

Why Good Oil Co. Decided to Enter the Restaurant Business



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Don Good's family has run Good Oil Company since his father founded the business in 1941. However, since the second generation took over, the company has evolved into much more than a petroleum distributor. In 1980, the company began building gas stations and convenience stores, and introduced restaurants in 2009. Here's why the decades-old company decided to get in on restaurant game and invest in a Rally's franchise.

Name: Don Good

Franchise owned: Rally's in South Bend, Ind. (Checkers and Rally's Restaurants, Inc.)

How long have you owned a franchise?

We previously owned a different quick service restaurant franchise for five years. This will be our second Rally's location, which we opened in 2014.

Why franchising?

Franchising brings many aspects that are difficult to develop with proprietary food service businesses, including name recognition, marketing, research and development of new products, systems and protocols, and discipline. While these can be developed over time without a franchise the learning curve is much shorter with franchises.

What were you doing before you became a franchise owner?

Our family has been in petroleum distribution for 73 years and operated convenience stores for 30-plus years.

Why did you choose this particular franchise?

We were looking for a franchise that had good synergies with our existing operations including customer base, traffic, and facilities. Rally's matched up well with our focus on value priced products and convenience.

How much would you estimate you spent before you were officially open for business?

We spent \$150,000 for the build out, \$175,000 for equipment, \$25,000 in training and \$50,000 on miscellaneous expenses.

Where did you get most of your advice/do most of your research?

We researched online to start and then began discussions with other Rally's operators. For us, we wanted to make sure that we brought on a new concept that fit our model. Rally's is the perfect fit for what we are working to accomplish.

What were the most unexpected challenges of opening your franchise?

In our first Rally's location, we underestimated the response and were not properly prepared for the amount of traffic we had as the "new place in town." Luckily, this was a problem we were able to successfully overcome. There are challenges with any business and how you respond to them will ultimately create success for you.

What advice do you have for individuals who want to own their own franchise?

Find something you are passionate about, spend a lot of time talking to people who share that passion and are doing it right. Also, don't underestimate the investment of time and the money needed to start successfully; it is always more than you think. Secure your capital and back up, put your head down, go for it and don't let up until you are ready to retire.

What's next for you and your business?

We will continue to grow our core businesses, including adding two additional Rally's locations that are in the works. We will also look for other ways to diversify our business interests while we work through a 10 year transition plan to our third generation.

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