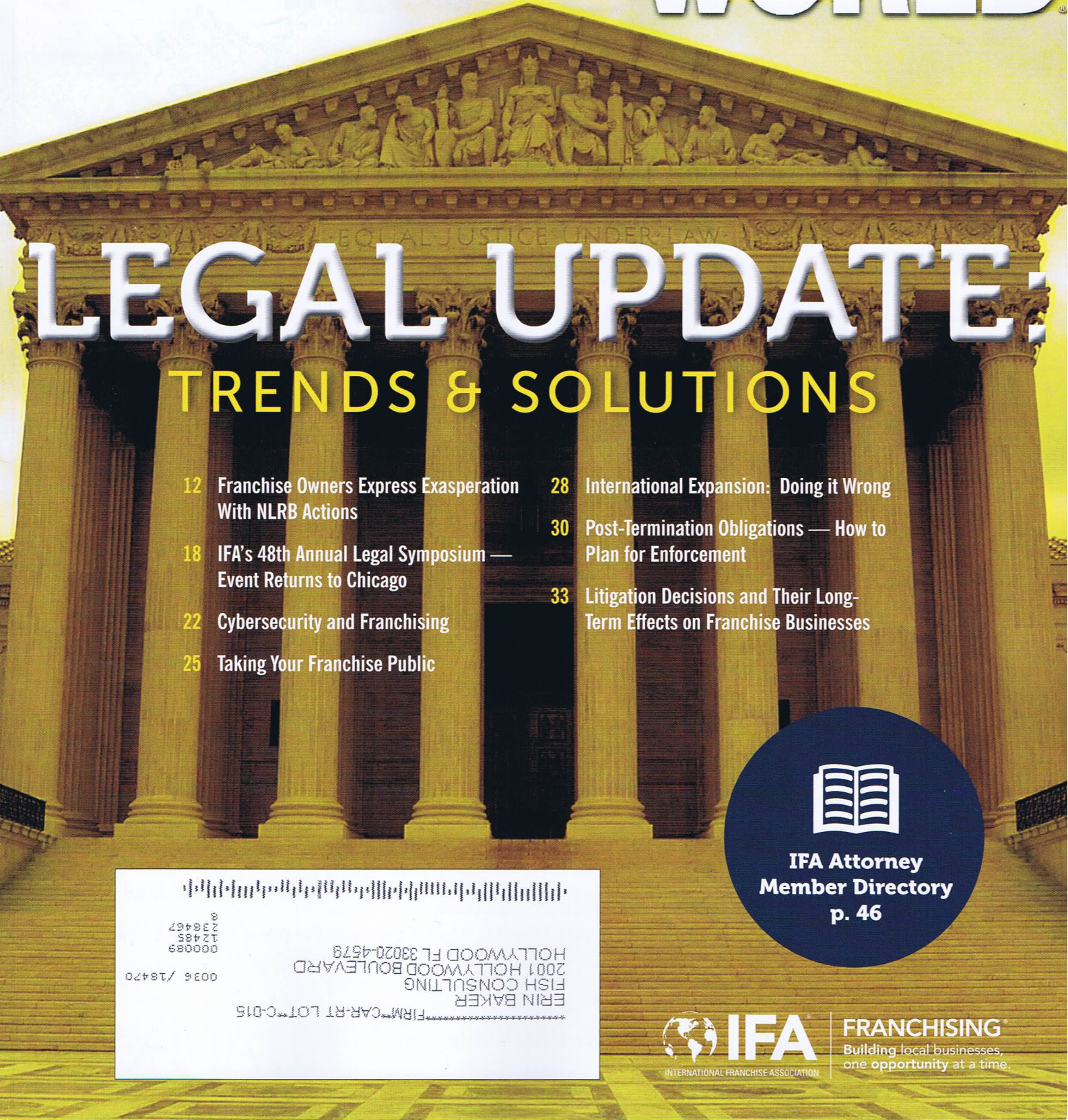



FRANCHISING WORLD

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FRANCHISING
Building local businesses,
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A STRATEGIC INITIATIVE OF THE
INTERNATIONAL FRANCHISE ASSOCIATION

★ SINCE 1991 ★

Valpak Targets Military Veterans for Direct Mail Success

The military trains its leaders to be mission-oriented, which translates well to the end game of customer service.

BY GREG COURCHANE



Mike and Robyn Lozier

For decades, Valpak franchisees have built their own successful small businesses by helping other local business owners achieve their goals. Our signature Blue Envelope was and is a simple marketing concept. Targeting specific nearby neighborhoods and sharing the cost of the envelope's postage, local businesses can efficiently and effectively advertise to prospective customers directly

within their trading area.

The concept of "shared direct mail" has certainly evolved over the years, and while our company now mails more than 20 billion coupons reaching nearly 40 million demographically targeted households each month in more than 100 markets, we also complement that with Internet and mobile advertising. It is vital that we continue to innovate and lead the industry by introducing digital advertising products with not only our smartphone apps, but continue to evolve and look for new strategic digital partners so that we can continue to be

relevant to today's consumers.

Our network is as strong as the franchisees we continue to bring into the fold, however, and the most important part of Valpak's growth is with our franchise owners. One area of strong recruitment for the company is with military veterans. In 2012, we initiated a veteran's incentive program to support returning U.S. military veterans seeking to start a Valpak franchise. By waiving start-up fees for qualified, honorably discharged veterans, we make it easier for them to start their franchise business and receive training at no direct cost. The savings amount can be up to \$32,500.

