

Inside Image

Winter 2007 **Volume 7** **Issue 2**

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The Business of the *Image Business*



Daniela Mastragostino

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Over the years I have found that being in business for myself has been no easy feat and I understand the truth in the saying, it's not enough to be good at what you do, you need to know the business end of things.

When I first started out in the image industry, I realized very quickly that I didn't know enough about the business end of things, including invoicing, pricing, gst remittances, and taxes, to make it through my first year.

Through trial and error, I have come up with new and better ways of doing business, but I recommend to those just getting started in the business to take as many small business start-up courses as possible. Many government programs

and resources are available free of charge, and small business enterprise centres offer courses to familiarize yourself with everything you need to know about being in business, including but not limited to: marketing, obtaining your master business license, and customer service. However, keep in mind that if you are in business for yourself, it is your responsibility to maintain proper records and bookkeeping in reporting to the government.

For anyone just starting out in the industry, have fun with it – you might just find some hidden talents while taking care of the business side of things.

Daniela Mastragostino
Chapter President
AICI Canada/Toronto
Nové Image Consulting



Leah Morrigan

EDITOR'S MESSAGE

I felt that January 1st was a good day to get around to all of those little jobs like dusting and reorganizing my workspace, cleaning up my bulletin board, filing, organizing my calendar, and completing the monthly income statement (TIP: not to mention cleaning my computer keyboard with a toothbrush). I always feel renewed when I clean and organize space; I find this new energy helps with my sense of motivation and efficiency, preparing me for the wonders of the next twelve months.

With a new calendar year comes new changes, and among the changes for 2008 will be my retirement from the editorship of Inside Image and the introduction of new editors, who you will meet very soon.

Since I plan to go out with a bang, I've decided on the themes of my final two issues that I'm not only looking forward to writing about, but reading what all of you make of the topics. To start your synapses snapping, spring 08 will see **The Women's Issue**, and the

summer edition will be the companion **Men's Issue**. I have yet to decide on the treatment of each edition, but I can tell you that the deadlines are **February 18** (I will send reminders ASAP) and **May 5** respectively.

HERE'S TO A SPECTACULAR 2008!

Leah Morrigan
Editor, Inside Image
Leah Morrigan Image Consulting for Men

CLEAR AS A BELL

A LITTLE INFORMATION DOES NOT AN EXPERT MAKE

After several years of working in the fashion industry as a designer and merchandise manager, I began teaching fashion design. During teacher training I was told that I only needed to be one step ahead of the students to be able to teach them something new. Although this was meant to calm my butterflies, after teaching twenty different courses in less than five years, I now believe that to be effective and confident, it is best to be several steps ahead of your students.

In our unregulated industry, we often encounter people who gain a small amount of information, then present themselves as expert image consultants. If they are not qualified to adequately deliver the services they promise, the caliber of our industry suffers.

Consequently, if a client approaches you requesting a service that is beyond your expertise, in order to maintain your integrity and that of our industry, you could do one of the following:

- A)** Admit you are not a specialist in that field and refer them to an expert. Your client will be impressed with your honesty and will be well-served by the incoming expert professional. This works particularly well in large urban centres where many consultants choose to specialize. I'd suggest having an agreement with the specialist to send the client back to you for other services that you can perform.
- B)** If the client is not in a hurry and an expert in the field is available to teach you the skills necessary to perform the service, tell your client that you are taking training and will contact them in an appropriate amount of time. In some cases, you can inte-

grate your client into the learning process under the watchful eye of your trainer. Developing a coaching relationship with that consultant can also help answer any questions that may arise as you gain experience.

Whether you chose to specialize or be a generalist, make on-going education part of your yearly strategic plan so that you are constantly improving your skills and injecting new life into your business. Our AICI conference is a perfect venue to meet experts who could assist you in moving your business forward.



Catherine Bell, AICI, CIP
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Angèle Desgagné, AICI CIP is the only internationally Certified Image Professional member by the Association of Image Consultants International to provide Image Consulting Training Programs en français and English in Canada.

