

COUNTRYWIDE SIGNS SUMMARY:

TYPE OF FRANCHISE:	Van-based/Management
INDUSTRY SECTOR:	'For Sale' sign supply, erection & maintenance
IDEAL FRANCHISEE PROFILE:	You must be enthusiastic, self motivated, keen to succeed and relish the challenge of running your own business as part of a team.
COMPANY HISTORY:	Established 1998, franchising since 1998
NETWORK SIZE:	56
INVESTMENT REQUIREMENT:	£19,995
PRIORITY RECRUITMENT LOCATIONS:	Nationwide



Franchisee Profile

A business built up through word of mouth

Even though Countrywide Signs franchisees James and Jane Bickerstaff started their business eight years ago, they still find that every day is different and interesting

Text: Derin Ibrahim

While many franchisees may find their efforts and funds are mostly spent on promoting and advertising their business, Countrywide Signs franchisees James and Jane Bickerstaff have found most of their business comes to them. "Since launching our franchise back in 2000 we have not done much advertising but have built our business up through word of mouth," reveals Jane. "When we started we only had one van and it was just my husband and I - we now have five vans on the road."

Based in Preston, Lancashire the Bickerstaffs offer a complete sign board service for Estate Agents. This includes providing the signs and, using state-of-the-art technology such as Global Positioning Satellite (GPS), distributing them in the correct locations.

Before becoming Countrywide Signs franchisees Jane worked in production planning and James was a HGV driver. The couple wanted to start their own business so they decided to look into franchising. Jane remembers: "We chose to join a franchise as although it offers the flexibility of working for yourself you have still got a network and framework in the background to support you. We found out about the Countrywide Signs franchise while reading *The Franchise Magazine*. This franchise appealed to us because it had a relatively low start-up investment and we thought it looked like something that we would be able to grow and build into a successful business."

Although the couple have been running their franchise for many years they still find that the work is varied and interesting. Jane comments: "I enjoy the fact that it is a challenging business and every day is different - you really don't know what you're going to come across the next day. One of the main benefits of Countrywide Signs is that it is run by down to earth people who have



I found my franchise in
The Franchise Magazine

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Countrywide Signs franchisee Jane Bickerstaff

lots of hands-on experience and have practical knowledge of what running a business is like. "

The couple are on target to meet their estimated turnover and are planning to build on their success. Jane says: "We want to grow our business. We are aiming to get more customers onboard in our territory so that we eventually have total coverage in the area."

Jane advises those looking at the Countrywide Signs franchise: "This franchise would suit someone who likes to be busy and enjoys a challenge. This isn't a nine-to-five job, however what you put in you do get out at the end, which has enabled us to achieve the success our hard work deserves." •

FRANCHISEES SAY:



"Countrywide Signs ticked all my requirement boxes, such as having low start up costs and potentially high profit margins. I enjoy being outside and the estate agents are very easy to deal with and very professional, which makes my job easier and more enjoyable. This is the perfect franchise for those who are hard working and looking for a business that is reliable and easy to run."

Anthony Williams, franchisee, Liverpool

"The set-up and internet service is very professional. There's very good communication between estate agents and franchisees."

Ian Morris, franchisee, Merseyside & North Wales

FOR MORE INFORMATION:



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