



# Ovenu goes global

With a network of over 100 UK franchisees, the oven cleaning specialist is now expanding abroad

**O**venu was founded in 1994 by Rik Hellewell operating out of Wokingham. Franchising followed in 1997 and the franchise network has continued to grow extremely well, with now over 100 franchisees providing a first-class oven valeting service in towns and cities throughout the UK.

The potential for the Ovenu service in the UK remains very strong because cleaning the oven is still one of the most disliked chores in most households. Despite its recent growth, Ovenu has a number of prime areas still to be exploited, and because the franchise network is well established, occasionally an existing area might become available with good sales and a high level of repeat business, so there are opportunities for new territories and some with existing sales income.



## VALUE FOR MONEY

Having started the business from scratch, Rik is well aware of the need to offer good value to customers. When he decided to franchise in the UK, offering value for money remained uppermost in his expansion plans, but this time Rik was offering franchisees value for money in two ways. Firstly, the Ovenu start-up package was comprehensive and good value, and, secondly, the monthly fees that franchisees pay for ongoing support was fixed for three years and again represented excellent value.

Franchising is an established business format accepted by the banks and professional advisers, especially for those franchisors who, like Ovenu, have qualified for full membership of the British Franchise Association.

All good franchises create an interdependence between franchisor and franchisee, and for the relationship to flourish both must succeed. This is achieved by clearly defining the roles and responsibilities of the parties.

The relationship begins when a prospective franchisee first makes contact with Ovenu requesting information about the franchise opportunity. That's why the Ovenu recruitment process is as open and transparent as possible. Prospects must spend time with an experienced franchisee to see at first-hand exactly how the business works so that they can be sure it's what they want to do before there is any commitment.

Once the decision to proceed has been taken by both parties, the franchisor provides the franchisee with comprehensive training, helps launch the business and offers ongoing support.

Franchisees are given a generous territory in which to promote and market their service, usually based on a minimum of 50,000 households. Rik Hellewell confirms: "We understand the importance and impact buying a franchise has for everyone concerned. We also understand the importance of moving our business forward at the right pace for our franchisees, because if they're happy so am I."

Given the thorough approach taken by Rik with every aspect of his business and its development, it's no surprise to find Ovenu is the market leader in oven valeting. Being first is a position Ovenu has worked hard to achieve. Ovenu was the first oven cleaning franchise to be accepted as a full member of the British Franchise Association, first to advertise on satellite TV and first to advertise the oven valeting service in the national daily press.

## OVERSEAS DEVELOPMENT

With that sort of pedigree and track record, it's not surprising that Rik has been approached by a number of people interested in taking the Ovenu concept overseas.

Ovenu's overseas development is likely to be undertaken with a master license arrangement, especially in larger countries. However, smaller countries can be developed by other means more appropriate to their size and potential.

Ovenu has successfully adapted its franchise format in Australia (Perth) and Spain (southern) as well as the United States of America and Canada. Northern France is due to begin operations in the next few weeks.

Overseas development has so far been passive, but Ovenu intends to promote the master license opportunity more actively later this year, and to do that has established a much closer relationship with its franchise adviser, The Franchise Company, to ensure overseas developments do not affect the UK in anything but a positive way. The Ovenu brand is going global. **MM**

To find out more about Ovenu in the UK or overseas contact Ken Rostron for a franchise pack on 01325 251455 or email [kr@franchisecompany.co.uk](mailto:kr@franchisecompany.co.uk)

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