

From \$80 and a Basement Apartment to Entrepreneur of the Year at the 2025 CanadianSME Awards

Emily Lyons, founder of Femme Fatale Media, wins top Canadian entrepreneur honour after building her business from just \$80.

TORONTO, ONTARIO, CANADA, June 22, 2025 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Emily Lyons, founder and CEO of Femme Fatale Media, has been named Entrepreneur of the Year at the 2025 CanadianSME Small Business Awards, a national recognition honouring Canada's most innovative and inspiring small business leaders.

Over a decade ago, Lyons started her business with just \$80, a cracked laptop, and a vision she couldn't shake. From her one-room basement apartment, she built what would become a multi-million-dollar agency known for providing elite promotional staffing and experiential marketing to major brands across North America.

"There were days I had to choose between paying for the subway or groceries," said Lyons. "I didn't have investors or a safety net, I had a dream, and I was stubborn enough to keep going."

The CanadianSME Awards, hosted in partnership with industry giants like Google Canada, Microsoft, and RBC, received thousands of nominations across the country. The Entrepreneur of the Year title is one of the evening's most competitive and distinguished awards, celebrating resilience, innovation, and impact.

Lyons founded Femme Fatale Media at just 24 years old. Over the years, she has expanded her entrepreneurial portfolio to include [Lyons Elite](#), a luxury matchmaking firm, and [True Glue](#), a clean beauty brand known for launching the world's first all-natural lash adhesive.



Entrepreneur Of The Year, Emily Lyons

Her entrepreneurial story is rooted not just in ambition, but in adversity. After losing her mother to cancer at 17 and facing personal and financial struggles in her 20s, Lyons leaned into entrepreneurship as a way to create opportunity where none existed.

“Emily’s journey is the definition of grit,” said Kirsten Visima, Vice President of Femme Fatale Media. “She went from pitching clients in coffee shops with nothing but passion and a vision, to leading national campaigns for Fortune 500s. This award is well-deserved, and just the beginning.”

Today, Femme Fatale Media operates across Canada and the U.S., with a client roster that includes L’Oréal, Red Bull, Sony, and Grey Goose. The agency has been recognized as one of the Top Event Staffing Companies in North America and continues to raise the bar for premium experiential marketing.

As Lyons accepted the award, she reflected not only on her team and company’s success — but on the early days many entrepreneurs are still in.

“I share this win for anyone building something out of nothing right now,” she said. “You’re not behind. You’re just getting started.”

To learn more about Emily Lyons or Femme Fatale Media, visit www.femmefatalemedia.com or www.emilylyons.com.

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