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Testing . . . are you fit for a franchise?

Ask **Ken Stein** about the biggest mistake people make in the franchising business, and his answer is: buying because they think a business is "hot."

"Everyone asks me, what's the best franchise, what's the hot new franchise?" Stein said. "The truth is: What's the best franchise for you?"

Stein calls himself Long Island's franchise matchmaker. His Roslyn Heights-based Kensington Co. & Affiliates represents more than 150 different national concepts. He helps people select the right opportunity partly by administering a test that sorts out a candidate's wants and needs. "We try to match

up opportunities that will meet your goals, your life-style and your skill sets," he said.

Take, for example, the candidate with a management marketing background who wants to buy a doughnut franchise. "He's never worked retail," Stein said, hypothetically. "He doesn't like working with teenagers. He doesn't like working with low-wage employees. He clearly doesn't know anything about the food service business and he wants to have the weekends off. He's not a fit. Instead, he's much more geared up for a business-to-business or business-to-consumer sales/service franchise."

Stein brings to the table a

decade of experience and, before that, 18 years of owning a chain of drug stores and health care businesses. In addition to matching franchisees with franchisees, he also gets involved in reselling franchises, and just co-brokered (with **Darren Martin** of Oyster Bay-based Gold Coast Business Consulting) the sale of two Hooters franchises, in East Meadow and Islandia.

So what's hot and what's not? "The fastest growing segment in franchising is sales and service, not in retail sales," he said, reeling off as examples real estate offices, tutoring businesses and consulting. Are they right for you? Take the test.



Ken Stein, left, and Darren Martin.