

## JERRY ZHANG

CEO | GLOWSTIK SOCIAL MARKETING

Jerry Zhang's interest in business began in Grade 5, when his dad used to play Warren Buffett audiobooks in the car. Last summer, at the age of 14, Zhang decided to start a company. Babysitting? Dog walking? A lemonade stand? Nope—a social media marketing firm aimed at small businesses and non-profits.

Why social media? "I'm in Grade 10, so I knew most people wouldn't trust me," says Zhang, who lives with his parents in Markham, Ont. "So, I asked myself, 'What is my durable competitive advantage? What am I better than adults at?'" Having been born in the Digital Age, youths know social media better than anyone, argues Zhang: "We spend all day on it." With that realization, Glowstik Social Marketing was born.

It hasn't been an easy road.

Building a website was straightforward enough, and plenty of ambitious teens have proven eager to trade their labour for valuable work experience rather than pay—Glowstik now has 30 staff. Finding clients remains another matter. Zhang says his lack of credentials forces him to charge significantly less than his competitors do. "We think a firm should be evaluated on ideas and results," he says. "We have open minds, with ideas that could spark the next big thing."

Zhang has lofty goals for his 10-month-old company, of which he is CEO. He'd like to expand his workforce, find clients outside Ontario and even try to ink a deal with a large corporation. But more important to Zhang is staying true to his vision for Glowstik: "We want to maintain our brand, which is our ability to focus on youthful energy and bold innovation, and not get bogged down with red tape." If he can hold onto that youthful optimism, he may just realize his dreams.



## LYSANNE TUSAR

FOUNDING DIRECTOR & CMO | THE 8<sup>TH</sup> ESTATE WINERY LTD.

Like many groundbreaking businesses, Lysanne Tusar's started over a glass of wine.

It was 2006. Tusar was 26, living in Vancouver and working as a beverage marketing professional when a dinner conversation turned to flash-freezing grapes. The process prevents the decomposition and fermentation of just harvested grapes, allowing them to be shipped and turned into wine anywhere in the world. That got Tusar thinking—and put her on a course worthy of the most swashbuckling entrepreneur.

A year later, Tusar sold her house and car, moved to Hong Kong and established the special administrative region of China's first winery. Since then, 8th Estate Winery has produced four vintages, using grapes from as far away as Washington state, Australia and Italy.

When Tusar arrived in Hong Kong, she was short on contacts but long on research. An exploratory trip several months earlier had taught her that despite

the wide availability of wine in the metropolis, there were no local wineries. "It's also a great logistics port," says Tusar, "and people here are generally very supportive and open to new ideas."

Today, 8th Estate produces 40,000 to 60,000 bottles annually that are sold at local restaurants and specialty wine shops. The winery also hosts tours and tasting events to introduce both locals and tourists to the product. Tusar is now exploring the possibility of introducing indigenous wines (made from foreign grapes, of course) in other equally improbable markets.

So, how does a woman from Vancouver become the toast of a burgeoning urban wine culture in a city on the other side of the world? While Tusar admits the idea of launching an untested product in a brand new market was intimidating even for her, she got over that fear by just jumping in and doing it.

"I think for anyone starting a business, you have to accept that it's going to be frightening," says Tusar. "But if you don't do it, I think the long-term regret would be even more frightening."

## BARB STEGEMANN

CEO | THE 7 VIRTUES

Barb Stegemann describes herself as "a normal mom in the suburbs with a strong desire to help others." Based in Bedford, N.S., Stegemann is fulfilling that desire through entrepreneurship.

Inspired by a close friend injured in the war in Afghanistan, Stegemann created 7 Virtues Beauty Inc., a perfume company that trades with nations experiencing war and hardship. Stegemann sources organic oils from Afghanistan, Haiti and other countries in turmoil to support their economies and build peace. "Business has the fullest power, the biggest opportunity, to be a part of building peace and harmony in the world," she explains. "We can't expect military and government to do the heavy lifting."

The Canadian and U.S. governments have taken notice of her efforts. Last year, Stegemann was

appointed honorary colonel of 14 Wing Greenwood, N.S., and also received the Women Innovators award from the U.S. State Department at a conference hosted by Secretary of State Hillary Clinton.

Stegemann, the first woman from Atlantic Canada to land a deal from the investors on the CBC business reality show *Dragons' Den*, is enjoying success in a highly competitive industry. Her three fragrances can be found in all 91 Bay stores and, earlier this year, sales ranked seventh out of 120 cosmetic products at the Bay. "That's not easy when you look at what you're up against in the beauty industry," says Stegemann, who relies on word-of-mouth marketing instead of "skinny models and movie stars." She's now working toward exporting her products to the U.S. and the U.K. "We're right on target with our plan, and we're staying the course," says Stegemann. When it comes to business success and effecting change, she says, "We do dream big."