In addition to offering these deep incentives, Valpak is a proud member of the International Franchise Association's VetFran Program, committed to hiring and recruiting veterans and military spouses as team members and franchise owners. Thousands of service men and women are transitioning out of the military and need opportunities to succeed in the civilian economy. We strive to give them the financial incentives and training needed to do just that. Valpak has also been named to two prestigious lists recognizing franchises that go above and beyond in helping military servicemen and women achieve their goal of business ownership. The company earned a spot on the Best for Vets: Franchises list compiled by Military Times EDGE and has been selected for G.I. Jobs' Military Friendly Franchises list.

The veterans' community is filled with deserving military heroes whose experience and dedication make them ideal business owners.

CONVERTING LEADERSHIP SKILLS

One such hero is Valpak franchisee Mike Lozier. After 15 years serving in the U.S. Marine Corps, Lozier was searching for a next-chapter career opportunity that would allow him and his wife, Robyn, to go into business together. They were already familiar with Valpak after watching Robyn's parents operate their thriving franchise in New Jersey. In 2007, the couple bought a majority of her parent's Garden State territory and went into business together with Mike as chief executive officer and Robyn as president. They recently expanded in 2014, acquiring an additional 150,000 households in nearby New Jersey markets.

Mike is a wonderful example of converting leadership skills acquired in the military into entrepreneurial success. He served for 10 years in the enlisted ranks and then five years as a finance officer. His background and training are impressive and range from intelligence analyst and Marine Reconnaissance to close combat instructor. In addition, he completed challenging training courses such as U.S. Army Airborne School, U.S. Army Ranger School, Combat EMT Training and U.S. Army S.E.R.E. (Survival, Evading, Resistance, Escape), also known as POW School. This intense training background and discipline has helped to create a strong, passionate and loyal business leader.

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Transitioning from serving your country to serving your customers and leading employees has its challenges, to be sure. Mike learned that managing civilians takes a softer touch, and barking orders drill sergeant-style doesn't do much to motivate a team of salespeople. The military does, however, train its leaders to be mission-oriented, which translates well to meeting deadlines, managing multiple tasks and keeping the end game of customer service in mind all along the way. Mike knows how to stay organized and operate under pressure. Having been in situations where his life depended on carrying out orders, thinking on his feet and getting the job done, he and service members like him are the ultimate in team players and leaders.

Military veterans have experienced the honor and tremendous responsibility of serving our country, so finding a satisfying and fulfilling career afterward can be a tall order. With Valpak, they find an opportunity to be in business for themselves and grow their business while helping other small-business owners do the same. They find a proven system to follow that is much like the structured environment they experienced during military service with a very direct and detailed process designed for success.

All Valpak franchisees benefit from extensive training and support including more than 300 hours of classroom, in-field and online training. Our peer mentoring program pairs tenured franchisees with new franchisees for a two-year period. One of Valpak's key differentiators is the incomparable technology we provide our franchisees. From lead generation to ad design

and order process, to printing coupons and providing the software to run the franchise, Valpak creates efficiencies so our franchisees can focus primarily on sales and working with their clients.

Military veterans and other ideal candidates for Valpak franchise ownership should possess a desire to join a trusted industry-leading brand, work within a proven franchise system, develop relationships with local businesses and have a comfort level with selling new, digital technologies. Franchisees should also possess a minimum liquidity of \$75,000, and a minimum net worth of \$150,000.

Valpak appreciates our military veterans for the service and sacrifice they provide to our country and the impact they make in their post-military life. They are the ultimate target market. Hard work and commitment are in their DNA, and their dedication and passion for success is inspiring to our business and to others. When servicemen and women channel that determination into our franchise opportunity, there is no limit to what they can achieve. ■



Greg Courchane is director of franchise sales for Valpak. Find him at fransocial.franchise.org



IFA Welcomes Air Force Veteran as New VetFran Program Manager

Eldridge's efforts will build on the success of IFA's VetFran program.

U.S. Air Force veteran George Eldridge joined the International Franchise Association in January as program manager for VetFran, the franchise industry's strategic initiative to help veterans, military spouses and wounded warriors transition to civilian life through employment opportunities and franchise ownership.

Eldridge oversees veteran relations, educational programming for veterans considering careers or ownership opportunities in franchising and the VetFran Committee, helping IFA continue its award-winning efforts for veterans. He also works closely with a network of more than 650 franchise brands that voluntarily offer financial discounts and training for aspiring veteran franchisees and veterans seeking employment.

Eldridge's efforts will build on the success of IFA's VetFran program that has helped increase the number of veterans who have found employment in the industry to more than 203,000 with 5,600 becoming franchise owners, with more than 50,000 finding employment and more than 400 becoming franchise owners in 2014 alone.

"George Eldridge brings significant dedication and past experience to the association as we continue to expand our educational programming and outreach for veterans," said IFA Pres. and CEO Steve Caldeira, CFE. "Veterans are a natural fit for franchising because they are highly trained to work as part of teams, follow a proven organizational structure and excel in leadership. I am happy to welcome George to the IFA team and look forward to his future successes as he steps into this critically important role."

Eldridge graduated from the U.S. Air Force Academy and has served as an Air Force intelligence officer for the past 12 years. He has completed tours of duty in Korea, Iraq and Germany. He recently returned to the Washington, D.C., area and is pursuing his master's degree in business administration at George Washington University. ■