

Small Business Spotlight:

Missy MacKintosh | Owner

MisMack Clean Cosmetics, Est. 2019

Life Story

Missy has been a professional makeup artist for over 16 years. She grew up in Salmon Arm, B.C. and then moved to Vancouver, B.C. to study makeup artistry at the Blanche MacDonald Centre. Missy then worked in management roles for several professional makeup companies before returning home to Salmon Arm.

What motivated you to start your own business?

I began freelancing when I returned to Salmon Arm and then discovered clean beauty. I decided that I wanted to work with clean products. However, I could not find professionally performing products that met my standards, so I took matters into my own hands and made my own! I pre-launched with a biodegradable glitter collection in 2018 and MisMack officially came to the market in 2019.

How has your business been impacted by and adapted to the COVID-19 pandemic?

MisMack launched right before the COVID-19 pandemic and was impacted a great deal. Previously I was focusing on selling wholesale to retailers, and then all those salons, spas and retail stores shut down. I was forced to pivot to direct-to-consumer sales and focus on my online presence to survive.

Within a week of the COVID-19 shutdown, we became the first makeup brand in Canada to offer online consultations and makeup lessons to customers all over North America. When it became safe to open again, I set up a small distribution centre in my basement for customers to get products and lessons in person. With support from the community and advisory services from Small Business BC, MisMack kept growing. We expanded out of my basement and created a unique concept store that offers retail, consultations, lessons and complimentary pampering sessions for customers.

This pivot ended up being the best thing that could have happened to us. We are now opening a second store in Victoria.

What challenges did you encounter while growing your business, particularly in a rural area?

The biggest challenge was getting the word out and realizing that nobody is going to build my business but me. I had to hustle every day and go out and speak about the products to get people in the store to experience them.

Before I opened an in-person store, only 20 per cent of Salmon Arm knew about the business – even though I had won the local Shuswap Launch-A-Preneur business competition. With hard work and pivoting my business, I overcame these challenges.

What would be your advice for others starting a business?

Fail into your flow – don't be afraid of failure because that's how you grow. It takes pivoting and trying new things until you find what works.

How do environmental sustainability and clean cosmetics fit into your business?

Makeup is a self-regulated industry with lots of toxic ingredients and green-washing in marketing where brands can claim their products are "clean" without explaining what that means. MisMack is all about full circle sustainability and follows a model we call T.E.S.S.S. (transparency, ethics, sourcing, safety and sustainability) to explain what true clean beauty means to us. Our

products are also all multipurpose to minimize consumption and the feeling of being overwhelmed by owning too many products.

The Bottom Line:

- MisMacK has four full-time staff and three part-time staff across two store locations.
- Since opening the first store location in March 2021, sales have increased by 726 per cent. MisMacK now has a second store in Victoria and Missy hopes to one day open five more stores across Canada in addition to locations in Paris, London, New York and Los Angeles.
- MisMacK recently released two new products and has more on the way.
- This year, MisMacK's Art Shadow line won first Place in Best Eye Colour at the Global Clean Beauty Awards and MisMacK was also a finalist in three categories for the Small Business BC Awards.