

# fresh

MAGAZINE

*beauty, fashion & lifestyle*

INTERVIEW WITH

*Manjit Minhas*

ISSUE 48  
JULY/AUGUST 2019  
freshmag.ca



# WOMEN

10 BRANDS  
TO FOLLOW

*Inc.*

*Woman Inc: 10 Brands to Follow* connects you with women-owned businesses that you deserve to know about. World-changing, innovative, and conscious, these brands showcase the power of a woman in charge.





---

# Helping Entrepreneurs find Long Term Success

If you've ever fantasized about leaving your 9-5 and starting your own business, you're not alone.



A report published in 2017 states that Canadian women are the most active entrepreneurs in the world. A full 13% of women in Canada run their own businesses, the highest percentage of all G20 companies. (<https://www.folio.ca/canadians-are-most-active-women-entrepreneurs-in-the-world/>)

The reasons why vary; for some it's about the flexibility self-employment gives them, for some it's about breaking the glass ceiling. For some, it's simply because they saw an opportunity and went for it! (<https://www.thebalancesmb.com/statistics-on-canadian-women-in-business-2948029>)

Susan Friesen, owner of eVision Media, a company that specializes in building websites, doing branding, SEO and digital marketing, has found immense personal satisfaction as an entrepreneur.

A pioneer in her field (she started 20 years ago, when the web was young), one of the things that has given her the most satisfaction is "attracting other women entrepreneurs and business women. They felt comfortable working with another woman who gets them and understands what their brand positioning should be like."

## Success

For Friesen, being an entrepreneur has allowed her to be successful on her own terms. "Success," she says, "is not about the dollar; I'm not here to become a millionaire." Rather, her idea of success is multi-layered, and focuses on how much of a difference she is making. "I'm doing what I'm passionate about, and I'm living with purpose, confident that this is what I'm meant to be doing. I mostly help female small business owners and entrepreneurs to be successful in their business. I am supporting my team; the more business I can bring in, the more work they have. I am helping them succeed in creating an income and helping them do what they are passionate about."

## Long hours, hard work

It has not, however, been easy. She confesses she works 16-hour days, 7 days a week, and that has sometimes been met with disapproval. "I am criticized when I talk about the number of hours I put in into my work. I'm judged; their perception is that I don't have enough balance in my life. But that's what it takes to create a successful business, you have to be prepared to put in the hours."

Working long hours while raising a family was certainly a challenge for Friesen. But she has no regrets. In addition to providing for her two kids (now adults), she also instilled in them a sense of responsibility: "both of them," she says proudly, "have a solid work ethic."

As someone who has been successfully self-employed for two decades, Friesen has a wealth of experience and advice for new entrepreneurs. She generously shared some of her hard-earned knowledge with us.

## What makes you different?

One challenge Friesen puts to new entrepreneurs when she begins working with them is to figure out their differential or unique selling point. In other words, what is the thing that makes your business different from all the rest in your niche?

For eVision Media, it's customer service. As a woman in a male-dominated industry, she has found that right-brained features like creativity and empathy make her business stand out.

"What differentiates me from a lot of web developers out there is that I have bridged the gap between the creativity and the technology. I am able to bring our clients a much broader scope of all the different intricacies involved in creating a brand presence on line."

Additionally, don't negate the importance

of good customer service: "our industry is notoriously bad for customer service. At eVision, we focus on customer service. It's one of our biggest priorities. We work quickly, have a fast turn-around. We offer a speedy, reasonably-priced service."

Friesen loves working with women who are coming from the corporate world, and starting their own businesses. It's gratifying to her to help women to create strong brands and an online presence, she gets immense satisfaction from seeing them succeed.

Focus on what you know, invest in good people to do the rest

"Know what you need first, and hire the right people to do it for you. The more you try to learn how to do things, then the less you are focusing on your own core competencies, and the less people you are actually serving and helping. Don't spend so much time learning and doing and struggling and doing it yourself that you aren't building the actual business and working with clients."

When you've been working for a boss for many years, the transition to self-employment is especially challenging. And there is no magic solution, no shortcuts. Hard work is the key; but not just working harder, working smarter, too.

"Don't get caught up in what the gurus are saying. My advice is to be educated on what you need in order to build a sustainable business, but not necessarily to educate yourself on how to do it all. Invest in your business with someone who can help you to build the right foundation. Build the right branding, the right website to do the kind of marketing that will accomplish your goals."

