

FAI's Franchise Trade Mission to the United States

The Franchising Association of India (FAI), the apex body representing the interests of the franchising community led a Franchise Trade Mission of Indian entrepreneurs and businessmen to the United States of America on April 11, 2008 along with the US Commercial Services, India. The 25-member Trade Delegation attended the International Franchise Expo 2008 (IFE'08) organised by the MFV Expo and sponsored by International Franchise Association at Washington DC from April 11 to 13, 2008.

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At the Expo, FAI held a **Panel Discussion on 'Franchising in India'**. The panel was focused towards encouraging US franchisors to consider expansion in India. The attendees were given previous issues of Franchising Focus, an FAI publication as well as useful information for franchising in India.

The panel was moderated by Mr. Sunil Dewan a senior franchise professional, Mr. Lakshmi Narayanan of REBI, Mr. Dave Koch of Plave Koch, Ms. Smita Joshi of the USCS and Mr. Rajeev Manchanda of Franchising Association of India, Mr. Dhawal Shah of Franchising Association of India concluded the discussion by mentioning that while India does not have any franchise law, it has an astute franchise legislation.

Mr. Dewan kick-started the discussions by saying that while most Americans would discuss the weather in general when they meet, in contrast to Indians that prefer to talk business. 30-50% of the 600 million Indians are the target audience for most international brands. Thus, needless to say, India has to be on the radar of every international expansion initiative. He also pointed out that there are 200 million potential customers in India as compared to 65 million in China.

Mr. Dave Koch informed the audience that India is a better market than China because Indians have a more formal approach towards commercial matters.

Mr. Rajeev Manchanda said that India is a very diverse country and it is very important to provide support to the Franchisee. He also mentioned that McDonalds had a customized food recipe for Indians and thus it is very important to adapt your product offering to suit the consumers taste buds. He also stated that inspite of all the hurdles related to infrastructure in India, Dominos' Pizza still manages to deliver pizzas in 30 minutes!

Ms Smita Joshi pointed out that due diligence of your master franchise partner is a must for a successful partnership. The US Commercial Services (USCS) has 7 offices across India. Its very important to conduct market research and reference checks while entering a new market place like India. International Franchisors could consider appointing regional licensees / franchisees to facilitate it.

Mr. Lakshmi Narayan, who is a real estate expert pointed out that getting good locations in India continues to be a challenge. While the infrastructure is poor, Indians are loyal and smart employees.

Mr. Dhawal Shah thanked the speakers and concluded with a Vote of Thanks. He stated that while

India does not have any franchise laws, it has a very astute legislation protecting the interests of the franchising community.

The Panel Discussion ended with an encouraging note and there were several interest that was generated amongst the participants, who were mainly Foreign Nationals.

Franchising Association of India had also taken up a booth to assist NRIs take up Indian franchise opportunities. The FAI booth at the expo too drew a lot of crowd and it managed to portray India as the most promising destination for Franchising business.

Franchising Association of India founded in 2000 is headed by leading industry professionals, Mr. C. Y. Pal and Mr. Pramod Khera.

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The Franchising Association of India is a Membership Organisation of Franchisors, Franchisees, Vendors, Consultants, Financial Institutions and Students and others. Our services are dedicated to provide a one-stop shopping experience for franchising business and with membership of the prestigious World Franchise Council we have ongoing access to knowledge of the World accepted best practice related to Franchising in different areas of business activity as also networking contacts with the WFC member Franchising Associations in different parts of the world for generating new business opportunities for Indian entrepreneurs.

In recognition of the increasing role of franchising in the market place and the very beneficial positive contributions of franchising to the Indian economy, the franchisor and franchisee members of the FAI believe that franchising must reflect the highest principles and standards of fair business practices.

Mission

Tap the vast entrepreneurial energy available in the country by promoting the concept and practice of franchising in India.

Objectives

- Exchange and safeguard the business environment for franchising, both with regard to franchisors and franchisees
- Act as the resource centre for current and prospective franchisors, franchisees, the media and the Government.
- Disseminate knowledge to promote the concept of 'franchising' and propagate it as a healthy business practice.
- Establish a forum for discussion and deliberation on Franchising related matters and problems and help promote the interest of members by organising seminars, conferences and meetings.

Activities

- To work towards achievement of the above mission and objectives our activities will include:
- Creation of appropriate forums for discussion of issues and problems related to Franchising.
 - International linkages to promote - bringing in of foreign franchisors and best practice for doing business in India through Marketing India at International Expos and otherwise.
 - Make representations to the Government with regard to legislative and other measures affecting

the promotion of concept and practice of Franchising.

- Encouraging Bank and Venture Capital funding for franchisees.
- Publication of Franchising Successes
- Creation of India's most comprehensive [Online Franchise Directory](#) - which helps franchisors promote their business's and attract new franchisees.

For more information about FAI, please visit www.fai.co.in

For more information, Please contact:

Sheena Khara

Sr. Manager - Franchising Association of India

+912267727518

+919819265733+912267727477

You can also visit www.fai.co.in for more information.