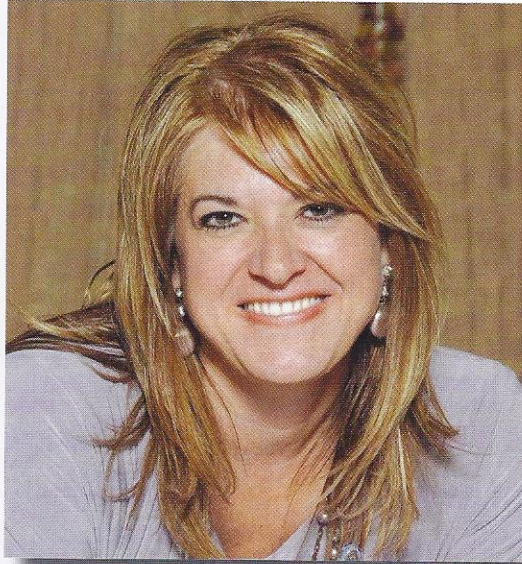


## Diana Degan, ABC, AAP

President  
Diana Degan & Associates  
Guelph, Ontario, Canada



The worth of a good internship to give practical shape to what is learned in the classroom is invaluable. Diana Degan can speak to this fact, as she spent a summer as a public relations intern for a concert and tourism venue, adding to her formal education in print journalism and broadcasting, and giving her a glimpse of her future profession.

Now, as the president of her own award-winning integrated marketing communications firm, she believes the success she has experienced is due to loving what she does. And, it seems, as her experience in the industry has grown, so has her adoration for it and the success she has enjoyed. Ms. Degan has worked with high-profile celebrities such as Beyoncé Knowles and Sean “Diddy” Combs, spearheading the international launch of their respective fashion lines. Five weeks of nonstop planning and around-the-clock work culminated in a two-day media tour and launch event for Diddy’s clothing in Montreal and Toronto. At the event, he reached across a mob of event-goers to thank her personally for her efforts.

Moving forward, Ms. Degan plans to continue working on interesting projects and developing programs

that not only help her clients achieve their business goals, but also incorporate social responsibility by allowing them to give back to their communities.

***What personal or professional challenges have you faced that have contributed to your overall success, or forced you to pursue other endeavors?***

It took a lot of disappointments while working for others for me to decide to open up my own business. For 15 years, I worked around the clock for other marketing firms, and was fired once and laid off twice. In the instances where I was laid off, it was a purely financial decision by the companies, and with the instance where I was fired, I was standing up for my colleagues whom I believed were being mistreated. When you are going through [some] challenges, you tend to think life is ending. Sometimes it is hard to see the opportunity through the tears, but life does go on and another door will open.

***Who or what has been your greatest professional inspiration?***

My greatest professional inspiration has been my father. He came to Canada in 1959 from Italy without a possession to his name and not knowing a word of English. He grew up poor during the war, and his family moved to Canada to give their children an opportunity for a better life. His first job was in a gas station, where he began to pick up English, and he would go on to learn so much more in his life.

My father attended night school all his life, and by the time he passed away, he had earned a Ph.D., and was a world-recognized specialist in air pollution and water control systems. That was the legacy my father, Felix Degan, left for me: to always work to improve, progress and be educated.

***What kind of legacy do you want to leave?***

I hope that people will remember that I gave my all to family, friends and clients, especially in their time of need. Most people look to their offspring and say, “They are my legacy.” Since I have no children, I look beyond that and know that I would be the one any of these people could call for help at midnight.