

The Wembley show — where you can talk to franchise managers face-to-face

Look into your future

by **Linda Whitney**

NOW is your chance to see dozens of franchises, when the British and International Franchise Exhibition 2003 takes place in London this coming weekend.

More than 200 franchisors will have stands at Wembley on Friday April 4 and Saturday April 5, where you can talk to franchise managers face-to-face — important because you have to get on well with them if you buy a franchise.

All the franchises at the show have been accredited by the British Franchise Association and include well-established names such as signage specialist Signs Express, bicycle retailer Action Bikes, educational toy shop Formative Fun, Puccino's cafes and restaurants, and postal, business and communications services company Mailboxes Etc.

New franchises launching at the show include Lincary Recruitment; the Cornish Oggy Oggy Pasty, Pastry and Coffee Shops; Clive's Easylearn Pop Music Schools; detox and slimming clinic Rejuvena; and Steppes Restaurant.

Check out new franchises extra-carefully as they do not have years of previous franchising experience.

You are not limited to UK franchises. The international pavilion at the show includes franchisors from over 20 countries looking for franchisees.

You can also get free information and advice from franchise experts, banks, the British Franchise Association, fran-

chise lawyers and consultants, with seminars on 'Introduction to Franchising' and 'How to Franchise your Business'. The

■ **FRANCHISING** is one formula for business success. Nine out of ten franchisees say they are profitable, according to the latest NatWest/British Franchise Association survey. What is more, franchisors are likely to welcome new recruits with open arms — four out of ten franchisors say that a lack

of suitable franchisees is still the biggest barrier to growth. Perhaps as a result, fewer franchisors are now likely to specify the kind of people they are looking for and in most cases age, gender and lack of experience in their business sector are no problem. Almost all now also provide training.

Start Your Own Business Showcase and free conference which runs alongside the show offers help on issues like tax,

patents, company formation, leasing and grants, from specialists in starting and developing a business.

Public relations expert Lynne Franks will be opening the showcase and launching Seed, a training initiative for women starting in business.

Tickets for the show, including the showcase and conference, cost £13 on the door or £8 in advance (£7 for two or more) from 01280 707433, or see www.franinfo.co.uk.



Keen on cars: Pamela and Stuart Cass run a mobile tyre-fitting business

One for the roads?

IF YOU'RE car crazy, an automotive franchise could be your road to success. Stuart Cass, 47, and wife Pamela, 45, bought the Fleet Mobile Tyres franchise in Portsmouth seven years ago. 'I had always been keen on cars and I served in the Royal Corps of Transport, so this franchise means I'm in a business I am very enthusiastic about,' says Stuart. He concentrates on marketing while Pamela runs the office and keeps the books.

They started out employing one mobile tyre-fitter and have now expanded to two. The company supplies, and fits, tyres for company car fleets, garages and individual motorists. 'The main skill required is sales,' says Stuart.

Fleet Mobile Tyres does not demand its franchisees have experience in the automotive trade but

an interest in cars and a practical bent helps. You can start in management and employ tyre-fitters or do the fitting yourself at first and move into management as the business grows. It is seeking another 15 franchisees with energy and good communication skills. The company also supplies customer repair services such as Dent Devils, Car Medic, Chips Away and Car Park Valeting.

Other franchises include mobile car repair services such as Dent Devils, Car Medic, Chips Away and Car Park Valeting. The Mr Clutch auto centres involve setting up main-road premises, while many of the best-known vehicle rental businesses are also franchises, such as National Car Rental.

Fleet Mobile Tyres: 0800 0289 000. Contact numbers for other franchises can be found at www.franchiseworld.co.uk