

Cristina Samper Pearl

Owner, Fluent Productions
and The Event Planner
Academy

AGE: **28**

THE STORY: Cristina Samper Pearl is a child of the world: born in Minnesota to Colombian parents, she was raised in Sweden and Abbotsford while making regular visits to Colombia. So when the Vancouver-based entrepreneur founded her event-planning company, Fluent Productions, in 2012, she put her cross-cultural experiences, three spoken languages (English, Spanish and French) and three passports (Canada, the U.S. and Colombia) to good use. Her company plans and hosts weddings and corporate events at destinations around the world—from Paris to Mexico City to New York—for clients that include Airbnb Inc., Shangri-La International Hotels Inc., Lexus and Topshop. Samper Pearl learned event planning with a diploma from Vancouver Community College but credits her growing success to people skills: “It really is just relationship building, but being genuine and strategic.” She looks to pass on some of those smarts with her online training company, the Event Planner Academy, which she launched at the end of 2014.

MARKERS OF SUCCESS:

Samper Pearl started her company as a solo affair, but within six months she hired an associate to take on some of the growing workload. The year after that, in 2014, she hired another four associates. Not only has she doubled her income every year since inception, she’s been able to increase her rates and be more selective about who she takes on as clients. —*Dee Hon*

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UNDER
30



Adam Wicks

Owner, Wicks Electric Inc.
AGE: **28**

THE STORY: Adam Wicks is literally an accidental entrepreneur. Nine years ago, he was a 19-year-old electrician apprentice, with no plan to start a business, when he slipped at work and tore a knee ligament. Emergency doctors discovered a bone tumour, and in the months of contemplation during

Favourite TV show right now?

“Narcos. I wanted to see what all the fuss was about and how accurately they were portraying Colombia”



CRISTINA SAMPER PEARL

PATRICK CRAWFORD

MARIEL ARMSTRONG

his treatment and recovery, Wicks developed his vision for what a great electrical contracting company should be. He started Wicks Electric in 2012, slowly gathering clients using flyers at local stores and ads on Craigslist. The industry has been around almost since Edison, but Wicks's obsessive attention to customer satisfaction propelled the company to doubling its sales and profits each year. Tesla Motors Inc. chose Wicks Electric as a recommended Lower Mainland installer for its customers' home-

charging stations in 2014, and the company is the electrical contractor of choice for a growing list of builders.

MARKERS OF SUCCESS: Sales have grown from \$120,000 in 2013 to \$750,000 in 2015. Wicks no longer wields a pair of pliers now that he's running a company that's grown from two employees to eight over the same time. This past December he was asked to speak in front of Vancouver Community College's graduating class. —D.H.



Worst advice you've received?

“Make sure you get all your money out of every job. I've taken hits on jobs of anywhere from a hundred dollars to two or three grand just so the client is happy in the end—and that's worked out so well for us”

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