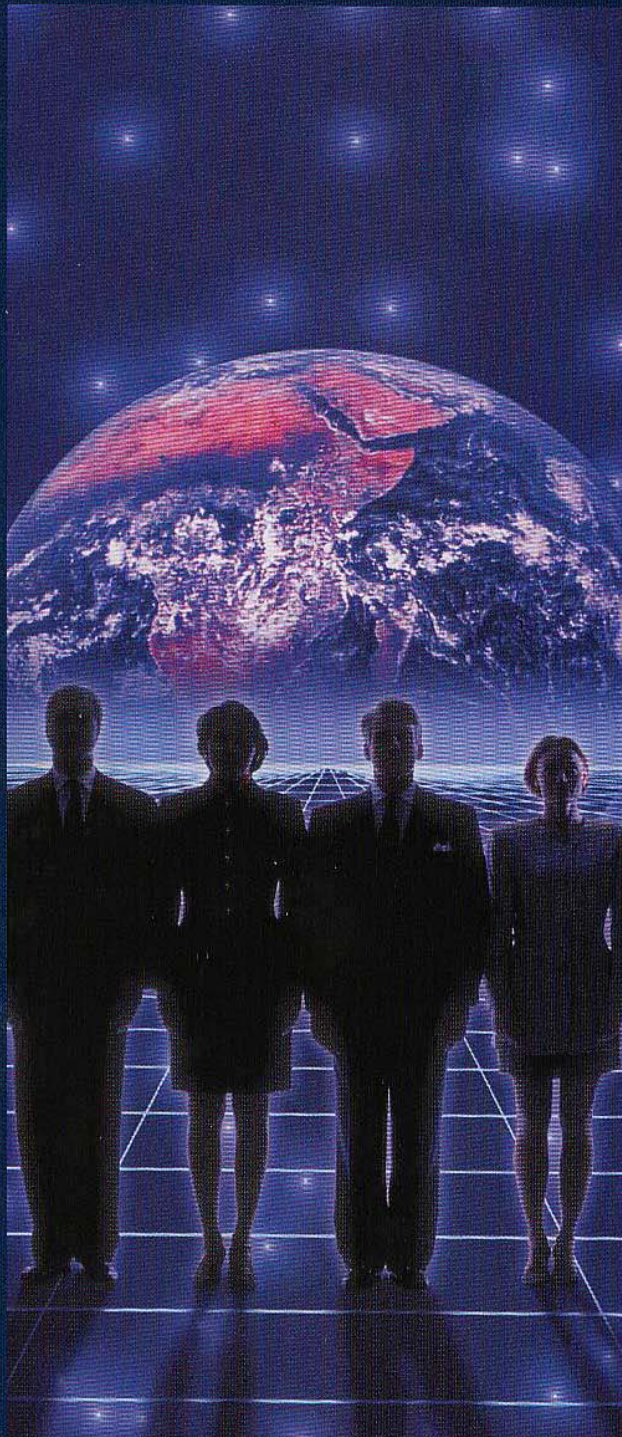




Levelling the e-business playing field



In recent years, 'e-commerce' and 'e-business' have gone from being catchy buzzwords to representing real solutions that have revolutionised the way companies around the world conduct business

UNFORTUNATELY, joining this Internet revolution usually meant an investment far beyond what most businesses were capable of, paving the way for online domination by 'the big guys'. That's no longer the case however, thanks to one pioneering company - WSI Internet Consulting & Education.

Headquartered in Toronto, Canada, WSI has built the world's largest network of Internet Consultant Franchises by capitalising on this significant gap in the business services marketplace. Realising that small- to medium-sized businesses represent the largest segment of the worldwide business landscape, WSI entered the industry with a nearly limitless customer base. These are customers that are eager to realise the benefits of powerful new technologies, but without the knowledge or means to implement them. Advanced e-Commerce solutions, used

“The leverage of saying you're part of a company with over 700 offices in 87 countries gives you instant credibility”

by giants such as Amazon.com and supplied by enterprise-level providers like IBM and Microsoft, are so far out of reach of most businesses that it seems almost impossible for them to compete on the same level. Appearances can be deceiving however, and this is where WSI franchisees, using proven, patent-pending systems and technologies step in and stand

out. By developing cutting-edge tools for serving this ever-growing business segment, WSI has enjoyed tremendous growth and is currently ranked as the world's #1 Internet ►

Franchise by *Entrepreneur Magazine*.

