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PROFILE

IAN CAMPBELL'S MISSION TO INSPIRE BABIES AND CHILDREN ON A LIFETIME ADVENTURE THROUGH WATER

From running a single Grafton swim school in an old converted brewery seven years ago, Gold Coast father of three Ian Campbell has created one of Australia's fastest growing franchises and the nation's leading learn to swim school for babies.

JUMP! Swim Schools currently operates in over 40 locations across Australia, has a further 50 schools scheduled to open in the coming 12 months, and has expanded internationally with a site open in Singapore and facilities mid-construction in Brazil and New Zealand.

Last month's national title Emerging Franchisor of the Year puts JUMP! in elite company with past winners healthy burger chain Grill'd, optometrists Laubman & Pank and lifestyle centres Plus Fitness.

It's been a rapid expansion for JUMP! Swim Schools and the 32-year-old Managing Director who saw business potential in the niche service of teaching babies and young children to swim in a calm environment free of distraction instead of the hustle and bustle of learn-to-swim classes at aquatic centres.

When he saw a swim school for sale in Grafton in 2009, he drove 140 km from Ballina that day to inspect the business opportunity, motivated by his love for swimming and learn to swim expertise developed over fifteen years.

"It was a little pool in a former brewery shed but the moment I stepped inside, it dawned on me that this set up solved the biggest problem with learn to swim — distraction," Mr Campbell said.

"I bought the business, quit my job, moved to Grafton and built the company on country values — getting to know every customer and being invested in the kids so they can leverage off confidence to excel in the pool."

JUMP! uniquely offers a competency-based curriculum, has developed internationally — recognised expertise in infant water safety, and is one of the few swim schools that teaches babies as young as three months of age.

"We see ourselves as the child carers of learn to swim. We have a low teacher on baby ratio and we are putting specialised education with metrics back into learn to swim and that relates to our success across the country," Mr Campbell says.

"We are excited that children reap the benefits of this tailored, highly-personalised program delivered in our fun and safe innovative swimming facility. It is the perfect environment for boosting the confidence in young swimmers."

JUMP! instructors are expert in teaching babies from three months of age. Only two classes are run simultaneously, numbers are capped at four per class and the competency-based program focuses on the joy of participation and parental engagement in a fun and hygienic environment.

The first JUMP! Swim School franchise opened in mid-2014 at on Queensland's Gold Coast.

JUMP! operates eight corporate sites, has grown to include 28 full-time staff at its head office on the Gold Coast and satellite office in Melbourne, and is on track to reach its goal of 150 franchise units next year.

The past year has seen a 220 percent increase in JUMP! annual revenue, with the company's 2017 turnover projections sitting at $13 million ahead of the international franchise openings.

Campbell, dad to three young sons and a former swim coach, says the key to JUMP! Swim Schools is providing lessons in a private, stress free facility to make children comfortable.

Parents seeking specialised swimming lessons for babies and keeping them learning year-round was driving growth for the group, both in Australia and overseas.

"Parents are picking up on the importance of babies and children learning to swim year-round in order to ensure they are confident and prepared for summer," Mr Campbell says.

"We believe teaching babies and children to swim is not only a safety measure but an essential skill for our lifestyle.

"We understand how capable babies are and teach babies as young as three months of age."

While the JUMP! offering has driven growth among customers, it is Campbell's franchise model that has also contributed to the rapid rise of the business.

JUMP! Swim Schools have been recognised with a plethora of national awards in 2016 for its superior business plan, innovative systems and excellence in the field of sport and recreation.

JUMP! won a Gold Coast Business Excellence Award for Health and Wellbeing, and collected the Australian Swim Schools Association Inclusive Swimming Award for its service to children with special needs.

The company is also the Silver Stevie Winner in two categories of the world's premier business awards, the 2016 Asia-Pacific Stevie Awards.

"It's an honour to be recognised alongside some of the finest business leaders and professionals in Australia, but particularly pleasing when you're doing something you love and know you are making a positive difference to children's lives," Mr Campbell says.

Ian Campbell Bio

Ian Campbell has three young sons and a long history with swim schools. He opened his first purpose-built swim school in 2009.

JUMP! Swim Schools provides lessons in a private, stress-free facility to make children comfortable. It delivers industry-leading early learn to swim expertise, small intimate classes, superior cleanliness and an innovative learning environment that caters specifically to babies, young children and carers.