

Franchising is booming in Michigan

A record 275 new franchisors registered in Michigan during 1985, a direct result of the state's streamlined franchise law, according to the Michigan Department of Commerce.

"We've attracted more franchisors to this state in the last 18 months than in the previous 10 years," said Commerce Director Doug Ross, adding that many are headquartered in the Oakland suburb.

"We've grown from 428 to 891 franchisors in the last year and one-half since the new law went into effect."

"Michigan's welcome mat is out, and companies are responding in record fashion," said Ross, former state senator from southern Oakland County.

"It's further proof that our business climate is improving."

LEGISLATIVE changes in regulations governing franchises in Michigan were proposed in 1983 by the Blanchard administration as part of the governor's 20-point plan to revitalize the state's economy.

The reforms, co-sponsored by Rep. Robert Errington, D-Flint, and then-Rep. Vernon Ehlers, R-Grand Rapids, took effect in June 1984. Since then, franchise activity in Michigan has been growing leaps and bounds.

Michigan is also the home base for the seven largest number of franchise headquarters in the nation, according to the International Franchise Association (IFA), a trade group based in Washington, D.C.

The list of franchise headquarters includes American Speedy Printing Centers of Birmingham; Inacom Computer Centers of Troy; Ziebart Corp. of Troy; Little Caesar Enterprises of Farmington Hills; Domino's Pizza of Ann Arbor; A&W Restaurants of Dearborn; Nu Vision and Action Auto, both of Flint; and Tuffy Service Centers of Saginaw.

"PRIOR TO 1984, Michigan was universally recognized among franchisors as the most difficult state in which to obtain and maintain a franchise registration," said IFA President James W. Trethewey, senior vice president of the Sheraton Corp., Boston.

"Not only is Michigan's new law in line with those of other states that regulate franchisors, but it's an excellent example of how responsible government can further economic opportunity for its citizens."

Under the old 1974 Franchise Investment Act overseen by the Commerce Department, franchisors were required to apply for registration, submit documents subject to merit review, put franchise fees deemed necessary by the Corporation and Securities Bureau into escrow and fulfill other requirements.

These obligations resulted in waits of up to two years before a franchisor could sell outlets in Michigan.

Under the new law, a franchisor needs only to:

- Notify the Economic Crimes Division of the Attorney General's Office of its intention to do business in Michigan.
- Pay a \$250 service fee.

Record 425,000 jobs in Oakland

A record 425,000 were employed in businesses in Oakland County last year, topping the prerecession high of 380,000 in 1979.

"This rapid recovery is even more remarkable," said County Executive Daniel T. Murphy, "when you consider that the experts a few years ago forecast that we would never recover all of the manufacturing jobs lost during the recession."

"Our forecast now predicts that the 25,000 manufacturing jobs lost during the

recession will be fully recovered by early 1987," Murphy said.

THE NUMBERS and forecast were produced by the county's Economic Development Group (EDG), which employed an econometric model developed by the University of Michigan's Institute of Labor and Industrial Relations.

EDG predicted a 3.5-percent gain in '86 and 4.5 percent in '87 for private business employment in Oakland County.

At the bottom of the recession in 1982, there were 350,000 jobs in Oakland County.

ty. Since then about 75,000 new jobs have been created — a gain of 21 percent.

Murphy called Oakland "the leading growth area of Michigan."

OTHER FORECASTS from the Economic Development Group:

- 6,400 additional manufacturing jobs in 1986-87.

- 28,000 non-manufacturing jobs in 1986-87.

- Within the non-manufacturing area, a gain of 15,200 jobs in the service indus-

tries. Services continued to grow, even in the 1980-82 recession.

- 3-4 percent growth rates in finance, transportation and utilities.

"The magnitude of the county's economic growth is clearly reflected in the volume of new office space constructed during the past few years," said Joseph Joachim, director of the EDG.

"The latest figures show that nearly two-thirds of all new office space built in Michigan during the past two years has been constructed in Oakland County."

Franchising is big nationally

It's estimated that one-third of all businesses in the country are franchises, accounting for more than \$500 billion in retail sales in 1985.

The U.S. Commerce Department predicts that franchising will account for more than half of retail all retail sales by the year 2000.

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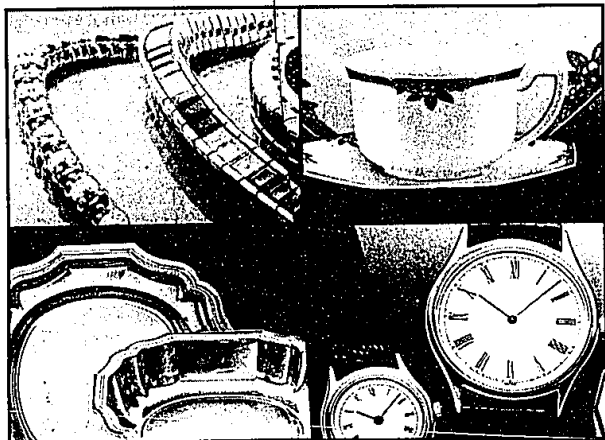
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