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FOCUS ON ENTREPRENEURS

Business keys on eco-cleaning your home

■ The Daily Courier charts the growth of entrepreneurial efforts in the Central Okanagan with this report about business starts

By STEVE MacNAULL
The Daily Courier

There are a lot of cleaning companies in Kelowna. Natalia Mordy knew she'd have to make hers different in order to stand out.

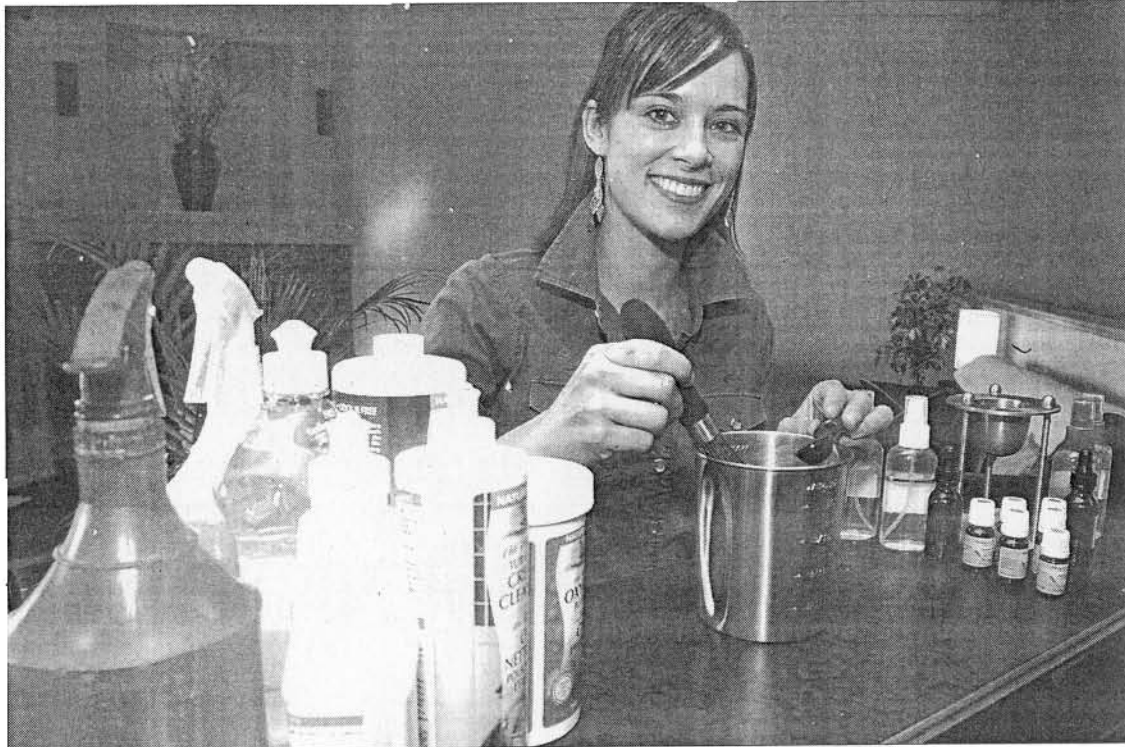
"I think I've been able to do that by creating a cleaning company that is not just a service, but an experience," said Mordy, owner-operator of Immaculate Interiors.

"It's a totally customized service that uses only eco-friendly, biodegradable, hypo-allergenic cleaning products and I incorporate the use of my own aromatherapy blends."

The residential and commercial cleaning business is quite a departure from Mordy's previous business — skateboarding and snowboarding shops called Pipe Dream in the Ontario cities of Cambridge, Stoney Creek and Brampton.

"I started those stores in 1999 when I was in my first year of history at the University of Guelph," said Mordy.

"It was a family business because my parents provided the financial backing and accounting, I managed the stores and my two brothers



GARY NYLANDER/The Daily Courier

Natalia Mordy has started Immaculate Interiors, a residential and commercial cleaning company that uses only eco-friendly products and aromatherapy.

worked in the stores."

They have since been sold and Mordy's husband Tyler — an investment analyst with Hahn Investments — was transferred to Kelowna from Ontario.

Mordy initially thought her background in retail ownership and management would lead to a similar job here.

"But I found the responsibility and

pay of the management position here weren't as challenging as I wanted," she said.

Interested in environmentally-friendly products and aromatherapy, Mordy started to work part-time at health food store, Nature's Fare, and took a personal-interest course in scents at Okanagan College.

That's when the idea started to take shape for an eco-friendly clean-

ing business with an aromatherapy element.

Mordy did a full business plan for Immaculate Interiors through Community Futures Development Corp. that showed by exploiting a niche, the firm could do well.

For cleaning, Mordy uses a line of products called Nature Clean, from Nature's Fare.

She also uses some cleaners that

she makes out of ingredients like baking soda, natural liquid dish soap and tea tree, peppermint and eucalyptus oils.

Mordy says most of the commercial household disinfectants, sanitizers, mould and mildew cleaners are classified as pesticides that can cause headaches, nausea, rashes, burns and other respiratory and skin irritations.

Natural alternatives are safe — for people and the environment — and just as effective, says Mordy.

Her aromatherapy blends so far include Rejuvenate with lemongrass, Comfort with rosewood and a Christmas holiday blend with cinnamon, mint and nutmeg.

Six weeks in business, Immaculate Interiors has several clients and it's getting busier.

"I belong to the Kelowna Chamber of Commerce and my chiropractor (holistic practitioner Dr. Derek Ginter of the Rhino Chiropractic and Life Centre) is promoting me," Mordy said.

"I'd rather build the business by word of mouth with people who appreciate the tailored service."

Immaculate Interiors fees are \$55 an hour for a team of two cleaners — Mordy and a helper.

The minimum booking is half an hour and billing can be done in 15-minute segments.

Mordy says a standard home usually requires one to 1 1/2 hours to do a basic cleaning.

Service can be one-time before a party or company arrives or can be arranged for once-a-week or every two weeks.

■ Immaculate Interiors can be reached at 808-7774.