

Participant Profile/**Yen Chu**



Yen Chu is Regional Sales Manager for Thought Equity Motion, a leading provider of stock footage, video platform and rights clearance services to content creators and rights holders. A member since 2009, Yen is a graduate of the 2010 WIFT-T Media Leadership Program (MLP).



Congratulations on being an MLP grad! What were some of the program's highlights?

The Media Leadership Program was great. The classes were dense in content but the instructors did a good job of delivering condensed versions of university courses that are normally delivered over an entire semester. There were a lot of insight moments which we called “a-ha” moments. My fellow classmates and the WIFT-T and Schulich team running the program were the highlights of the program. Very few of us are surrounded by a network of support and this course gave us access to colleagues from varied backgrounds and perspectives. It's wonderful to hear stories from different parts of the industry and know that we share many of the same challenges. Since the completion of the course, many of us continue to see each other and support one another through emails and group chats.

Which “a-ha” moment do you find most useful in your everyday business?

I've learned to become disciplined in making time for non-urgent yet important tasks, such as business development and review. This is especially important in Sales where it's easy to spend all day responding to client emails; but when those immediate, urgent projects run out, there's nothing left in the pipeline. By carving out time to develop future sales, I'm ensuring a healthy long-term business. Anyone working on a project-to-project basis has to do this. While it's difficult to make time, it's extremely important to the survival and growth of any business.

What's the most surprising thing you learned through the program?

We were presented with a report on how the public consumes media and I was pleasantly surprised to see that television is still by far the most engaging and effective medium. The report found that, even with all other media available, people still spend most of their time watching television programs and are more likely to remember and discuss what they viewed, whether it was programming or advertising.

Why are programs like MLP important for professional women and the industry as a whole?

The film and television industry lacks a formal body that encourages and regulates best practices. WIFT-T is the only organization I'm aware of that focuses on delivering training and education to industry members, at all levels, including managerial. Programs like the Media Leadership Program give women a broader perspective of the industry as a whole and introduce them to all aspects of the industry, including broadcast, finance, marketing and digital media.

What's the best professional advice you have ever received?

My favourite mentor once told me that if I managed the money, I would always have a job. Film and television is an industry and no matter the role you hold, whether creative or not, if you can manage the money, you should always be able to find work. For a director, this might mean being respectful of the budget, or for an editor, it might mean keeping to the production schedule. In one way or another, we are all responsible for the business of the industry.