

Franchisor Spotlight: Steve Everhart

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The in-home care industry has come a long way, from a little known service to a popular option for seniors seeking to maintain their independence – to one of the biggest categories in *Entrepreneur's* Franchise 500®. We talked to Steve Everhart, founder of The Senior's Choice, about changes in the industry, and what franchisors need to do to keep up.



How has the senior-care industry changed over the years?

When we started The Senior's Choice in the 1990's, this was an entirely different industry. Our biggest competitor was indifference. People didn't know in-home care was an option. Now they do, and now it seems like almost every day there's a new senior-care franchisor.

Do you think the market will reach a saturation point soon?

I'm asked that question just about every day, and the answer is: probably not. There's always going to be an increasing demand for senior-care services simply because of the aging population. At the same time, we can't just rest on that anymore. We have to stay ahead of the curve. We have to continue to expand revenue sources and to innovate.

What's your latest innovation?

This year we officially launched a new division of The Senior's Choice called StaffChoice to offer temporary healthcare staffing services. Our franchisees have unique relationships with companies that give them client referrals – rehab centers, hospitals, healthcare companies – and, especially, in this economy, those companies often have a need for temporary staffing. Our franchisees don't have the resources or the time to provide this staffing, but the healthcare staffing professionals we've hired for StaffChoice can. So all the franchisees have to do is take the StaffChoice team by the hand and introduce them to their referral partners, and then we share in the gross profit percentages.

Besides the added revenue stream, are there other benefits to franchisees?

We're really promoting StaffChoice to our new franchisees, because it's a way for them to get ahead of the line a little bit by offering referral partners something that the traditional senior-care franchisee isn't offering. We also think having this staffing service might help some of our more established franchisees, whose growth has really been outpacing their ability to attract and maintain caregivers. Through StaffChoice, we'll be able to help them find those non-skilled workers as well.