

CASE STUDY

Hire A Hubby

“LOCATION INTELLIGENCE IS A REAL SALES TOOL...EVERYONE CAN SEE AND UNDERSTAND WHY WE CHARGE WHAT WE DO FOR GOLD. WITHOUT MAPINFO WE WOULDN'T HAVE BEEN ABLE TO ACHIEVE THIS.”

Brendan Green, Chief Executive Office, Hire A Hubby

HIRE A HUBBY GETS A
PROFESSIONAL HELPING HAND



Challenge

Hire A Hubby wanted to combine territorial franchise maps with local demographic data to build a better picture of the prospective customer base within each territory and to help prove its value proposition.

Solution

The company deployed MapInfo's AnySite Australia and has been able to create a new, tiered fee structure that has successfully doubled its entry price for top end franchises and doubled monthly management fees.

SUMMARY

One day in 1996, a chef and father of four was at home carrying out some handyman chores, pondering the family unfriendly hours he was working. As he toiled, his wife and a neighbour watched, drinking a cup of tea. The neighbour commented that she had lots of odd jobs that needed looking after at her house and quipped, “I should hire your husband some time.”

Thus, Hire A Hubby was born.

From its roots as a Melbourne-based handyman business, Hire A Hubby has grown to become one of Australia's leading franchise businesses. More recently, the company has expanded internationally, establishing footholds in Spain and the United Kingdom.

Through approximately 300 franchisees, Hire A Hubby provides home, office and factory maintenance services including painting, gyprock repairs, carpentry, tiling, fencing and landscaping. The franchisees are also adept at coordinating the bigger jobs, and providing project management services for their time-poor clients is becoming a bigger part of the Hire A Hubby business.

Hire A Hubby Chief Executive Officer, Brendan Green, believes part of the company's success has been due to timing, in effect being in the right place at the right time. The company was created at a time when trades are in decline and baby boomers have begun to retire, taking their

skills and experience with them. “Of those who are trade qualified, 31 percent are not working within their trade,” Green notes. It's a trend that has resulted in Hire A Hubby's band of skilled DIY workers being very much in demand.

Government occupational health and safety changes have also worked in Hire A Hubby's favour, encouraging businesses to outsource some tasks rather than try to manage some workplace tasks and practices. Over recent years, the company's business has expanded well beyond residential properties to include work for retailers, banks and the real estate industry. “There is so much opportunity and if you provide good service, people will keep calling you back,” Green comments.

Remodelling the franchise

Back in the late 1990's, when Hire A Hubby first introduced franchising, it developed a “one price fits all model”. Management overlaid urban maps with some basic demographic data from Australia Post and divided up the territories. It was a simple solution that allowed the company to quickly get its franchise business up-and-running, but as Green acknowledges, “One suburb is not always going to equate to another in household spend. Well-to-do areas are always going to outperform the households in outlying areas or suburbs of lower socio-economic standing.”

“ANYSITE PAID FOR ITSELF IN A MATTER OF WEEKS.”

Brendan Green, Chief Executive Officer, Hire A Hubby

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Eventually, to remove the inequities, Green decided to take his organisation to the next level and develop a tiered system of franchises but he knew that he would also have to be able to explain why and how a territory had been classified. He turned to the maps. He also talked to other franchise organisations about geographic intelligence and asked his staff to analyse data from the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS). “Ours is a territorial business and we’ve always worked with maps, putting them into franchise contracts to stipulate boundaries,” he says.

Following recommendations from other franchise organisations, he turned to Pitney Bowes MapInfo and its Windows-based mapping and geographic analysis application called MapInfo AnySite Australia that would enable Green to overlay territorial maps with a broad array of customer, prospect and franchisee information.

“One of the key functions we sought from the introduction of this type of software was the ability for the technical infrastructure to allow for the import of other external databases. Our franchise model is very active in the B2B market, and we know there is huge potential for some industries to provide regular, repeat business opportunities for our franchisees. AnySite ticked all of the boxes, and we have successfully imported and overlaid the key business information that was required to complete the classification process.”

Benefits

Deploying AnySite has helped Hire A Hubby completely re-define its Australian territories, creating bronze, silver and gold tiers. Rather than a flat fee of \$27,000, entry fees now rise to a top level of \$50,000 for gold. Most importantly, Green and his team now have the data to back up why a territory is classified a certain way,

while prospective franchisees have a better understanding of the business they are buying and of its potential earnings. “Location intelligence is a real sales tool. Our cheapest franchise now is \$30,000 but nobody wants it. Everyone can see and understand why we charge what we do for gold. Without AnySite, we wouldn’t have been able to achieve this.”

“We also provide a guarantee of \$100,000 annual revenues on gold territory data,” Green states. It’s a confident move that has helped attract new franchisees and one that has made it easier for prospects to negotiate with banks.

Given the physical nature of Hire A Hubby work, the typical franchise changes hands every five years as owners move on to new challenges or even retirement. Given this turnover, Green and his team have started encouraging franchisees to understand how they can improve the resale value of their franchise by capturing more data about their territory in AnySite.

“Our first phase was to get a demographic profile on every territory in Australia,” Green comments. “Now we are looking to use what we have and take the next step by including data from franchisees to assist in the sales process.”

Green’s advice to others considering location intelligence is typically straightforward. “The key thing is to be clear in your own mind what you want before you sit down with an organisation like Pitney Bowes MapInfo. It was an investment that seemed significant at the outset, particularly in terms of staff acceptance and the associated training, but the positive impact it had on our sales process was immediate, to the point where we could say that AnySite paid for itself in a matter of weeks,” he concludes.