



FRANCHISE OPPORTUNITY: RETAIL

# building FOOT TRAFFIC

THE ATHLETE'S FOOT  
HAS THE EXPERIENCE TO  
DRIVE RETAIL SUCCESS

➔ The secret to success in retail these days is to have size and experience behind you, and The Athlete's Foot offers franchisees all this and more. With over 140 stores across Australia and New Zealand (and 800 stores worldwide), The Athlete's Foot is the market leader in retailing sports and leisure footwear. Last year, the company appointed Ed Connolly as master franchisee for New Zealand. Ed brings a wealth of experience to the role, having been on the board of a major UK supermarket chain before becoming CEO of Warehouse Stationery in New Zealand, then commercial director of The Warehouse and, more recently, CEO of Carpet Court.

'What appealed to me about The Athlete's Foot is that health and wellbeing has been a fast-growing business sector for some time and shows no signs of slowing down,' says Ed. 'We are at the premium end of the market where it's about service rather than price. We sell top brands and we don't discount, so margins are maintained. Our customers are loyal and come to us because we offer expert advice and good value all year round. As a result, our nine NZ stores have bucked the trend over the last six months and are showing good growth. I've just opened a store of my own in Palmerston North (above) and it's going very well indeed.'

The stores' focus on the correct fitting of shoes via the state-of-the-art Fitprint system has also enabled The Athlete's Foot to develop an additional expertise in children's shoes, as demonstrated recently on *Campbell Live*. 'All our franchisees and staff are trained in foot anatomy,

fit and comfort so we are able to give individual service to customers whatever their age and needs,' says Ed.

Ed has identified over 30 additional locations around New Zealand for new outlets, from Whangarei to Queenstown and including several sites in Auckland and Wellington. 'Now it's a matter of finding the right person for the right site and making sure the figures stack up,' says Ed. 'Ideally, we are looking for franchisees with a good retail or management background who are passionate about service and have an interest in sport and health. They need to have good business acumen and equity of around \$300,000.'

'The Athlete's Foot has over 30 years' experience of helping franchisees create valuable and successful businesses. I've worked for some big retail names and spent over six months doing my research before buying the master franchise. I have to say I was mightily impressed with the quality of the people and systems behind the business. We have the brand, the products, the relationships and the standards to keep our franchisees ahead of the game. If that makes sense to people interested in buying a franchise, get in touch with me.' ■

## ADVERTISER INFO

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