“**Angèle taught me everything I needed to know to start my own image consulting business.**”

Amey Casson ~ Polished Image, London, Ontario

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Angèle Desgagné, AICI CIP est la seule imagiste-conseil canadienne ayant obtenue son accréditation et titre de membre professionnel (CIP) de l'Association of Image Consultants International à offrir des formations d'imagiste-conseil en français et en anglais au Canada.

“**Angèle a su me montrer tout ce que j'avais besoin de savoir pour démarrer avec succès mon entreprise en gestion de l'image.**”

Amey Casson ~ Polished Image, London, Ontario

For program & registration information,
please contact Angèle:

Pour de plus amples renseignements,
veuillez contacter Angèle :

t. 905-469-1889 c. 905-601-5929
angele@imageliteinternational.com

www.imageliteinternational.com

FROM PERPETUAL STUDENT TO LIFELONG LEARNER

I really like the phrase “lifelong learning”. The World Bank Education Group describes it as “more than just education and training beyond formal schooling. A lifelong learning framework encompasses learning throughout the life cycle, from birth to grave and in different learning environments, formal, non-formal and informal”.

I used to describe myself as a perpetual student, thinking that I would learn by signing up, sitting in a classroom, handing in assignments, writing an exam and hopefully passing the one course or another that I was taking (to the point that my family used to roll its eyes every time I mentioned I was taking another course). To date, I have learned ballet and belly dancing rather unsuccessfully, but marketing, public relations, image and presentation skills, to more avail.

At one point, I got really busy and for the first time in many years, I couldn't sign up for any courses. I missed it for a while until I realized that, although I'm not sitting in a classroom, I'm still learning. The difference? Formal learning happens in a classroom; informal learning can happen anywhere, anytime.

Learning is a part of being an entrepreneur, as you never know what opportunities are going to come along. When I work with a client, I'm learning all the time. For example, I'm learning to put aside my dislike of the colour brown since a number of my clients look and feel fabulous when they wear it. I also learned from a client's 10 year old daughter that “Daddy just isn't fashionable”. We're working with Daddy.

Learning is more than keeping up to date for my business – I learn when I explore the city, have coffee with a friend, go to a party, or go on holiday. I've learned a lot about Toronto's history from my 91 year old neighbour who's lived here all her life. I learned that sometimes our tax dollars are well spent! While out for a walk the other day, I discovered a wetland area that is being nurtured and preserved within sight of one of our largest hospitals. Learning is really about being open, curious and interested. And, it's about having fun.

The other day, I picked up a course calendar for one of the community colleges and flipped through it. There are all sorts of courses I would love to take but I probably won't. I'm going to set aside some time every couple of weeks just to learn. I'm really looking forward to it – it's going to be such fun!

This article first appeared in the Dec 07 issue of *CAWEE Acclaim* (www.cawee.net) and is reprinted with permission.

Anne Sowden, AICI CIP

MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

WINTER 2007

Joanne Blake, AICI CIP: Based on **Reader's Digest** survey on civility across Canada, Joanne Blake appeared as a guest expert to discuss civility on **CBC Radio** Wildrose Forum, October 30. Continuing into November, Joanne took part in a three-part **CTV** television interview about civility, November 20, 21, and 23. Also in November, Joanne discussed Dining for Success in **24 Hour Magazine**.

In December, Joanne commented in What Gives – Appropriate Business Gifting in **Forum Magazine** for CMAs, and the same month, her article, Spouses' Guide to the Office Christmas Party appeared in the **Edmonton Journal**, Dec. 10, and was picked up by the **Ottawa Citizen**, the **New Brunswick Telegraph Journal** and the **Vancouver Sun**.

Karen Brunger, AICI CIP: Discussed 7 Easy Pieces for Fall and Winter in **B Magazine**, October 1, and the same day featured in The Power of Body Language in **Glow Magazine**. Karen quoted in **B Magazine's** Dos and Don'ts of Individual Styling November 1, and writers Jayne Hobbs and Maddy Dennett teamed up for their article, Behind the Scenes – Certified Image Professional Karen Brunger, in **B Magazine**, also on November 1.

