

# new franchisors



The Franchising team at Ashtons Legal are among the leaders in the franchise world. We have over 20 years experience assisting franchise networks within the UK and internationally with a strong reputation for service and high end quality advice. Our dedicated franchise team is made up of specialists within their fields who understand the unique needs of franchisors. The team is supported by a wider commercial services team enabling it to provide our franchise clients with an holistic approach of all their legal needs.

The team is further supported by its associated franchise consulting business ensuring that our clients are able to benefit from a 'one stop shop' approach of having all professional advice needed to start up and operate a franchise under one roof, where required.

These clients have included such diverse businesses as Millie's Cookies, Hotel Chocolat, Neal's Yard Natural Remedies, Coffee Republic, Pitman Training, Signs Express, French Connection, Chevron Texaco, Chopstix, CeX and Harry Ramsden's.

In addition to advising these larger clients, much of our business is in advising start up and SME franchised businesses.

The team advises a number of recent winners of the British Franchise Association's Franchisor of the Year award including Water Babies, TaxAssist Accountants and Agency Express.

The varied business backgrounds of the team provide an ideal platform for advising franchisors, as much of the law as it is applied to franchising depends on a huge amount of common sense and commercial experience. In addition, a number of the team have been awarded the British Franchise Association's Qualified Franchise Professional certification. This means that our lawyers truly understand the day to day issues faced by Franchisors and are able to offer practical advice on how to resolve them.

The ethos of the team is that it is essential to look at franchising from a business owner's point of view first, and a lawyer's second,

giving clients practical advice in plain language, and very often within tight deadlines. The team's international experience is a real specialism and it means that we can help our clients become truly international brands.

## **New Start Franchise Package**

Over time we have developed a package for new franchisors. This comprises all of the necessary legal documentation for the franchise as well as practical help generally with the legalities of franchising.

- Franchise agreement
- Confidentiality agreement
- Deposit letter
- Franchisee letter
- Checking internal processes and paperwork to protect the franchisor from liability to third parties
- Health check of existing terms and conditions of business and data protection documentation
- Advice on the structure of the franchise (including the holding of intellectual property)
- Advice on practical control systems available for use within the network
- Review of the proposed Prospectus and second stage information such as an Information Memorandum to minimize the risk of possible misrepresentation claims (including the drafting of relevant disclaimers around earnings claims).

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Following an initial briefing from the client or its consultant the first draft of the Franchise Agreement is produced. There follows a face to face meeting to discuss the draft. This is particularly useful from a commercial perspective for the client, as all important issues relating to the proposed franchise structure are given a thorough airing, together with a full explanation of the legal documentation. This is usually a very full session, and is another feature that sets us apart from our competition - we try and ensure that you are properly structured to give you practical control over the network.

## International experience

The firm acts for a large number of UK based franchisors who have export potential and has advised on many international transactions, to the point where probably a third of our time is spent in this field. Recently the firm has advised clients on dealings across the four corners of the globe including:

- A restaurant chain on the granting of rights to open outlets in Qatar
- A Lebanese bakery chain on the granting of rights (including manufacturing rights) to other outlets into Saudi Arabia and Qatar.
- An education provider on granting franchise rights into Palestine and Russia and licenses into Malaysia and Russia
- A high street retailer on its granting of rights to a partner in Mexico to open outlets
- A national accounting firm on the appointment of a master franchisee in Canada and Australia
- A high street beverage retailer on appointing a developer to open outlets throughout Russia
- An Asian food chain on its appointment of a major service station operator in Germany and Ireland to open outlets at their forecourts

## What people say

“This specialist franchising practice is based in Norwich and possesses a strong reputation for high quality work in the field. The firm acts for franchisors, helping them to expand both throughout the UK and overseas. It has particular expertise working with organizations looking to use franchising for the first time and earns praise for its ability to produce effective and specialised agreements”. **Chambers & Partners**

“Whenever you're dealing with John Chambers you know he knows the client very well. He's also sensible - he doesn't point score”. **Chambers & Partners**

“Clients praise Damian Humphrey for his approachability, and describe him as professional, personable and commercial” **Chambers & Partners**

“Damian Humphrey is impressive giving pragmatic advice in a reliable and effective manner”. **Legal 500**

“John Chambers has knowledge and experience that is second to none; he is a first rate communicator who knows franchising inside out”. **Legal 500**

“The franchising team have always gone above and beyond to support us in our plans, providing sound advice”. **Chambers & Partners**

For client testimonials please visit [www.franchiselawyer.co.uk](http://www.franchiselawyer.co.uk)

[www.ashtonslegal.co.uk](http://www.ashtonslegal.co.uk)



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