

Franchise Owner Profile



Name: Chris Casselberry

Location: Baton Rouge, LA

Established Baton Rouge business turns to franchise ownership to support long-term growth objectives.

BUILDING ON SUCCESS

With an established list of customers, 120 employees and revenues in excess of \$8 million, GreenSeasons, a family-owned business, was doing just fine. Providing pest control, landscaping, pressure washing and fence installation services to a sizeable group of commercial, industrial and government customers in Baton Rouge and the surrounding area, GreenSeasons easily could have continued to build on its successful formula for years to come.

But Chris Casselberry, the owner (with his wife Sheila) of the 11-year-old company, and his four sons wanted to continue to grow. "We're a family business; we're not interested in selling," Casselberry says. They even knew where they wanted to grow – in the lucrative lawn and tree care residential market. They just didn't know exactly how to do it.



Weighing Their Options

Their first move was to change the company's name from Corporate Green to the more inclusive GreenSeasons. That was the easy part. Identifying qualified prospects and marketing to thousands of homeowners in the Baton Rouge, Slidell and New Orleans markets would be a lot harder. So would educating themselves and their crews on everything they needed to know about tree care, fertilization and other inputs.

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As the challenges mounted, they began to doubt their ability to pull together all of the resources and the expertise needed to be successful in a competitive market. It seemed a daunting task. That's when Casselberry began considering another strategy: a franchise business. After evaluating a couple of options, he and Sheila purchased an existing Spring-Green Lawn Care franchise that had been operating in Baton Rouge for several years.

Casselberry says marketing experience and expertise tipped the scales in favor of Spring-Green, also a family-owned business.

"No matter how we cut it, we couldn't convince ourselves that we could do marketing as effectively as a company with Spring-Green's resources," Casselberry says. "They had the statistics and the programs that small independent businesses just don't have. Especially when it comes to mailings, they have the ability to target your marketing where it needs to go."



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Marketing Support Focused on Customers

Spring-Green's marketing programs are designed to help franchise owners stay focused on servicing customers, especially during peak seasons.

A suite of sophisticated and cost-effective direct marketing programs takes advantage of historical local market data to target the most qualified potential customers. Franchise owners also can view and analyze customer demographics, select mailing lists and promotional offers and send materials directly to the printer for quick turnarounds. The Spring-Green technology platform provides tools to monitor campaigns in real time.

Utilizing a variety of media – email, direct mail, invoice messages, inserts and phone calls – Spring-Green's marketing staff also sells additional services to existing customers. Spring-Green's national call center, which many franchise owners take advantage of to reduce overhead during peak times, helps business owners prioritize the most profitable parts of their operations and stay focused on providing great service.

Spring-Green franchise owners also benefit from the collective knowledge of the entire franchise system, including consultants and trainers who conduct local and regional meetings and seminars.

"I'll definitely be going to some of those because that's one thing that's really lacking in the green industry for independent business owners," says Casselberry. "We're really looking forward to talking to peers and sharing real numbers and information."



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Year 1: Ambitious Goal

Casselberry has set an ambitious goal for his first year as a Spring-Green franchise owner: \$700,000 in revenue. Meeting that goal would require adding approximately 400 new accounts, which would make the return on his franchise investment a "no brainer," he says.

But simply opening Spring-Green residential accounts and growing revenues in the franchise business is not Casselberry's ultimate goal. "We also want to pull a lot of that business over to GreenSeasons and vice versa," he says. He believes being on homeowners' properties and establishing a relationship through the Spring-Green franchise increases that potential.

Casselberry also considers economies of scale and cross-selling opportunities that supplement his GreenSeasons businesses a key benefit of the Spring-Green relationship.

"If we hit the high side of the potential with Spring-Green, we would be tickled pink because that wouldn't just mean new revenue for our Spring-Green business, it also would mean opportunities to sell all of our other services to our Spring-Green customers," he says. "If we're real successful, this will have been one of the best decisions I've ever made."



About Spring-Green

Spring-Green delivers traditional and organic lawn-care services to residential and commercial clients nationwide. A family-owned and operated franchising company, Spring-Green is a recognized leader in the professional lawn and tree care industry. Chicago-based Spring-Green has been beautifying neighborhoods and communities for more than 37 years.

For more information, please visit www.springgreenfranchise.com or call 1-800-777-8608.