also do not get involved in the selection of vans as the franchisees can bring their own van, anything from a \$12,000 - \$13,000 van to a brand new van. In terms of our national suppliers, probably the large ones are the insurance company and our web developers whom I deal with directly.”

Plans to expand through web-based marketing

In an effort to boost customer service



and automate operations, last year the company developed an online booking system. A person who wants to get their car detailed need not phone the company. They can simply log on to the Car Care website and fill out a web form. The system will automatically inform the concerned franchise owner in whose territory the customer is located about the requirement.



style. When awarding new franchises, Car Care is totally transparent in its dealings and strongly urges potential franchisees to talk to its existing franchise owners before taking a decision on whether they should invest.

This allows it to recruit only those people who fully understand what they are getting into. Over the long term, it has resulted in the sustained high performance and growth of Car Care.

Car wash and detailing services in Australia are growing at a compound annual rate of 2.5%. The popularity of mobile car detailing services is steadily increasing as car owners, especially those who have bought expensive models, realise the benefits of detailing services provided by professionals. Car Care is in a strong position to take advantage of the growth in the market and increase its business volumes.

In case that franchise owner is not available, the system will allow other franchisees to service the customer. The new system is doing well and has resulted in a sharp uptick in business.

Car Care is already the foremost car detailing company in the country. It has established a high degree of trust with its franchise owners due to its open and forthright management

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