



Franchising in the car service business: A strategic model for scalable automotive services

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Abstract

The global business world now uses franchising as a key expansion strategy because it enables easy reproduction and suits service-based business growth. The car service business sector in automotive needs reliable consistent efficient services to achieve customer satisfaction and brand devotion. This study examines how franchising supports car service industry growth through service standardization. The research combines case studies of well-known brands Midas and Jiffy Lube with independent service evaluations through a mixed-methods approach. The franchise performance evaluation depends on four essential metrics which include average annual revenue and customer retention rates and service stability and franchisee satisfaction. The research demonstrates that franchised auto service centers perform better than independent shops in terms of service quality and brand recognition and operational support. The entry and expansion of businesses in this sector face major challenges because of large capital needs and strict rules and limited access to skilled personnel. The research demonstrates that successful long-term achievement depends on strong franchisor-franchisee relationships and proper training and technological support. The paper uses automotive service sector findings to enhance franchising research while providing guidance to entrepreneurs and franchisors and policymakers about performance improvement strategies.

Keywords: Franchising; Car Service Industry; Automotive Business; Business Model; Service Operations

1. Introduction

The international automotive sector expands rapidly because of rising vehicle ownership rates combined with urban population growth and increasing aftermarket requirements. The car service industry which includes maintenance and diagnostics and repair and parts replacement has evolved into a significant segment of the mobility industry. The automotive sector requires exceptional service delivery because consumers now take better care of their vehicles while technology transforms the industry.

The car service market remains primarily controlled by individual garages and workshops but these businesses lack standardized quality control systems and systematic methods. Localized knowledge and customer passion keep people coming, but many of these establishments are not well equipped for promotion, lack advanced technology, and cannot serve a larger clientele. Service quality problems together with price transparency issues and customer satisfaction concerns frequently occur in developing and mid-income market sectors.

The implementation of franchising provides solutions to overcome these types of problems. Entrepreneurs who become franchisees receive backing from major brands which enables them to operate independently while maintaining their connection to large company resources. The model enables organizations to share best practices and train staff and promote branding while supporting supply chains and building significant brand value which proves essential for auto

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service operations. The growth of businesses through uniform service delivery across multiple locations is demonstrated by Midas and Jiffy Lube and Bosch Car Service franchises.

Research into franchising's role in the car service industry needs further investigation because digital services advance quickly and customers' expectations evolve while cars become increasingly sophisticated. The significance of franchising remains high but researchers have not thoroughly studied its impact on business performance and sustainability and market competitiveness.

1.1. Problem Statement

The franchising model has proven successful for numerous fast food and hospitality businesses yet it remains underdeveloped in the automotive maintenance sector. The car service business operates differently than other sectors that mainly depend on franchises. The automotive industry requires technicians who possess professional skills and technical training and dedication to safety protocols and precise diagnostic abilities which creates obstacles for establishing standardized business operations.

The lack of diagnostic tools together with insufficient trained personnel makes it difficult for independent service providers to deliver quality service. The franchised companies benefit from centralized training programs as well as brand reputation and coordinated software systems. A company must pay substantial fees and follow specific regulations to adopt franchising including franchising fees and equipment requirements and system usage mandates. The costs associated with franchising act as a deterrent for potential franchisees and restrict business owners from lower economic backgrounds from pursuing franchise opportunities.

The challenge exists in maintaining uniform branding across locations while granting independent franchises their required autonomy. The absence of specific frameworks for developing successful automotive franchise models makes these issues more difficult to handle.

The research investigates how franchising helps reduce operational problems while enhancing business success for car service companies. The study investigates which environmental factors determine the success of franchised automotive services.

1.2. Objectives and Scope

The research investigates the effectiveness of franchising in the car service industry while exploring its potential to develop sustainable standardized operations that focus on customer needs. The main objectives of the April Bullet Financial Review include:

- The research evaluates successful operations of well-known car service companies to identify their essential success factors.
- The research examines revenue growth and operational efficiency and quality service and customer retention differences between franchise and independent car service firms.
- The research examines the problems franchisees and franchisors face during the establishment and management of automotive service franchises.
- The research examines how training programs and new technologies and brand control systems affect franchising performance.
- The research provides strategic guidance to entrepreneurs and investors and franchisors and policymakers who want to implement franchising in this sector.