The WSI opportunity stems from the reality that in today's increasingly competitive economy, a business needs more than just a website to succeed online. In fact, many businesses with a standard website have never experienced any sort of success or benefit from their online presence at all. Whether due to a lack of information, a lack of resources or both, many companies simply stumbled online with a flashy electronic brochure developed by one of the ubiquitous web design firms that can't see past a site's front-end. No thought was ever given to how Internet technologies could be used to improve the operations of the business, increase profits or communicate more efficiently with its customers. What's worse, quite often these web design firms don't even have access to the technologies that a business truly needs to profit online. This short-sighted philosophy has plagued the Internet industry for years, but it has also paved the way for WSI franchisees to succeed beyond even their own expectations. "I probably looked at ten different franchise opportunities before I did this," says franchise owner and Internet Consultant Skip Quinn. "I did a lot of research, and I liked the WSI model because I could bring something to the table that my competitors didn't have. The leverage of saying that you're part of a company with over 700 offices in 87 countries gives you instant credibility when you go to the table and make a sales presentation."

To give its Internet Consultant franchisees the edge they enjoy in the industry today, WSI has developed a unique system that combines consultancy services and technological innovation. Rather than operating as yet another web design shop, WSI franchisees offer their clients complete Internet Business Solutions. These solutions are designed to not only give a business a professionally developed online presence,

but to also transform the way the business operates by taking advantage of advanced Internet technologies.

These technologies, which include full e-Commerce applications, Customer Relationship Management and e-Marketing Systems, robust e-Learning platforms and much more, have the power to make nearly any back-office task more efficient. More efficient operations mean substantial cost savings, a point that is especially important for smaller businesses where every dollar counts. "One of the reasons why I chose [to join WSI] was the breadth of products we can offer," explains franchise owner John Sinnot. "The size of the company and the resources behind WSI mean we

"The WSI model brings something to the table that competitors don't have"

have literally hundreds of products that we can choose from when we're out talking to prospects and out selling the products, so to me that was a deciding factor."

The benefits here are an easy sell, but the difficulty has always been in making those technologies accessible to the small- to medium-sized business owner.

To do so, WSI utilizes an impressive 'Global Production Center' model that unites high-tech development facilities from low-cost centres throughout the world into a proprietary e-Marketplace system. The WSI e-Marketplace includes Internet application developers, graphic design houses,

Internet marketing specialists and more, giving every franchisee access to a wealth of resources that other web design firms simply can't match.



This creates economies of scale, passing huge cost savings on to every member of the franchise network. It also means that an Internet Consultant doesn't need any specific technical experience to operate his or her business, as expressed by franchise owner Jim Hannigan: "Our responsibility is to get out there and market ourselves and our business to our customers. All the most complicated bits, the development and the production and making things happen have been made incredibly easy by the systems that WSI has put together for us."

