

Essential tools for business success

Adam Orlando

PEOPLE today expect to live longer, yet look younger, according to Western Australia's Essential Beauty master franchisor, Angus Forrest.

A growing men's market in particular has led to an increase in the range of beauty products and services available for both sexes, from waxing and painting nails, to permanent make-up, laser hair removal and body piercing.

Mr Forrest said the beauty therapy industry offered many opportunities for prospective franchisees, however the complexities of running a business had deterred many in WA from setting up shop.

There are 27 Essential Beauty franchises in Australia, with four salons in WA, operating in Innaloo, Morley, Perth and Midland.

The franchise was recently placed 15th in BRW's 'Fastest-Growing Franchises' list, which rated businesses on the number of outlets in Australia.

According to Mr Forrest, while Essential Beauty has taken off in other states, particularly South Australia which has 13 salons, it's been slow to catch on in WA.

"The issue is finding new franchisees, good franchisees," he told WA Business News.

"In the early days over here, no-one had heard of us [Essential

PROBLEM SOLVING

COMPANY: Essential Beauty.

BUSINESS: Beauty therapy and make-up artists.

PROBLEM: Finding willing franchisees.

SOLUTION: Mass marketing.

Beauty]. They didn't know that we were around and yet on a national level we were doing really well.

"The brand really lacked market profile, so it was difficult to get franchisees to come on board because they weren't familiar with us."

Mr Forrest said beauty therapy was a complex environment to work in, from the hands-on level of accredited beauty therapists to the franchisee who is required to understand the beauty processes and also manage the business.

"If you look at a shop that sells DVDs, it's quite self-serving. You go in, look around, pick out the DVD yourself, take it to the counter, they scan it and you pay \$29.95 or whatever it is," he said.

"With our salon, there are 85 different things on our menu and our staff really need to be able to cater for all different customer types, someone with a particular skin condition or skin type, for example."

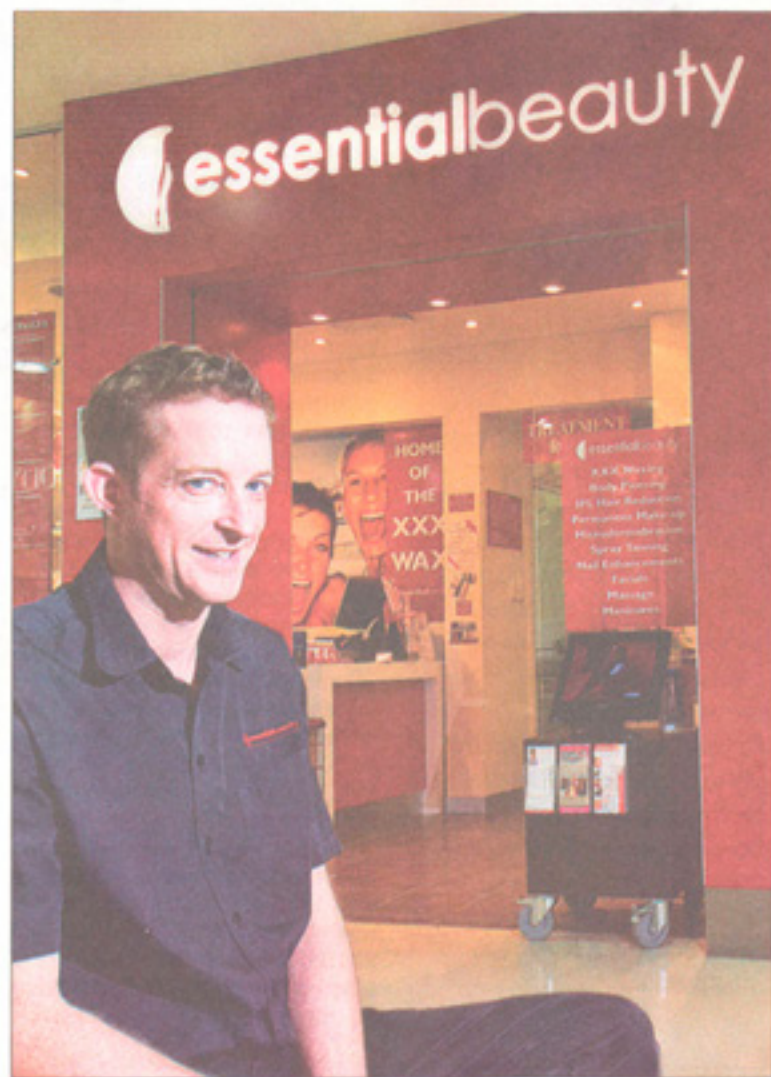
Mr Forrest said while the intricacies of the industry contributed to Essential Beauty's growth struggle in WA, a lack of public awareness had impeded earlier expansion efforts.

He said implementing a mass marketing campaign by advertising extensively on 92.9 FM radio had boosted the franchise's profile in WA, which in turn led to a doubling of the number of salons in recent years.

"When you look at it, we essentially have the same population as South Australia, yet they are able to effectively operate 12 or 13 salons," Mr Forrest said.

"I think if we continue with our advertising and maybe step it up in the future, we can catch up and get more franchisees into the industry."

Mr Forrest said he would expand the franchise's marketing campaign in 2009 by advertising on television, most likely Channel 10.



ESSENTIAL EFFORT: Master franchisor Angus Forrest at one of his four WA Essential Beauty salons. Photo: Grant Currall