

A comment from Tabatinga founder Brian Parker (for mum and dad investors)

'You are to be commended for your interest in controlling your own financial destiny by seeking to run your own business. However this information is offered with a word of caution. Running your own business, (even a franchised business) is very demanding. Demanding of your time, resources and finances. These demands can often inadvertently affect those most precious to you, your family.

80% of all small businesses don't exist five years after they have started, more alarmingly, 25% don't even make it to the 12 month mark! Can you imagine the financial and social cost this must have put on these budding entrepreneurs? Add to this the tremendous state of flux the leisure industry is currently experiencing due to crowding out by on-line entertainment, and you begin to see the enormity of the decision you are considering.

Granted, this is a rather dire introduction to a recruitment piece, but at Tabatinga we want people to join us that are coming in fully aware of the commitment required to 'be your own boss' and work in the leisure industry.

You see the real competitor for us is not so much the play centre down the road, the bowling centre in the next block or the lazer tag business in the next suburb. Our main competitor is technology! I will even go so far as to say that if those play centres, bowling alleys and lazer tag arenas are not planning radical adjustments to their existing business model (no matter how successful they currently are), they are on the path to oblivion, and probably quicker than even I am imagining.

Put more simply, you cannot follow what's already out there in existence because it is now an outdated business model! On-line entertainment is available 24/7, available in the comfort of your own home, of extremely high quality and available at comparatively low prices. Location based leisure facilities struggle to match any of these realities, so the only place that we as bricks and mortar venues can compete is in the areas that on-line cannot.

But what's left, I hear you ask! It's human interaction! No app or program can put two people physically together in a room no matter how good virtual reality and hologram technology gets (famous last words!). People will always crave social interaction with others, just look at the explosion of social media. Facebook, Twitter and the like have made socialising with friends and family much more immediate and easy. Technology has not diminished the desire for people to socialise, and therein lays the opportunity for leisure based entertainment venues.

I will throw another statistic at you here too: 68% of people that stop doing business with a company do so because they feel that the staff, managers and owners don't care about them. It has nothing to do with price or convenience. Even if you halve that figure, that's a lot of lost business that can easily be avoided don't you think?

So what's the answer? At Tabatinga we have systems in place and plans in mind to make sure we will combat these modern day obstacles as best as possible and ensure that at all times our customers feel appreciated and that Tabatinga remains their first and only choice of leisure venue – that's what we promise to you when you join our family.

As you do your due diligence into our industry, here are two questions you need to ask and be satisfied with the answers before committing yourself;

1. What are you doing to combat the on-line technology onslaught?
2. What are you doing to retain your customers and keep them feeling appreciated?

The success (or otherwise) of a leisure business of the future lays in how well they are planning to deal with these very real threats.

Thank you again for your interest, hopefully we will meet sometime and discuss your future success some more.'

Brian

