



Contractors Adding Home Performance Services Have Choices

Building internal capabilities or becoming a franchise are options.

BY HVACRBUSINESS STAFF

Many hvac contractors believe Home Performance (HP) — addressing residential customers' needs from a whole-house, energy-optimization point of view — is the future of the industry. *HVACR Business* presents these reports from two residential providers who are taking different routes to adding HP services.

ABC Finds Franchise Route the Best Way to Enter HP Market

Jerry Unruh is owner and president of ABC Cooling and Heating Services Inc., a 55-year-old residential hvac company with multiple locations in northern California. His company is one of the newest GreenHomes America franchises.

Why did you begin exploring the possibility of offering HP services to customers?

We are an environmentally conscious company and always aim to provide the most energy-efficient, environmentally friendly options to our customers. With federal, state, and utility incentives fueling our market — and California's initiatives to drive 40% energy reduction by 2020 — we decided it was a great time to begin providing HP services to our customers.

Why did you decide to become a GreenHomes America franchise?

Initially, we were not looking to participate in a franchise. With our decades of experience and many successful years of business, I had hoped my company could figure out Home Performance, get it up and running quickly, and see a fast ROI. But after months of research, we found it to be quite confusing, especially since not many companies currently offer it.

Nonetheless, we started planning how to add Home Performance services, but shortly after that I read about GreenHomes America and saw this company as a true expert in the market.

What made you so sure this was the company to go with? Did you do any research?

I am very familiar with GreenHomes America's parent company, The Linc Group, because several of my friends

start-up time down to the tee. They also provided answers to questions that we didn't even know to ask, which we now know helped to avoid costly mistakes due to inexperience. And as a part of The Linc Group, GreenHomes America partners with leading vendors, which

They provided a detailed, step-by-step launch plan that had everything in it and was set in the order of priorities with anticipated completion dates. GreenHomes also provides ongoing marketing support and consultation, documented procedures, job descriptions, forms, software and scripting for field and office staff.

What are your goals for the new HP service?

Our goal is always to keep our customers for life. We saw this as an opportunity to take our customer relationships to the next level. We can now do so much more to find energy savings by improving our customers' homes in ways they don't even realize. Not only energy savings of significant measures, but improvements in the health and safety of their home.

We also expect this to spur a cultural change in the company. We don't see ourselves selling some hvac and then some Home Performance. Everything we now do will be through the eyes of Home Performance.

Finally, we expect to increase average job sizes by \$6,000 to \$15,000; increase jobs during the typical "off" seasons — since Home Performance is not driven by weather; and decrease the number of callbacks and warranty issues because comfort issues are being solved.

In today's economic climate, time and resources are precious items. We felt that GreenHomes America had the start-up time down to the tee.

— Jerry Unruh, owner/president, ABC Cooling and Heating Services Inc.

on the commercial hvac side are a part of the Linc Service Network and have been for many years. I also spoke with Princeton Air, a Linc Service and GreenHomes America franchise that launched the Home Performance model in just 90 days after partnering with GreenHomes. Princeton Air confirmed that after partnering with GreenHomes, they beat their projected numbers just after their first year.

What are the biggest benefits of going with the franchise model for HP?

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means we receive nationally negotiated, discounted prices.

Can you describe the process of getting the GreenHomes franchise up and running?

First, we received Building Performance Institute (BPI) accreditation, had several of our staff certified as Building Analysts, and designated a Home Performance manager. Next, we used GreenHomes' consultation and training processes to get our sales staff, field personnel, and customer service representatives up to speed. Then we ordered new branded trucks and began hiring additional field labor.

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