

6 Innovative Small Businesses in BC

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It is well known that Canada is increasingly becoming a great place for startups to launch and thrive. The country is finally seeing the opportunities and potential in the startup market and strongly supports all such entrepreneurial attempts. This is especially beneficial for all the IT and tech startups which have good representation.

But while we're cheering about the rise of the startup industry, we should not forget that, apart from startups, there are thousands of other businesses, especially small ones. Many of these have already gone through their startup phase and are well on their way to developing interesting products and generating innovative ideas. And because a country can't run only on tech and IT companies, it is well worth having a look at what else is to be found there. With that said, we have picked out 6 of the most innovative small businesses in British Columbia, which have been recognized by organizations such as Small Business BC as well as won awards and been featured online as innovative businesses.

HapiFoods Group Inc.

The World's Most
Amazing
Breakfast Cereal

Holy Crap

Holy Crap Cereal
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Hailing from Gibsons, BC is HapiFoods Group Inc. or, as they are currently known, [Holy Crap](#). Holy Crap was started by Corin and Brian Mullins as an artisan cereal business in 2009, with the modest

sum of \$129. In only a few years the company has grown quite a bit. It has been featured on a number of television shows (including Dragon's Den) and won numerous accolades, including a Small Business Award in 2011. Their product was even sent to the International Space Station for superstar Canadian astronaut Chris Hadfield to enjoy it there.

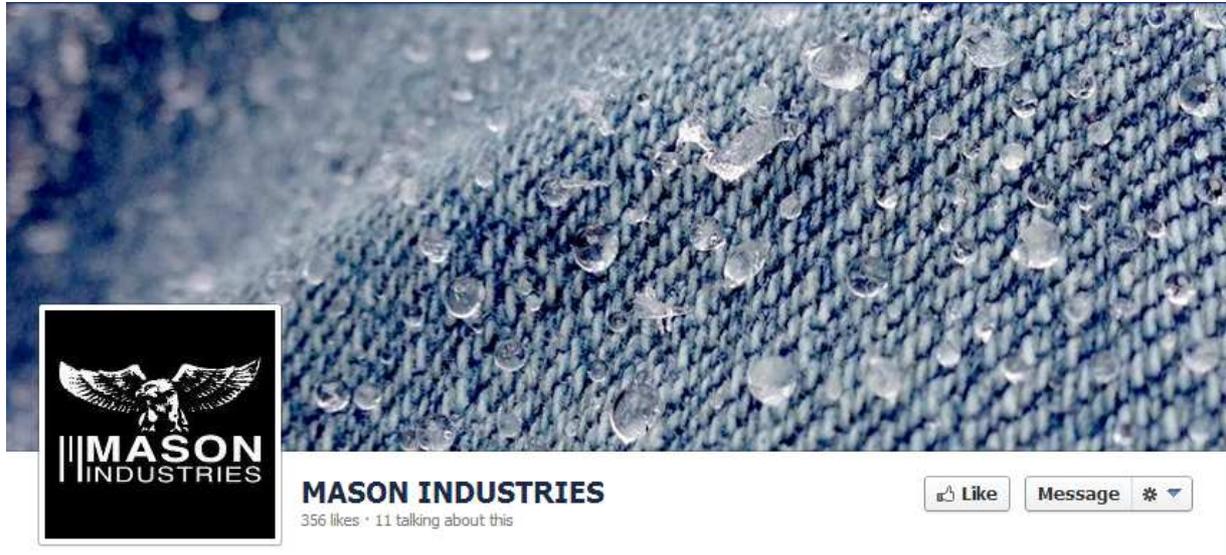
The business was, in a certain sense, born out of necessity because Corin was trying to figure out a healthy type of cereal to circumvent her husband's numerous food allergies. Thus she ended up creating a gluten-free, vegan, non-gmo, organic breakfast which became an instant hit to the extent that it is now being shipped worldwide.

Örling & Wu



Fredrik Örling and Julie Wu brought their design ideas in 2009 to Gastown in Vancouver after they had finished their studies at Central Saint Martin's University of Arts in London, UK. Coming to Vancouver, they wanted to open up a place which would feature the look, the feel and the design they had seen across Europe – from fabrics to wallpapers, tableware and other home furnishings. All the items that are sold at Örling & Wu are hand-picked by them because they only want to sell products that they themselves like. And as Julie says, "Our passion has always been hunting for the best in design; our work is fun." As a small business which has been gaining popularity fast, the shop has been featured in a number of notable design and decor magazines.

