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## Junk King franchise uses Columbus as springboard for company's Ohio expansion

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One person's junk is another person's business opportunity.

At least that's the way it is for Junk King, a new junk removal and hauling company that chose Columbus for its first-ever franchise a year ago.

Since then it has added 27 new franchises across the country and is looking to add a second franchise in Columbus and multiple others throughout Ohio.

"Columbus has been very good so far," said Peter Gilfillin, Junk King's master franchisee responsible for developing the Junk King brand in Ohio.

Plans call for as many as 12 franchises in Ohio in the next two to three years.

Junk King works with homeowners, real estate agents, property managers and business owners to haul their junk, removing everything from old furniture and appliances to yard waste and garden refuse, fencing and lumber to tires and automotive parts.

The concept is similar to industry leader 1-800-GOT-JUNK, which started two decades ago, but Junk King is different in that it uses an environmentally friendly approach, trying to recycle or reuse as much of the junk collected as possible.

Junk King was founded in 2005 in California and started to franchise the concept two years ago, awarding its first franchise to Eric and Marta Hughes in Dublin.

"It's a very simple business model, which makes it nice for (franchisees). There are not a lot of moving pieces," said Gilfillin.

"The segment has continued to grow but from a franchise standpoint there's not a lot of competition."

Indeed, the business essentially includes just a truck and two workers.

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# Springboard

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"It's not like you have to build a large building or have a lot of (overhead)," said Gilfillin.

Junk King, which Gilfillin said is now second only to 1-800-GOT-JUNK in the industry, gets most of its business from three target groups.

The first is individuals who may want their basement, attic or garage cleaned out or perhaps they're moving or downsizing.

The second is businesses, such as real estate agents, property managers or even home remodelers.

"Realtors will contact us when they're going to list a house and say 'Hey, we're getting ready to sell the house and we need it cleaned out,'" said Gilfillin.

There also is the government market, where, perhaps, a home is seized for any number of reasons by the government and it needs to be cleaned out. Even colleges use the service to have their dorms cleaned.

"Everyone has clutter and unwanted items, but few have the time or ability to dispose of it properly," said Gilfillin. "Whether residential customers with two incomes and little time to clean out their garage or a single mother in need of turning an unused storage room into a home office, there is demand for the service Junk King provides."

Helping to fuel the company's growth is its continued commitment to environmental responsibility, he said.

The company recycles as

much as 90 percent of what is collected from customers and has already saved nearly 2.3 tons of waste from local landfills.

"We hold the claim to being the greenest hauling service. Our focus is very much on being green and that separates us from the competition," said Gilfillin. "With all other things being equal, people will choose the green company."

He said that a local franchisee may use a number of different venues for recycling.

For example, if computers or other electronics are collected they may be taken to an e-waste disposal company.

According to Gilfillin, the "green" concept not only helps the environment, but allows the company to save on expenses.

"By recycling most of what we collect, we end up going to the garbage dumps less, which allows us to manage more jobs per day and generate more revenue per truck," he said.

The company may make money on items that include copper or aluminum or other metals that can be sold for cash.

Even with cardboard materials, if Junk King can collect even a small amount of money from a recycling facility it helps offset the cost of doing business.

Other items such as furniture can be donated to Goodwill, rather than paying the cost of disposing it at a landfill.

With a franchise fee of \$30,000, the total investment to own and operate a Junk King franchise in an exclusive territory is about \$90,000 to \$150,000.