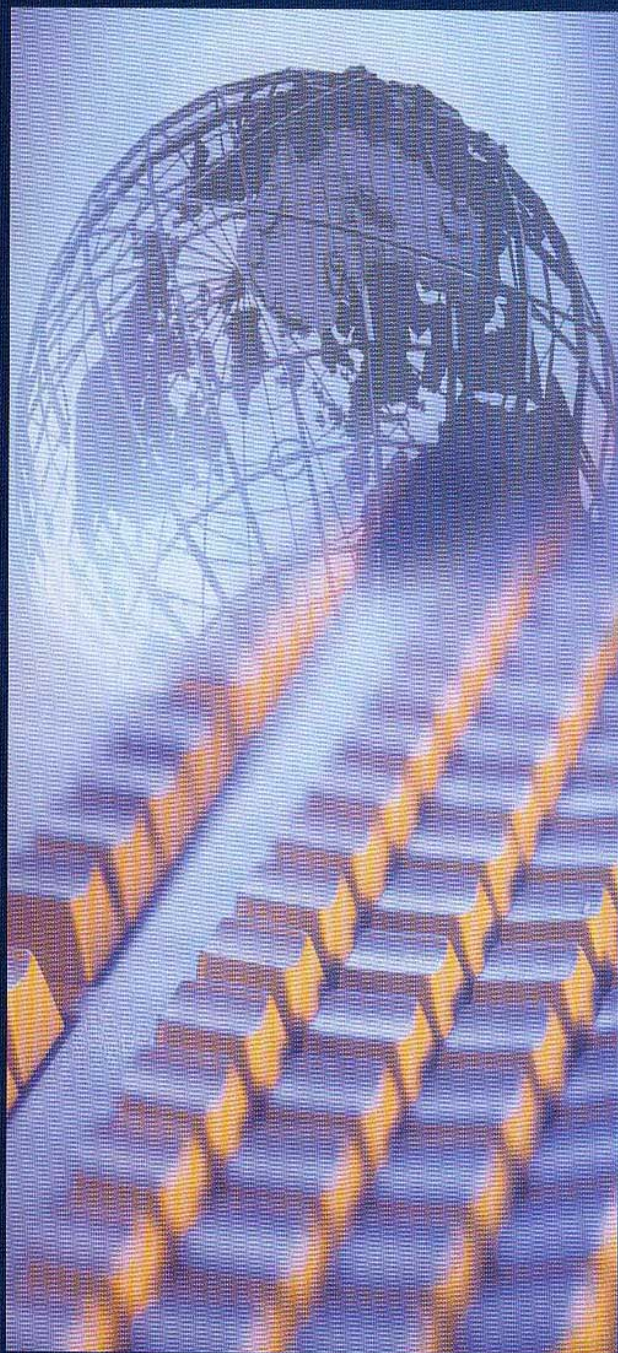
This makes the WSI opportunity inviting to investors of all backgrounds since the technical details of website development are left to technology experts while Internet Consultants focus their time and energy on developing business relationships with their clients.

"I enjoy this more than anything I've ever done... I've worked at senior levels at large corporations"

Indeed, taking the time to fully understand the needs of a business is an integral part of the WSI Internet Solutions process. This means becoming a trusted advisor, rather than simply a supplier of web services. WSI franchisees do this by utilising the company's patent-pending Internet Solutions Lifecycle™ system, which includes a revolutionary business analysis tool. In this way, Internet Consultants come to really know their clients and are able to fully assess their needs. The end result is not only an effective Internet Solution built specifically for each client, but also a long-term business relationship with long-term revenue potential. Many Internet Consultants find this approach to be not only financially rewarding, but personally satisfying as well. "I don't think you can pick a better industry," states Ken Gilley, a franchise owner based in Texas, USA. "The Internet lifestyle brings a lot of opportunities, and for me it's about quality of life. The ability to work from home or, if you elect to move yourself outside of the home, the opportunity to achieve a level of income that I don't think you can get in other places, and then also achieve that quality of life."

Jim Hannigan agrees: "I have to say I enjoy this more than anything else I've ever done. I've worked at senior levels at large corporations before this where I was pretty much responsible for everything I did, but now whatever I achieve is totally 100% down to me and the team that I work with. There's a much greater satisfaction from that."

With its commitment to innovation and focus on serving a large, stable customer base, WSI and its franchisees are rapidly building one of the Internet's biggest success stories. This is no small feat in an industry that has seen some significant challenges, but WSI has shown that when you build on proven systems and take the time to identify and understand your market, success is inevitable. As put by franchisee Larry Hering, "[WSI] is an incredibly powerful company. You can deliver the impact of an IBM, yet operate out of your home office. If you can think of it, we have it. How many local developers can say that? None." **FI**



WSI

Internet Consulting & Education

+ 44 1603 620 301

CONTACT

Dugan Ayles
Franchise Development Services
Franchise House
56 Surrey Street
Norwich NR1 3FD
ENGLAND

+44 1603 630 174

dugana@fdsltd.com

www.franchise-international.net