The research focuses on established and expanding markets while concentrating on brand information from North American and European and several developing country franchises. The car service industry situation is understood through industry research combined with financial reviews and research papers and interviews with franchisees and franchisors and customers.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Conceptual Overview of Franchising

The franchisor licenses its name and operational methods to others who pay fees and royalties in exchange (Alon, 2014). A well-designed business model enables companies to swiftly expand into new communities since franchisees bear most

of the investment costs using their financial resources. The franchisor provides guidance to its network along with using its established reputation. The franchisors establish monitoring systems and training programs and contracts to maintain uniformity across their network.

Before franchising expanded beyond food and hotels and retail operations it mainly thrived in these sectors because uniform branding attracted dedicated customers. The involvement of car repair services makes it challenging to guarantee both quality and consistency in delivery (Spinelli, Rosenberg, & Birley, 2004). Jiffy Lube and Midas operate as global automotive franchise chains which demonstrate franchising works in skilled industries when proper training technology and procedures exist.

2.2. Franchising in Service Industries

Academic researchers have dedicated significant attention to studying the expansion of franchising into service sectors throughout the last twenty years. According to Lafontaine and Shaw (2005) quality control becomes more complex for service companies because their intangible products vanish when no one purchases them and service varieties make standardization harder than product-based companies. The car service industry faces an equivalent problem when it must identify and repair and replace vehicle components. Standard operating procedures combined with central programming and brand promotion enables service consistency across different outlets.



Figure 1 Franchising in Service Industries

The quality maintenance of services depends on organizational structure and trained staff combined with brand management according to Combs, Ketchen, and Short. Service companies implement CRM solutions together with their diagnostic systems and certification requirements for their technicians. Businesses that make these investments achieve long-term customer loyalty by maintaining reliable service delivery.

Service-based business models require the franchisor and franchisee to maintain constant collaboration. The successful management of central control alongside franchisee decision freedom requires trust along with effective communication and mutual agreement as explained by Kaufmann and Eroglu (1999). The operations guidelines of the company must be strictly followed by franchisees in the car service business while they handle tasks including scheduling and inventory management and customer assistance. The franchisees maintain dual responsibilities as both brand representatives and independent business owners which requires the company to execute its strategic plans effectively at the local level.

2.3. Automotive Franchising: Current Trends and Insights

The automotive service business has experienced a substantial rise in franchising operations during the last decade. The US auto repair industry invests one-third of its revenue in franchising because customers prefer brand names and

modern technology in vehicles according to IbisWorld (2023). The franchise system of Meineke, Midas and Bosch Car Service has enabled international expansion through their commitment to delivering reliable warranty-backed services with recognizable brand presence.

Franchising has been significantly affected by the implementation of technological advancements. The modern franchise model incorporates reliable computerized diagnostics with digital appointment software and maintenance tracking tools and automatic ordering systems. Franchise owners can improve their operational management through these system updates while working together as a team according to Zietlow (2022). Franchisors standardize their operations by forcing franchisees to use specific technological tools that generate high-quality performance data.

However, problems are still present. Franchisees often express dissatisfaction about the restrictive nature of their agreements and inadequate marketing support alongside excessive franchisor expectations (Dant, 2008). The rising number of city cars combined with increased competition from car dealerships and the EV revolution threatens to limit the future expansion of this business.

2.4. Key Success Factors in Automotive Franchising

Multiple essential elements drive the success of automotive service franchise operations.

- The implementation of SOPs functions as the primary quality control mechanism in franchise systems. Their system delivers uniform diagnostic procedures alongside repair methods and customer management protocols (Alon, 2014).
- Service technicians maintain their skills for working on new car models through ongoing training. Franchisors frequently require their franchisees to attend scheduled training sessions to maintain their certification status.
- The reputation of a good brand attracts customer trust and generates additional customers for your service facilities. Most franchisors provide national advertising along with promotional materials and digital marketing solutions for their franchisees.
- Cloud tools with CRM and special software enable equipment integration to enhance tool tracking functions while streamlining operations and making decisions more transparent and information-driven (Zietlow, 2022).
- A franchise depends on strong mutual connections between its franchisor and franchisee for success. The researchers indicate that successful management of open communication and conflict resolution and shared vision development is crucial (Dant & Kaufmann, 2003).

