Like Everything in Texas, This Franchisee is Doing Everything Bigger



Many franchisees understandably own just one store or territory. They settle in a city, and they work to scale the franchise bigger each year. It's a system that works well.

But Dan Schrobilgen is the owner or co-owner of multiple Our Town America territories.

He spends most of his time in his Austin territory, where he lives and first started with Our Town America in 2006. But in 2015, he purchased the Dallas/Forth Worth territory, partnered with Clint Finch, who also owns a territory in Houston, and launched that venture. In that acquisition, Schrobilgen also purchased a territory in Tulsa, Oklahoma.

How does he do it? Why does he do it? How has he come to champion Our Town America? We wondered.

Before Our Town America. Schrobilgen says that he has been in marketing and advertising his entire career. He moved from Iowa to Texas in 1990 and spent 13

years rising in the ranks of a large media company before taking what he learned and striking out on his own. The new business was successful enough that he was able to sell it a few years later. He sold the company because he knew the timing was right and there were multiple interested buyers, but he also had a desire to end his travel and own a smaller company that would give him less headaches and more control. Schrobilgen couldn't help but think there was a real downside in having a business in Phoenix when he and his family lived in Austin. It's one heck of a commute. A 1,000-mile commute, in fact, and Schrobilgen was racking up an obscene amount of frequent flier miles.

"My three kids were all under 10, and I was gone almost every week," Schrobilgen says.

That was painful for him.

Finch, a friend who had also worked for the media company, had told him about an opportunity to own an Our Town America franchise in Austin. This Our Town America gig, one in which he would court businesses interested in marketing and attracting people who were new to the area — sounded like a business he would enjoy. Schrobilgen made the decision to begin the next phase of his career with Our Town America in Austin, and his sales and revenue quickly grew. As he realized that he was living his professional dream, he doubled down on it and purchased the additional territories from another franchise owner.

Buying an Our Town America franchise… and then another… and another… To make a long story short, Schrobilgen and Finch ended up hiring someone to manage Dallas/Fort Worth. Between that business and his Austin venture, he keeps busy and he loves it. He says he found himself appreciating the Our Town America franchise model because, amongst many reasons, he felt like he had far more control over his present and future than he did working for a big media conglomerate.

"There were many things out of my control when I worked for someone else," Schrobilgen says. "Upper management was always making decisions that affected me."

Life as an Our Town America entrepreneur. Not to make it sound like this is an infomercial, where if you purchase an Our Town America franchise, your life will be suddenly transformed, and the gloomy, gray sky will be filled with rainbows and

unicorns, but that's pretty much what happened to Schrobilgen… okay, minus the rainbows and unicorns.



Dan Schrobilgen, an Our Town America Texas Multi-Unit Franchisee

"I just have these points of comparison from my previous two careers. I suddenly had no worries about how the stock price would affect my budget, no employee issues, and no office politics. I wasn't traveling, and I got to sleep in my bed every night," Schrobilgen says.

Even better, he got to spend quality time with his wife and children.

"I was able to help make their breakfast and school lunches every day when they were young. I made it to every dance recital, every Little League game, and was even able to coach my kids. Every karate class, every graduation and school event, every you-name-it, I've been to," Schrobilgen says.

His kids are well on their way to growing up – Grace, 22, is about to graduate college; Nate, 19, is a sophomore in college, and Ava, 17, is a high school junior — but what has been nice is that Schrobilgen has been around to experience it.

If he had stayed with the large corporation or the business in Phoenix, he would have missed out on many of the kids' important events and experiences, he asserts.

"The quality of life with Our Town America, to be able to spend time with your

family and friends in your community and still have a job that's challenging, but one that you control, that's a rare thing," Schrobilgen says.

He works with his wife, Jodi, who works part-time managing the administrative duties for his franchise, such as the finances and taxes. "All that fun stuff," Schrobilgen quips.

The rest of the workweek, he adds, she spends volunteering. For about six years, Jodi helped manage a food pantry and for the last few years she has been co-managing a free medical clinic, which specializes in providing medical care to the underserved, including many refugees and immigrants. Schrobilgen manages to volunteer as well. Every Monday since 2007, for a chunk of the time in the middle of the day, he participates in Meals on Wheels, delivering meals to senior citizens. They also both work together and with many other family members on a charity started by one of his siblings, an event that raises money for multiple charities in their home state of Iowa, as well as an orphanage in South Africa. The whole family, including all three kids, gets in on the projects and assists with the work needed to be done. That, too, wouldn't be happening with a conventional job or even running a different business, Schrobilgen says. He likes that due to the flexibility that comes with the job, the Our Town America business model has allowed his entire family to make a difference in the world, beyond helping local business clients and new movers.

"It's almost a formula," he says of the business model. "You just have to stay focused, organized and motivated because you're working on your own. But you can also spend time doing other things that are important to you outside of work, whatever those may be".



Our Town America Texas Multi-Unit

Franchisee Dan Schrobilgen with business partner Clint Finch, Our Town America CEO, Michael Plummer Jr. and Corporate Employees

Motivation can be a problem for some people, but not Schrobilgen. “As I tell people when they ask me about buying a franchise, ‘your success is 100 percent within your control. You don’t have any office politics. No mean bosses. No terrible employees, unless you expand and choose to hire, in which case, I guess that’s possible. There are no meetings you must be at every day. If you’re successful with this business, you deserve all of the credit. It’s a cliché, but it’s true – You will get out of this business what you put into it. You just need to be willing to put in the effort.”

Of course, he adds, if you aren’t successful, because Our Town America’s training and support system is so strong, there’s nobody you can blame. “Some people really don’t like hearing that,” he says.

But as far as Schrobilgen is concerned, Our Town America is where it’s at, and he loves that he can work on other projects or take two-week vacations during the holidays without feeling as if his business will fall apart while he’s away.

“When it comes to the quality of life, I truly don’t think it can be beat,” he says.

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If you’re a Texas business looking to gain new, loyal customers, you can contact Dan at 512-517-5277.

Businesses in any other U.S. state can contact the Our Town America corporate headquarters at 800-497-8360.