



Paying your dues



Jesse Green dreamed, as many young musicians do, of one day rubbing elbows with the rock stars. For Jesse, that dream would one day become a reality, if only a bit differently than he had originally imagined.

Making his way from his hometown of Shoal Lake, Ontario, Jesse set up camp in Winnipeg, and at the ripe age of 26 he decided to channel his musical interests in a different direction by delving into the audio-visual industry.

“I started out working for a couple of companies in the broadcast industry, and the guys there were just so disorganized,” he laughed. “And I thought to myself: if these guys can start their own business then I can too! So I just took it from there, and jumped straight into the fire.”

And with that, StrongFront A/V Productions was born.

With his background in music, and his simple mantra of “Do what you’re passionate about,” his foray into the audio-visual industry seemed like a natural development.

Not to say that it was easy.

There were, indeed, tough times from the get-go. He remembers specifically how difficult it was to develop his business plan; but “a good kind of difficult,” he says, as it forced him to focus and truly understand which direction he wanted to take his business in. The most important part in overcoming these early obstacles, he maintains, is acting like an entrepreneur:

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StrongFront A/V Productions

“You’re a risk taker when you become an entrepreneur, so sometimes you have to do a bit less thinking, and a bit more acting. Because where other people hesitate, entrepreneurs pounce. Take those leaps of faith. Do what you believe in. Entrepreneurs have to be so positive that things will happen for them, that they eventually will. And once you start something, you finish it. Having the ability to follow all the way through is critical.”

In 2006 Jesse teamed up with BDC’s financial team to really get the ball rolling, and he hasn’t looked back since.

Now, with StrongFront’s ten-year anniversary in the rear-view mirror, Jesse and his company have achieved more than their fair share of accomplishments. Having just moved into a new 2,000-plus square foot facility in Winnipeg, Jesse is currently acting as Co-Producer, Writer, Director for the TV series “Arbor Live”. With two seasons of work already finished, and a third upcoming, “Arbor Live” has become one of the most notable music variety series in Canada’s history. The

show, hosted by Jesse’s good friend Stevie Salas (former guitarist for renowned musicians like Mick Jagger and Rod Stewart), features big name musical acts like Velvet Revolver, Joe Satriani, Mötley Crüe, Chantal Kreviazuk, Slayer, Buck Cherry, Staind, The Crystal Method and Papa Roach.

No small potatoes.

But despite spending all this time with big rock stars in Los Angeles, Jesse always finds his way back to his headquarters in Winnipeg and his roots in the budding community of Shoal Lake. He makes a concerted effort to participate in community initiatives and provide mentorship to young people. His advice for them is simple: “Get ready to do a lot of work. Get training, training, and more training. Take a business course. Because your training and your professional development never end. Early on, I remember when I had to do everything myself: the camera work, the editing, the bookkeeping. So be ready to pay your dues. I’m still paying my dues and I’m 36.”

And, as StrongFront makes its way into the ‘big time,’ it’s pretty safe to say that Jesse’s dues are paying off. Big time.

ABORIGINAL STUDENT INTERNSHIP PROGRAM

As part of our national program, we are looking for 20 Aboriginal (First Nation, Métis and Inuit) students at the college and/or university level who are interested in a future career with BDC. The program is designed to provide business experience through training and mentorship.

Do you know a student who has what we’re looking for?

Aboriginal students who have completed at least one year of college or university and/or who are enrolled in a bachelor of commerce or business administration program.

To enquire about BDC’s Internship program, send your resume and cover letter to alyssa.reid@bdc.ca.