Leah Murrigan: Co-written with *Anne Sowden*, Canada's Most Professional MPs, originally published in **Inside Image** summer 2007, was expanded for publication by Ottawa's **The Hill Times**, October 15, 2007, under the title, Image Consultants Give Thumbs Up to a Few Stylish MPs. Leah discussed men's low-slung rocker jeans in Low-rise Guys for **Sun Media**, November 20. She commented on men's socks in the **Globe & Mail's** Footwear Follies November 26, and followed up discussing men's winter footwear in the **Globe's** Foot Patrol, December 3.

Anne Sowden, AICI CIP quoted in Chic Cliques, Geek Cliques about dress codes in the **Globe & Mail** October 8, and appeared with Christine Williams, On the Line, **CTSTV** about preparing for interviews on October 26.



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"Karen, your training program is phenomenal and very deep. It was WAY beyond my expectation... I would highly recommend the entire program."
- Nyla Ibrahim, Pakistan & Canada

"I've run out of superlatives. The courses that I attended were the most complete and life changing that I have ever experienced... Your training has taken me to a whole new level of aspiration and expectation."
- Jan Fisher, New Zealand

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Office Waste Reduction

A certain amount of office waste is generated when running our businesses, but there are ways to reduce our environmental footprint, as suggested by the Government of Canada's Network for Women Entrepreneurs:

In the life of a business there are many kinds of waste that can have a negative impact on the environment. Some of the most common include:

- paper
- general supplies like staples and paper clips
- toner and printer cartridges
- computer equipment
- general office equipment (telephones, fax machines, photocopiers, etc.)

Some simple things you can do to reduce office waste are:

- Whenever possible, use electronic communication, like email to reduce paper consumption
- Use recycled or reusable office products
- Buy products with less packaging
- Set up a paper recycling program
- Set your photocopiers and printers to print on both sides by default, and reuse the other side of unused printed pages
- Cut and staple bunches of used paper for note pads

For further information:

www.cobsc.org/nwe/en/synd/greening.cfm?id=999&side=1

STARTING YOUR OWN BUSINESS

Starting your own business is a daunting proposition. The financial insecurity and loneliness of entrepreneurship can leave us contemplating if we made the right decision to venture out on our own. Ask yourself questions if you are considering entrepreneurship:

WHO ARE YOU?

Do you have the personality to withstand the trials and tribulations of entrepreneurship? Are you prepared to commit one hundred percent to your business?

Do you have financial resources from which you can draw during the first three years? Do you have the support of your spouse? Can you work independently or do you require energy from others to work? Are you confident in yourself? Can you “fake it until you make it”? Are you self-motivated?

WHAT MAKES YOU UNIQUE?

Once you have decided that you do have the personality to persevere with the business, you need to discover your strengths: what makes you unique from all the other image consultants? Why would a potential client choose you over another image consultant? Do you draw on experience or education?

PLAN, PLAN AND PLAN SOME MORE.

The next step is to develop a solid business plan and promise yourself to stick to it. A business plan is a work in progress, so don't be surprised if you need to change it periodically. The business plan should contain your objectives for the year, strategies that define how you are going to achieve

these goals, and then specific tactics.

This time of year is a great time to reflect on the past twelve months and develop a plan for the upcoming year.

FOCUS, FOCUS, FOCUS.

It took me three years to determine that I wanted to focus on the corporate market, but for some of you, it may take less time to identify your area of expertise. What area of image consulting you enjoy the most? Do you enjoy one-on-one or corporate work? If you enjoy corporate work, what industries do you enjoy working in – pharmaceutical, financial, high-tech? If you enjoy one-on-one work, do you enjoy working with men or women? Professional women or stay-at-home moms? The more focused you are, the more successful you will become.

LEARN FROM YOUR MISTAKES.

Be cognizant of the fact that you will make mistakes and that's okay. The most successful business people constantly make mistakes, then learn from them.

PAY YOURSELF.

An entrepreneur and good friend of mine recently told me, “If you don't pay yourself, you have a hobby, not a business.” Her advice is dead-on. Make sure you pay yourself at least once a month.

The last three years have been challenging to say the least. There have been many times when I have contemplated giving it all up to return to the corporate world. There are things that I wish I had done differently; there are things that I wish I knew when I first started, but one of my greatest accomplishments has been starting my own business.

