Owning a million-dollar business may sound like a pipe dream, but it is well within reach for would-be franchisees. According to the International Franchise Association (IFA), 781,931 individual franchise establishments will generate economic output of $890 billion in 2015. That’s an average of $1.1 million per establishment, according to the latest figures from the Washington, D.C.-based trade group.

A million-dollar sales year is actually below average for franchisees of SealMaster. For the 23 franchises of the Sandusky, Ohio-based company operating at least five years, annual sales average more than $5 million. Gross profit margins, notes Rick Simon, director of franchise operations, averaged 42 percent.

SealMaster’s appealing economics spring from its one-of-a-kind concept and business model. Franchisees manufacture and sell pavement sealer and also distribute pavement maintenance products and equipment for the pavement maintenance industry. Customers include local, state, and federal governments; property management firms; airports; and pavement maintenance contractors.

The fact that it is a manufacturing business sets SealMaster apart from most other franchises. The size of its territories is another special characteristic. Franchisees may be awarded territories as large as an entire state. In fact, in order to serve the entire U.S., SealMaster plans to award just 48 territories, of which existing franchisees already own all but about 15.

SealMaster is looking for franchisees in New England as well as west of the Mississippi in the Dakotas, Wyoming, Iowa, Idaho, Washington State, central and Northern California, Nebraska, Louisiana, Oregon, Kansas, Montana, Nevada, and Utah. “Once they’re sold, the exclusive opportunity to own a SealMaster franchise will come only if an owner would leave the system, which is rare,” Simon says.

In addition to promising economics and limited supply, SealMaster franchises enjoy a big market and robust prospects. Essentially, anywhere there are paved roads, parking lots, runways, or other paved surfaces is a potential customer, and the pavement preservation business is on a long-term upward track. “The SealMaster system has seen consistent growth during the past 10 years, even during the worst economic times,” Simon adds.

Franchisees who want to earn a living doing something they love can find franchises that provide them with rewarding lifestyles while also generating good income. One good example of that is Snap Fitness, a Chanhassen, Minnesota-based chain of 24-hour gym and fitness centers.

“Our brand allows individuals to fulfill their lifelong dreams of changing people’s lives while getting paid for it,” says Steele Smiley, chief officer responsible for franchise development and brand strategy. “It’s a unique combination most people can’t pass up, because we make bringing their entrepreneurial dreams to life easy.”

Snap Fitness has more than 1,400 clubs now open. While most are in the U.S., Smiley reports they are experiencing rapid growth internationally. “Within 12 months, we will have between 1,550 and 1,600 operational locations,” he says.
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Snap Fitness has open territories in nearly every state, and the company’s franchisee support systems can help narrow down prospective locations to help them select the most promising sites available. “With our unique mapping software, we have the ability to pinpoint the best location in a given market,” Smiley says. “We can help our prospects identify the best locations for their clubs.”

As good as Snap Fitness has been for its franchisees so far, the concept’s business prospects seem to get steadily better. “The wellness industry isn’t getting any smaller. Our product is more relevant now than ever, and that trend is reflected in our domestic and international growth,” Smiley says.

Some things never seem to go out of fashion, and with more than a 100-year history of developing professionals to improve their marketability and skill sets, Dale Carnegie Training is one of those. The New York City-based company’s time-tested techniques remain as relevant today as when their iconic founder first developed them, decades before cellphones, the internet, and even computers, says Jean-Louis Van Doorne, senior vice president.

Technology these days is ubiquitous, but the ability to work well with people is less frequently encountered, Van Doorne says. “Technical skills alone are not able to guarantee success,” he says. “Today’s modern employee needs to be able to thrive in teams and have the leadership and communications skills that create collaborative and creative work environments.”

Dale Carnegie Training franchisees are attracted to the concept because it can make either an ideal sideline business or an opportunity to create a whole new career as a full-time Dale Carnegie Training franchise owner. The company operates in more than 90 countries and is continuing to expand in the U.S., China, Australia, the Middle East, and Africa.

The best news for would-be franchisees is that the chances of creating a million-dollar franchise business are on the rise. For 2015, the IFA is forecasting an industry-wide sales increase of 5 percent, while the number of establishments will expand by a more modest 1.6 percent. If correct, that can mean just one thing: more million-dollar business opportunities for the discriminating franchisee.
“The SealMaster franchise is not only a nice income generator, it’s a great capital asset and wealth builder. The SealMaster franchise has been the best investment in my life. It has allowed me a lifestyle beyond my hopes and dreams.”

- Bob Krebs, SealMaster Franchise Owner

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