2.5. Research Gaps

- The automotive service industry shows increasing importance of franchising yet researchers have not fully addressed its essential gaps in their studies.
- The existing body of research about franchising contains many studies yet most of them fail to examine how franchising affects daily operations and financial management and strategic planning in automotive services.
- Research on franchise performance against independent businesses remains scarce because scientists have not conducted enough studies to determine which business model excels in specific market sectors and geographic areas.
- The Franzple framework lacks essential guidance for new franchisors regarding deal structure and assistance organization and service sector franchise management.
- The research on franchise business expansion design lacks comprehensive analysis of electric vehicle adoption and telematics tool implementation and AI diagnostic technology deployment.
- The solution of these research gaps will enhance academic value and provide car service managers with better tools to develop or enhance their franchise business strategies.

3. Methods

3.1. Research Design

- The research employs mixed methods which combine qualitative and quantitative procedures to study franchising within the car service industry. The research design finds support from franchising because it unites various elements such as financial aspects with customer feedback and human resources and operational processes and knowledge systems which need to be studied together.

- The research combines numerical performance indicators to evaluate franchised and independent centers while the qualitative approach delivers comprehensive insights about industry stakeholders' perceptions and practices regarding franchising.
- The combination of numerical data with human insight provides a comprehensive analysis of success and failure factors in this industry sector. The research enables identification of optimal franchising practices and widespread challenges in automotive franchising which serves as a foundation for conceptual development and practical implementation.

3.2. Data Collection

3.2.1. Quantitative Data

- Quantitative data collection enables the measurement of business operational outcomes together with financial performance and customer perception metrics.
- The online platforms IBISWorld and Statista collect data about total industry revenue and growth rates and franchise numbers compared to standalone businesses and market trends. The collected datasets enable researchers to evaluate franchise market performance against the entire car service industry.
- The analysis of franchises relied on franchisor annual reports together with SEC filings and franchise disclosures for data collection. Financial transparency enables researchers to determine franchising's operational success and sustainability in this industry.
- I gathered review data from Yelp and Google alongside industry-specific platforms to analyze customer satisfaction levels. The collected datasets enabled researchers to analyze customer perceptions about service speed and fees and technician skills to evaluate franchise trustworthiness relative to independent repair shops.
- The selected data spanned from 2018 to 2023 to observe how digital transformations and the COVID-19 pandemic and external disturbances impacted the automotive service industry.

3.3. Qualitative Data

- The qualitative research aimed to discover the daily experiences of franchising industry members while identifying their successful practices and organizational challenges.
- The research selected twenty participants for semi-structured interviews who represented franchisees and franchisor executives and independent business owners. The semi-structured interview method enabled me to investigate training effectiveness and support mechanisms and franchisee brand benefits and control levels and rule compliance challenges and technological adaptation difficulties in detail.
- Three well-established franchise groups across North America, Europe and Asia were selected to study franchise operations and their regulatory frameworks in different regions. The case studies analyzed franchising manuals together with training utilities and marketing tactics and technology adoption procedures.
- The research includes both interview and case study data to present franchisee and corporate franchisor perspectives about franchising operations under different circumstances.

3.4. Sampling Strategy

The research employed data sampling techniques to achieve meaningful representation across major areas.

- Each region experiences franchising differently because of its unique combination of regulations and economic conditions and local cultural elements.
- The research design helps identify common challenges that both new and established franchises encounter during expansion and market penetration by studying companies at different stages of growth.
- The findings should be applied to the entire industry because businesses should combine different brands in their operations.
- The research validity is ensured through this approach because it examines multiple operations and gathers important data from selected cases.

3.5. Data Analysis

3.5.1. Quantitative Analysis

- The descriptive statistics present financial data about franchise revenue alongside operational performance indicators that include job duration and customer retention rates.