Mason Industries



Mason Industries was born out of founder Jason Mason's desire to develop denim clothing suitable as outdoor wear for extreme and action sports such as snowboarding, skating, biking, surfing or even hard physical labor. In other words, the clothing had to be protective, water repellent and fitted, but also breathable and very strong. Once Jason had the idea, and was convinced that it was something unique and new to the market, with the help of Small Business BC he was also able to devise a business plan that secured him instant financing. He is now developing his brand and clothing line, which has been gaining the steady support of professional snowboarders and surfers.

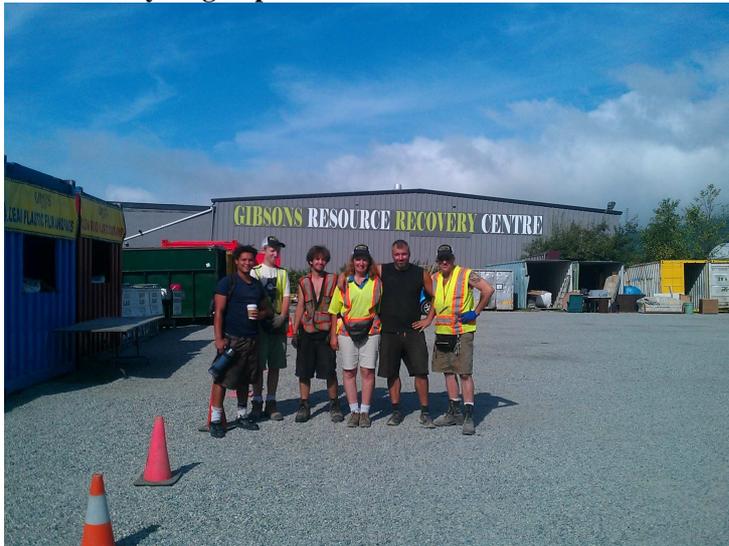
Jukeboxprint.com



Jukebox Print is an innovative online printing company with offices in Vancouver, BC and London, ON, offering a long list of products but best known for their high quality business cards. They are also devoted to adhering to environmentally-friendly principles and using recycled materials, as well

as plant-based inks whenever they can. Though technically not a small business anymore, since they have been growing rapidly over the past 7 years, Jukebox can still serve as an example for other small businesses when it comes to talking about what's possible when you have the right plan, the right team and a unique idea you want to develop. Not surprisingly, the company has been featured in Profit's top 50 fastest growing companies in Canada.

Gibsons Recycling Depot



Another company from Gibsons is [Gibsons Recycling Depot](#). Earlier this year they received the Best Green Business Award 2013 from Small Business BC for their commitment to energy, sustainability and green practices. Owners of the company Buddy Boyd and Barb Hetherington were the first ones to set up a resource recovery facility in BC in 2003 as well as an expanded polystyrene foam recycling program. Thus the small business that is Gibsons Recycling Depot has managed to make a big impact on the Gibsons community by providing employment opportunities as well as significantly reducing and reusing waste that would otherwise end up in local landfills.

Cycle City Tours



[Cycle City Tours](#) from Vancouver is a small business devoted to creating bicycle tours through

Vancouver for small groups or individuals. Earlier this year they received an award in the category of 'Best Concept' at the Small Business BC Successful You Awards. Springing out of company founder Josh Bloomfield's personal passion for biking, the tour company offers to take clients on a number of tours through the city that reveal its variety and diversity, and permit participants to really enjoy all the views, sounds, smells and intriguing details that add to the character of any city.

Furthermore, apart from the more immediate contact with the surroundings which bicycling offers, the idea of taking such a tour is also to cause as little environmental impact as possible or, as the company slogan states – big ADVENTURE, little IMPACT. As such, Cycle City Tours is certainly one of the city's innovative small businesses and deserves support.

In other words, it's not all about tech and IT in BC, though there is, of course, nothing wrong with that. But while we should honor the successes of such startups, we should also pay attention to other businesses that are emerging and are joining the community of creative, innovative and daring people who carry an entrepreneurial spirit.