

Marianne Bertrand

Inspired by a gift of ineffective dog boots for her Basset hounds, Marianne Bertrand set out to build a better mousetrap, in her case, a better dog boot. Thus was sown the seed of innovation and Muttluks was born.

Encouragement for the Muttluks concept came quickly when the first one hundred and thirty sets sold out in less than a week to local Toronto area pet stores who also recognized the need for quality canine paw wear. Ms Bertrand's entrepreneurial instincts had again proven right on the mark.

Before starting Muttluks, Ms Bertrand had applied a similar, 'necessity is the mother of invention,' logic to the construction business. Active as a consultant and designer in home renovations, her expertise in the environmental and non-toxic construction field developed out of health issues in her own life and her experience with environmental sensitivities. She recognized the opportunity to provide household audits and environmental renovations for people with allergies and sensitivities to building materials.

From a business standpoint, as she would later do with Muttluks, Marianne Bertrand had found a niche not being addressed in the marketplace. As a result of her innovations, the residential renovation company was awarded the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC) 1995 Healthy Housing Award.

Ms Bertrand has also become a much sought after speaker at various business associations and networking groups. Her unique blend of entrepreneurial chutzpah and innovative product design is not only a winning combination, but has proven to be quite inspirational to novice entrepreneurs.

In fact, she could easily be taken for a Renaissance woman. Montreal born and raised, she holds a BA in Business Administration from Acadia University with a major in Accounting and Small Business. Ms Bertrand is a graduate of the Canadian Securities Commission Course and also pursued a degree in Interior Design at Ryerson Polytechnic University. With new Muttluks products on the drawing board and her keen sense for developing innovative concepts, Marianne Bertrand personifies the entrepreneurial spirit of small business owners today.

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