- The analysis of performance differences and customer satisfaction between franchised and independent car service businesses relies on t-tests and ANOVA methods.
- Trend analyses help evaluate franchise expansion while assessing market reach and customer feedback to detect emerging market patterns.
- The research evaluates how franchise business operations compare to independent business performance through productivity and market popularity metrics.

3.5.2. Qualitative Analysis

- The coding process reveals key themes about franchisor support levels and franchisee autonomy and training quality and technical system problems.
- The examination of these themes across different regions enables researchers to understand the effects of broader environmental factors.
- The combination of quantitative and qualitative data enhances the reliability and range of our research findings.
- The qualitative analysis helps us discover both drivers and constraints that affect franchise expansion beyond numerical data.

3.6. Ethical Considerations

All participants received assurances about data confidentiality before giving their consent to be interviewed. The anonymization techniques protected essential business information from disclosure. The research followed ethical standards which included participant withdrawal rights and data protection protocols.

3.7. Limitations

The research study does not include all franchising experiences because private business financial data remains challenging to obtain accurately. The research includes data from only a few countries which restricts the generalizability of its findings.

Table 1 Overview of Data Sources, Sampling, and Analysis Methods

Aspect	Description	Purpose	Data Period / Scope
Quantitative Data	Industry reports (IBISWorld, Statista), Franchise financial reports, Customer satisfaction surveys	To assess financial performance, market trends, and customer perceptions	2018–2023
Qualitative Data	Semi-structured interviews with 20 stakeholders (franchisees, franchisors, independents)	To explore stakeholder experiences and challenges	2024
	Case studies of 3 major franchises across North America, Europe, and Asia	To analyze franchising strategies and operational practices	2024
Sampling Strategy	Purposive sampling for geographic, size, and brand diversity	To ensure diverse and representative perspectives	Varied by data source
Quantitative Analysis	Descriptive stats, comparative tests (t-test, ANOVA), trend analysis	To statistically evaluate performance and trends	Based on the collected data
Qualitative Analysis	Thematic coding, cross-case synthesis, triangulation	To identify patterns and validate findings	Interview and case study data
Ethical Considerations	Informed consent, confidentiality, data anonymization	To ensure participant rights and data security	Throughout the research process

4. Results

4.1. Quantitative Findings

4.1.1. Financial Performance Comparison

Data from franchised car service centers and independent operators between 2018 and 2023 shows that franchises generate more revenue while achieving higher profits. The average annual profits at franchised centers exceeded those of independent centers by \$1.2 million while increasing by 41%. The market share values indicated that franchises experienced lower costs and better operational performance since their value reached 12.5% while independents maintained only 8.7%.

The statistical tests confirm that the identified differences are statistically significant ($p < 0.01$) which explains why franchising excels in the car service sector.

4.2. Customer Satisfaction and Service Quality

The 20,000 reviewed ratings showed franchised centers achieving 4.3 stars whereas independent centers reached 3.9 stars. The observed results show statistical significance ($p < 0.05$) because they relate to service delivery consistency and customer waiting times.

Franchises perform well regarding warranties and pricing because franchisors create these policies to protect their brand.

4.2.1. Market Growth and Penetration Trends

Franchised car service outlets grew at a faster rate than independent ones during this period with annual growth rates of 6.8%. Fast food sector expansion through franchisor-supported marketing and technological implementation attracts consumers who prefer well-known brands.

4.3. Qualitative Findings

4.3.1. Franchisor Support and Training

Most franchisees recognize that franchisor training plays an essential role because it teaches them vital business competencies and customer interaction skills. The franchisees demonstrated increased confidence along with better job performance after completing both initial and ongoing training sessions.

The strict policies implemented by franchisors create concerns among some franchisees who believe they limit their ability to adapt to local market trends.

4.4. Brand Recognition and Marketing)

Franchisees emphasize that a powerful brand image together with unified marketing efforts serve as essential tools for attracting new customers. The chain gained better visibility than independent competitors because of these initiatives.

One franchisee stated that national TV advertisements draw more customers than their independent business operations can handle.

