

# No small fry

There's nothing outdated about this dynamic franchise that's taking global waters by storm...

Old Fashioned Fish and Chips prides itself on remaining a family business at the core, and bringing back the old "corner fish and chips store" that we all loved when growing up. That said, there is nothing low-key about the vision for this business, which has become one of the fastest-growing franchises in South Africa. As Nicolas De Sousa, Operations Director at the helm of the brand puts it: "We have grown into an international franchise and are one of the fastest-growing concerns in southern Africa, with expansion anticipated across the globe."

De Sousa cites value as being at the heart of the brand's success – whether it be great purchasing value for customers, or customers being valued through service – he feels that it's an essential within today's franchising industry. "Then there are factors like consistency, originality and creating a brand and product that people warm to. Above and beyond these, some might say, is keeping business ethics and motivation in line with what originally established the brand."

Of course, this impressive growth couldn't have been achieved without a formidable team of franchisees who share in the brand's driving ambition to expand and reach new levels of excellence at every stage of the game. Albert Botes, who opened his first store in Dobsonville, a township in greater Soweto, in February 2009, is no better example. He will open his fifth store in Louis Trichardt in December this year and has three locations on the cards for 2011. "My passion is to build the business model to be able to control multiple stores," says Botes.

## Fresh waters

With a background in retail leasing, Botes previously owned two franchised fast-food outlets as a sideline venture, before resigning from his corporate position to focus all his time and energy on building his Old Fashioned Fish and Chips business. And why this particular franchise? "It was exciting to start with a new franchise that has rules

and regulations, but also gave me a bit more freedom and room for innovation than others do," he explains.

An accountant by profession, this franchisee believes that strict financial and stock controls are essential ingredients for success, as well as staff motivation. "I believe in allowing my staff to grow with me and I now have three managers who started with me as general staff and worked their way up to supervisor and then management level. It is very rewarding to see how people grow and improve their own living conditions in my small group of 75 employees," says Botes.

## Reeling in success

It's the people side of the business that also appeals most to Bharti Patel Daya, who at 29 owns three Old Fashioned Fish and Chips stores in Joburg's CBD, as part of a family business. "I love the fast pace of being in the shop, the daily ins-and-outs of dealing with staff and customers, and being hands-on in every way – that's where I get my thrill," she says. Not one to remain idle, Daya completed her degree in accounting in 2005, is a trained pre-school teacher and also has a hand in the family's other business, a florist. When on the look-out for a new opportunity, she found that Old Fashioned Fish and Chips stood out from all the other options and met the family's requirements exactly, offering low initial costs,

a quick set-up process and a strong brand. "The fact that we are also a family unit means that we share the same values as the De Sousas," she says. "And have faced similar challenges. We are also motivated and enthusiastic about the same things."

With expansion high on Daya's agenda too, the families' vision for the future is perfectly aligned. De Sousa's next target is to open a 200<sup>th</sup> store within the first quarter of 2011. He whets our appetites with the following words: "Watch this space... Old Fashioned Fish and Chips have big plans on the cards... what we have in mind for development of various business facets will change business history in South Africa." Clearly no pond is too big for this global fish and chips brand...



Franchisees Bharti Patel Daya & Albert Botes

Operations Director Nicolas De Sousa