

FRANCHISE PLAYERS

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EVENTS

Artist Opens Up Her Own Paint-and-Sip Franchise



NOVEMBER 18, 2014

Franchise Players is Entrepreneur's Q&A interview column that puts the spotlight on franchisees. If you're a franchisee with advice and tips to share, email ktaylor@entrepreneur.com.

KATE TAYLOR
ENTREPRENEUR STAFF

Reporter



When Emma Harvey was working as an artist instructor and assistant at a Pinot's Palette paint and sip studio,

YouTube

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she wanted to share the concept with everyone she knew. Eventually, she decided that working at a Pinot's Palette wasn't enough – she wanted to open up a studio of her own. Today, Harvey and her husband operate their own franchise. Here's what this artist turned franchisee has learned.

Name: Emma Harvey

ADVERTISING



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Franchise owned: Pinot's Palette in Ridgewood, N.J.

How long have you owned a franchise?

We signed our franchise agreement in early 2014 and opened our studio within seven months. We are so thrilled to be in business.

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Why franchising?

Everything is turn-key. Pinot's Palette has an ever-expanding master painting library with hundreds of amazing paintings to choose from, as well as a comprehensive technology system that makes booking parties and scheduling staff a breeze. In the beginning, Chris and I weren't really interested in owning a franchise. But after experiencing the Pinot's Palette difference, from both an employee's perspective as well as a customer's perspective, we knew that this was going to be the leading paint and sip business in the country. And now it is!

The beautiful thing about franchising is that, while we may excel in certain aspects of running the business, there are areas in which we lack knowledge and/or expertise. With a simple phone call to headquarters in Texas, or an email to a local franchisee, we have instant feedback and assistance from our teammates who have done it all before. The support is amazing!

What were you doing before you became a franchise owner?

Before becoming a Pinot's Palette franchise owner, I worked as an artist at the Pinot's Palette Montclair studio. I remember reading the job posting online and thinking, "Wow, I'd love to work here!" Teaching art in a fun and exciting atmosphere sounded perfect. I was so excited to share this paint and sip idea with everyone I knew. After working at the studio for a few months as an artist instructor and assistant, I began to think about how my husband and I could open our own studio. Everyone who painted at Pinot's Palette left with a smile, and that became my goal: to work in a place where I could bring art to the masses in a fun and entertaining atmosphere with excellent customer service. That's what the Pinot's Palette brand does.

Why did you choose this particular franchise?

Pinot's Palette has built an exceptional team of creative people and it shows in everything they/we do. From the vast original painting library created by Pinot's Palette artists, to the eye-catching logo, right down to the precise methods of setting up the studio, everything flows perfectly. There is a consistent open line of communication between the franchise owners, the artists, and headquarters. Everyone plays an important role and our voices are heard. It truly is a wonderful group of people that make up the Pinot's Palette team!

How much would you estimate you spent before you were officially open for business?

Franchise fee: \$25,000

Legal fees: \$10,000

Rent: \$25,000

Marketing (Events/Ads): \$12,000

Supplies: \$20,000

Where did you get most of your advice/do most of your research?

I had a front row seat inside of the business as an employee at an existing studio. Then, most of our research to become franchise owners of our own location began when we started the conversation with headquarters, located in Texas. After several phone calls and emails, we signed up for “Discovery Day” and flew to Texas to meet the team. There, we were able to ask questions, look at statistics, meet other franchisee candidates and learn about the business.

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What were the most unexpected challenges of opening

your franchise?

Some of the challenges we faced came from the local laws and learning about the town code.

What advice do you have for individuals who want to own their own franchise?

Research your franchise, meet the people behind the scenes and make sure it's a good fit. We knew that Pinot's Palette was for us after we met everyone at headquarters and realized we had the same ideals and goals for moving forward.

What's next for you and your business?

We look forward to building a loyal customer base in our region, and working with other Pinot's Palette franchisees in New York and New Jersey to continue building this brand that we have fallen in love with!

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