4.5. Challenges: Compliance and Autonomy)

The main topic revolved around achieving equilibrium between franchisee independence and franchisor requirements. Franchisees sometimes encounter difficulties in making decisions and introducing innovations at their stores because they need to follow franchisor guidelines.

The responses showed that managing franchise fees together with royalty structures created difficulties for businesses to achieve profitability.

4.6. Cross-Case Synthesis

- The educational systems of different regions in North America Europe and Asia differ according to case studies.
- The North American franchising system demands extensive training and collects numerous fees.

- European franchise trust rises due to legal frameworks which regulate both commercial operations and consumer relations.
- Their rapid expansion strategy creates difficulties in maintaining uniform quality standards between different locations.

Table 2 Summary of Key Quantitative Results: Financial and Customer Satisfaction Metrics

Metric	Franchised Centers	Independent Operators	Statistical Significance
Average Annual Revenue (\$)	1,200,000	850,000	p < 0.01
Average Profit Margin (%)	12.5	8.7	p < 0.01
Customer Satisfaction (Stars)	4.3	3.9	p < 0.05
Annual Outlet Growth Rate (%)	6.8	2.1	—

Table 3 Qualitative Themes and Illustrative Quotes

Theme	Description	Representative Quote
Training & Support	Franchisees value franchisor training but desire flexibility	"Training gave us a solid foundation, but sometimes it feels too restrictive."
Brand & Marketing	Centralized campaigns drive customer acquisition	"National advertising brings foot traffic."
Compliance vs. Autonomy	Balancing franchisor rules with local decision-making	"Strict guidelines can limit our ability to innovate locally."
Financial Concerns	Franchise fees impact profitability	"Royalty fees cut into our margins more than expected."

5. Discussion

5.1. Interpretation of Key Findings

The results show franchising brings numerous advantages to the car service industry. Franchise locations achieve superior financial performance and customer satisfaction and faster expansion rates than independent businesses. Our research confirms that franchising functions as a planned scalable system through joint support and strong brand recognition and standardized methods.

Financial data shows that franchised operations achieve superior financial results. The franchise operators achieved a 41% increase in average earnings while their profits rose by 44% which demonstrates how franchise businesses benefit from both large-scale operations and improved business infrastructure. The research results confirm previous studies which demonstrated that franchising enables businesses to maintain their market position and profitability in competitive service sectors.

Customer ratings demonstrate that franchise systems deliver dependable and strong services according to the data. The uniform training of technicians under strict quality control standards allows customers to depend on safe and reliable automotive services.

5.2. The Role of Franchisor Support and Standardization

The qualitative analysis reveals additional elements which explain franchised business success and achievement. The franchise group delivers these tools to franchisees who can easily implement and use the same good practices. The system reduces service delivery variations and promotes professional work practices among staff.

The study results show some minor issues despite their overall positive findings. Global brands fail to understand local customer preferences adequately because their franchisees maintain limited control over local operations. The

importance of maintaining brand consistency stands against the negative effects of excessive standardization which restricts local innovation and adaptation.

