

The Bakery Cafe Category Fuels Fast Casual 's Success

As the fast casual segment continues to grow (with an 11 percent increase in 2013, according to food industry consulting firm, Technomics), the bakery cafe category leads all menu categories with U.S. system wide sales of \$6.7 billion.

These numbers -- along with the appeal of owning a bakery cafe franchise -- attract the attention of many would-be buyers, but the largest brands are simply out-of-reach for many.

Compare the basic investment requirements for the biggest bakery cafe franchise concepts to those for Zoup!

Zoup!

- Single units available
- Net worth of \$350,000
- Liquid assets of \$150,000
- Initial Investment : \$375,900 - \$576,400

Panera

- No single unit agreements
- Net worth of \$7.5 million
- Liquid assets of \$3 million
- Initial investment: \$1,032,490 to \$2,543,982

Corner Bakery

- Must develop minimum of five cafes in a market or combination of markets
- Net worth of \$3 million
- Liquid assets of \$1.5 million
- Initial investment: \$554,000 to \$2,375,000

Einstein Bros. Bagels

- Multi-unit agreements only
- Net worth of \$2.5 million
- Liquid assets of \$1 million
- Initial investment: \$536,300 - \$828,850

Au Bon Pain

- Must develop a minimum of five units
- Net worth of \$5 million
- Liquid assets of \$350k per unit, or approximately \$3-\$4 million
- Total initial investment: \$2-3 million

Bruegger's Bagels

- Must develop a minimum of three units
- Net worth of \$335,000
- Liquid assets of \$150,000
- Total Investment: \$404.6K - \$591.6K

The Takeaway: When comparing other bakery cafe franchises to Zoup!, the lower cost of entry and availability of single unit agreements make it an attractive choice for those who could otherwise be shut out of the category.