Amy Casson, AICI

PERSONALIZING PROGRESSIVES

With three out of four Canadians in need prescription lenses, eyewear has become a common aspect of personal style and image. Assessing client's lifestyles and eyewear requirements, I have found that many people now need eyewear for reading, but for clients who speak in front of groups, I recommend progressive lenses.



Progressive lenses are a multifocal lens that will have your distance prescription at the top and then gradually progresses to your reading prescription at the bottom of the lens. As progressive lenses have no lines, no one ever has to know we are wearing them!

Progressives allow speakers to look from their materials and back to their audience without a distracting glasses adjustment, eliminating the possibility of the audience feeling as though they are being “peered down” upon by the speaker who looks at them over the top of their glasses.

In the 30 seconds we have to make a first impression, eye contact is a critical

component of the interaction – just as important as our smile. I like to say that people who meet you for the first time look at three things: first your smile, then your eyes (and eyewear), and then your shoes!

I have recently come of the age where I require a reading prescription, and gone are the days of poking fun at my friends who cannot read the menu. I have a pair of reading glasses on every floor in my home but as I walk out the front door to start my day, I wear my eyeglasses with progressive lenses.

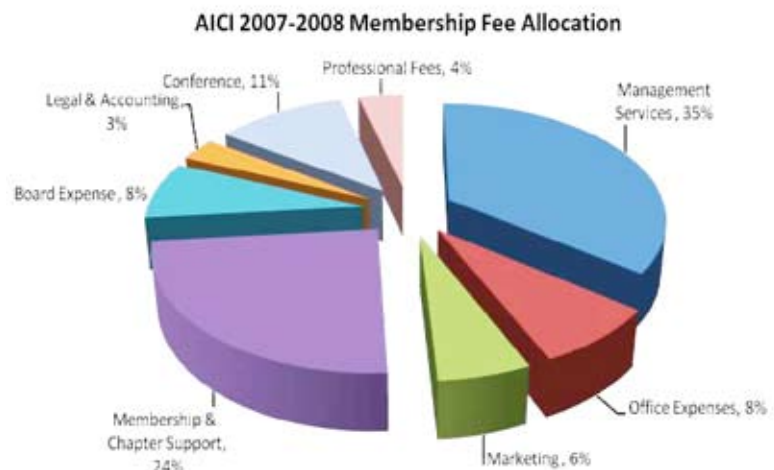
Wendy Buchanan
Image consultant and
licensed optician

WHERE YOUR AICI MEMBERSHIP DOLLARS GO

Based on the 2007–2008 Budget, the membership fees collected from the AICI members are spent in the following manner:

- 35% or \$96 from each annual membership of \$275 US is spent on the AICI Management Services which include financial and administrative membership support
- 24% or \$66 on average is allocated to the local Chapters. Please note that our Toronto chapter receives \$60 annually from the AICI headquarters for each membership. In the past our chapter used the money for our local website maintenance, newsletter publishing and hosting of educational and networking events
- This year \$30 per member or 11% was spent on the Annual AICI Conference. Since the conference is held at a different location every year and the number of attendees fluctuates, the money allocated to this function will vary
- Other Expenses include Board (8%) & Office (8%), Marketing (6%), Professional (4%) and Legal (3%) Services

Victoria Daji
Treasurer, AICI Toronto/Canada



MEMBERSHIP REPORT

Welcome to our newest Associate Members:

Leila Bates
Style Strategy
Toronto

Sheila Crowley
Toronto

Jennifer Gale
Toronto

Noreen Nunez
Toronto

Christine Kessel
Personal Power Image Consulting
Toronto

Isabel Rivard
Vaudreuil, PQ

Grace Janouye
Style with Grace
Oakville

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Michelle Walc Image Consulting
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Mission Statement

To support the professional development of image consultants through education, resource sharing, camaraderie and community involvement. To set standards for the image industry that promote professionalism, credibility and recognition.

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AICI CANADA/TORONTO

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| 1/8 page | \$ 70 | \$ 170 |
| 1/4 page | \$ 95 | \$ 195 |
| 1/2 page | \$ 165 | \$ 265 |
| 1/2 page | \$ 250 | \$ 350 |

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