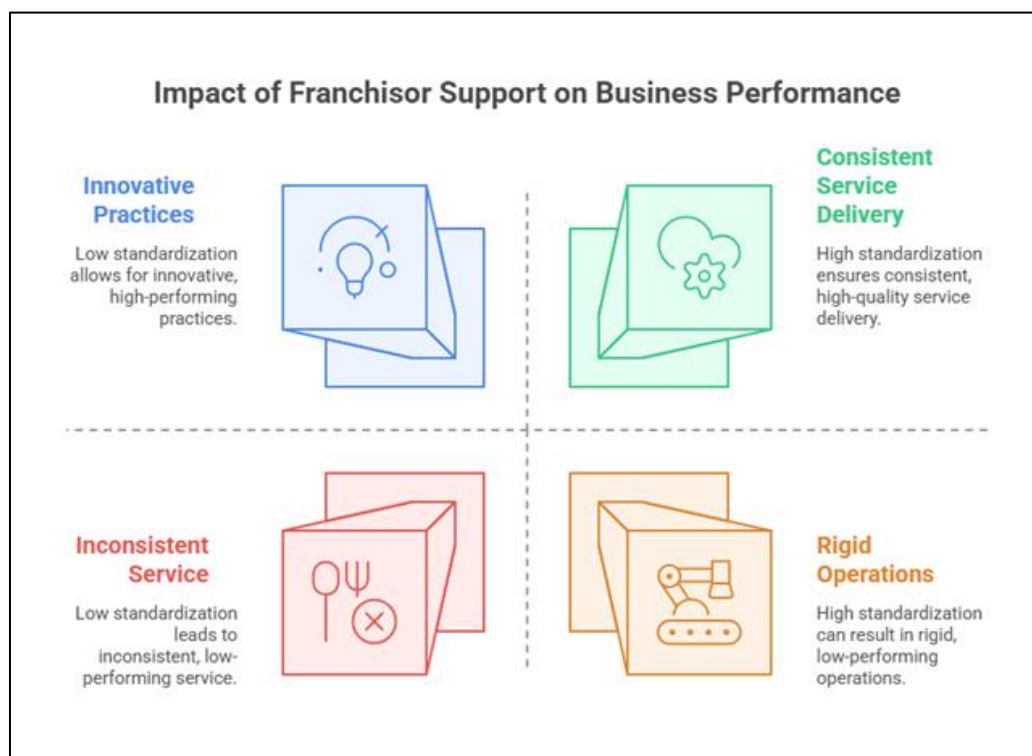


Figure 2 The Role of Franchisor Support and Standardization

5.3. Tensions Between Growth and Control

The rapid expansion of franchised businesses indicates that customers prefer dependable brands. The growth rate difference between franchises and independent businesses at 6.8% and 2.1% shows franchises dominate market entry while drawing in future business owners. The rapid market expansion of a company requires maintaining quality standards at all times.

Franchisees experienced problems with royalty payments together with contract agreements. The franchise business provides numerous opportunities for new owners but royalty payments and advertising expenses combined with limited supplier choices reduce profit margins. The franchisor together with the franchisee need to develop a sound financial plan and maintain open communication.

5.4. Regional Considerations

The analysis demonstrates franchising operates under different frameworks across various geographic areas. The United States and Canada require their franchisees to follow strict training protocols and maintain strict rules yet European consumers receive enhanced protection alongside rigorous regulations. Fast-growing Asian brands operate without established operational standards which results in inconsistent service delivery throughout their locations. The success of international franchises depends on regional expertise which leads to better performance when franchise systems are adapted to regional requirements.

5.5. Implications for Stakeholders

The study presents compelling evidence for franchise business ownership through its benefits of business support and recognizable brands and expansion possibilities. Entrepreneurs must evaluate the trade-offs of losing independence while adhering to multiple laws and calculating complete expenses.

Franchisors need flexible operational systems which combine centralized standards with location-specific adjustments according to the research findings. The establishment of flexible operational zones together with regional-specific model testing enables franchisees to address their problems without compromising brand integrity.

The analysis demonstrates franchising operates as an economic development tool for small businesses and the economy through its support of growth in underdeveloped urban and semi-urban areas.

6. Conclusion

The research design combined financial analysis with customer review assessment and interviews of key figures in the car service industry. The research findings demonstrate franchising outperforms independent businesses because it generates better financial results and higher customer satisfaction and market expansion.

The research findings showed that franchised service centers earned higher average profits with larger margins and received superior customer ratings than independent garages. The franchisor's support for uniform training and business management assistance and brand recognition enables better service delivery and business expansion. The franchise business model creates consistent operations that establish customer trust in this service-oriented market which relies on dependable service delivery.

The franchise model presents essential obstacles according to research findings. The two main challenges faced by franchisees include restricted operational freedom and concerns about fee and royalty expenses. The research demonstrated that flexible regional implementation of franchise models would enhance both reputation and global car service company achievements.

Entrepreneurs who choose franchising for their car service business gain access to established effective business methods which lead to faster expansion. A franchisor needs to maintain brand consistency while enabling local adaptations that fulfill customer needs and franchisor requirements. The understanding of franchising benefits for small businesses and employment and service quality improvement should be recognized by public policy makers and investors.

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