

JIM'S SCRATCH & DENT

THE MOBILE REPAIR INDUSTRY CONTINUES TO GROW WITH THE LATEST FRANCHISE ON THE MARKET FROM THE ESTABLISHED BRAND JIM'S.

JASON JAAP IS NO STRANGER

to the franchise world and certainly not to the scratch and dent market. He started out in the Jim's group as a fresh faced 20-year-old in the mowing division. He worked his way up to a master franchise, recruiting and supporting franchisees.

"Jim's has been pretty good for me over the years. One thing I've always admired about Jim, even though he's got a lot of flaws and he'll tell you about what those are, but it is ethos around customer service," says Jaap. "I really believe that's how he's built the brand that he has. Eventually I sold all the franchises and decided to go over to the UK. I bought the rights to Jim's Mowing UK and went over there and launched it."

While Jaap was in the UK he became familiar with SMART mobile repairs. "I was going to franchise expos, and they were full of all these mobile scratch and

dent businesses, like Chips Away and Car Medic and there was a whole host of them selling mobile scratch and dent repair franchises."

He returned to Australia, researched the market and started a company called The SMART Guys in partnership with Frank Rugulo who had the technical and repair industry expertise. In time he decided to create a membership program. "We went back to the drawing board and worked out what we could add to the membership program to enhance it. Then we would employ our own technicians that were experienced in, not so much mobile repairs, but spray painting and spot repairs. Then we would go to car dealerships and see if they were interested in on-selling the product. That got quite a bit of traction and it quickly evolved."

A few bad deals led to Jaap starting out again under the umbrella of Schmick.

"I started Schmick in 2010. The first

couple of years were hard because we were changing and swapping the model. Then we had a few big dealership groups take it on and it just started getting momentum," Jaap says.

"It grew to a multimillion dollar business – it was actually worth tens of millions when I left. We employed about 100 people, we had 60 vans on the road, all professionally fitted out mobile repair vans. The business model worked really well and I sold it to MotorOne."

Jaap stayed on as managing director for three years and left a couple of years ago. As MotorOne began its foray into the collision repair space Jaap learned about this industry too.

"I quickly learnt that the opportunities for starting up your own family business were a lot fewer than 20 years ago. It's a bit like supermarkets where it's dominated by some big players that own a lot of shops and run on predictive price models and high volumes.

"So starting your own panel shop if you're a spray painter wasn't what it used to be. I didn't see much opportunity for aspirational technicians. I got talking to Jim again and he suggested that I start a scratch and dent division. I thought about the opportunity for spray painters. What easier way is there for them to get into their own business safely, in partnership with a brand like Jim's behind them? As well as the business and the franchising experience and support that it provides."

Jim's Scratch and Dent launched a year ago with their first franchisee, Sean Charles on the Gold Coast, a competitive space in the minor cosmetic repair arena. Sean was busy from the first day and has been ever since.

"The first 12 months has been the pilot phase testing the concept. We have seven franchisees and another five in the pipe-works. We've been making it as cost-effective as we can. A technician can come on for as little as \$20,000 and most of that is spent buying everything that goes in the van.

"They can run their business as small or as big as they like to suit their own lifestyle. If it's a young technician they can go hell for leather and make as much as they can. If it's someone who owns a house and is just doing it for lifestyle, they'll start typically at 8:00 and finish at 3:00 and be quite happy. That will determine



on what type of money they make but generally they all turnover around \$3,000 – \$4,000 a week and a lot of them do as much as \$8,000 or \$9,000 a week.

Jaap says that every time they put on a new franchisee it creates more demand as the vans drive around. “It’s another mobile billboard and probably only 1-2 percent of people know that Jim’s offers this service. As it becomes more mainstream like mowing or dog wash everyone will think if they get a small scratch and dent “I can call Jim’s to fix it’. The potential is mind boggling.”

So what does a successful franchisee look like? “Certainly someone with aspiration. They don’t necessarily need to have business experience because we teach, mentor and train. Anyone that becomes a franchisee, will have Jim’s number and they can call him any time. They all have my number and I make a point of speaking to them weekly to see if they need any help.

“The most important thing is that they need to understand is customer service.



A franchise can start from \$20,000, the bulk of which goes into setting up the van with the necessary products.

They need believe in and understand why customer service is so important. If they don’t cut the mustard with customers they could lose their franchise.

“They all have instant contact with each other through a chat service so if any of them get stuck on a particular job or a colour they chuck it into the WhatsApp message and someone will have the answer for them. So they’re not on their own as far as the repair side but they’re all proficient repairers that turn out quality jobs.

“We’re looking for the right type of person who has aspirations of running their

own business and is not quite sure how to do it, and can do with the support. They can get comfort with one of the biggest brands in Australia behind them as well as the franchising experience.

While everyone so far as been consistently booked out, Jim’s also offers a \$3,000 work guarantee, which stays in place for the first 6-12 months to give peace of mind but Jaap says no one has had to claim it so far.

For more information on Jim’s Scratch and Dent contact 131 546 or visit: jimsscratchanddent.com.au.



There’s a better way to train your apprentices.



One-on-one onsite

At your workplace, getting real work done.



No block training

Training that works around your schedule.



Year-round intake

Flexibility to get started anytime.



Real time feedback

Know where your apprentice is up to.

We offer apprenticeships in:

- Light Vehicle Mechanical
- Heavy Vehicle Mechanical
- Panel & Paint
- Sales & Administration

**Where you work.
How you work.
When you work.**

A better way to train.

Contact us to get started today

(02) 9016 9066 | training@mtansw.com.au | mtatraining.com.au RTO 90402