

"It's the best decision we have made" says Plus Fitness franchisee

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Billy and Paula Van Der Kooi invested in their first Plus Fitness gym in 2010. Three years on and the couple own three gyms in the Sydney suburbs of Thornleigh, Carlingford and Alexandria.

While Billy and Paula had always wanted to own their own gym, they were apprehensive about starting a new business entirely from scratch. They came across Plus Fitness and it seemed to tick all of the boxes.

Here, Billy takes the *Franchising* Q&A.

1. Why did you decide to buy a franchise?

We always dreamed of owning our own gym. After careful research and considering the many factors that could potentially go wrong [if we started up our own business], we decided to buy into a franchise with a proven track record and systems already in place.

2. How long have you been in the system?

Coming up to three years now.

3. How did you come to decide on this brand?

We looked at several franchises. Once we reviewed the systems and level of support with Plus Fitness, the choice was easy.

4. What surprised you about the business?

The amazing growth over the past two years.

5. How do you spend an average working day?

We get out of bed when we choose and have breakfast with our family. We then go for a walk and wait for peak hour traffic to pass.

We travel around to our three gyms two days per week to ensure everything is running smoothly, and most days we have the option to work from home as the business can be operated remotely. Last year we were running our gyms from Canada and Hawaii.

6. Are you a sole franchisee or in a partnership, and if so, who with and how do you manage the roles?

I am the director, however my wife is my business partner and we specialise in different areas, so we really complement our business.

7. How has the franchisor training helped you in business?

The systems are flawless and continue to improve. The training is very effective and bulletproof.

8. How do you raise your brand's profile in the community?

We like to get involved with, and sponsor, local charities, rotary clubs, sports teams and schools. This gives us an opportunity to build relationships and generate awareness [of our business] in the community.

9. What are your goals for the business?

We are very happy with three gyms for the time being and want to ensure that we continue to provide a fantastic facility along with great customer service and retention.

Who knows, there may be gym number four around the corner if the opportunity presents itself.

10. How has franchising changed your life?

Wow where do I start? On the opening morning of our first gym, we found out we were having our first child. A great omen.

We work hard, play hard, have flexibility in our lives and are very comfortable financially. It's a great feeling to have so much freedom. It's the best decision we had made and we couldn't imagine doing anything else.

Read more at <http://www.franchisebusiness.com.au/case-study/its-best-decision-we-have-made-says-plus-fitness-franchisee#ymP2FzST8fvtS3ry.99>
