
Made in Oklahoma: JBF Franchise Systems, Inc.

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ABOUT THE COMPANY › Address: 325 N Butternut Place, Broken Arrow. › Web site: jbf.sale.com. › Key personnel: Founders Shannon Wilburn, president; [Daven Tackett](#), vice president. › Service: Just Between Friends offers twice yearly children's and maternity consignment sales events. HOW IT STARTED

Wilburn and Tackett had their first sale of gently used children's clothing and toys in 1997 from Wilburn's [Tulsa](#) living room. The pair sold about \$2,000 worth of items in two days to other mothers looking for some good bargains, and made about \$250 for themselves. The women didn't envision turning their idea into a business.

But enthusiastic friends encouraged the pair to keep organizing bigger sales until they found themselves renting out space at Expo Center at the Tulsa fairgrounds. They had already set up Just Between Friends as a business, and after helping friends and family create the same sales event in other states, they started franchising the concept in 2003.

The sales are held twice a year, although that can vary by franchise, and consigners receive up to 70 percent of the selling price on infant, children's, young teens and maternity clothing, toys and equipment in a large, garage-sale type environment that benefits everyone, Wilburn said. "Our goal is to help moms and families in communities where we've sold franchises."

Just Between Friends made almost \$5 million last year, Wilburn said. There are now 66 franchisees in 17 states. A franchise cost \$10,500, and franchisees pay royalty fees.

Each sale "is a major production," Wilburn said, that involves hundreds of volunteers to help man each event. The Tulsa events are the biggest, with [Oklahoma City](#) the second and [Norman](#) the third largest events.

The pair credits their business success on a concept that was ripe for the times. "When we started, our goal was just to shop for our families," said Wilburn, who has appeared on local and national television about the company. But saving time and money appealed to more people than the pair first realized.

"Like most great ideas, Just Between Friends fills a niche in the marketplace that wasn't there before," Tackett said. "This business is really recession proof, and lots of people are realizing that . . . we've seen increases in shoppers and consigners this fall."

BUSINESS WRITER DEBBIE BLOSSOM



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