

Harnessing "new media" key to entrepreneurs success

By Brock Weir

The power of "new media" is evident for all to see, but for people looking to start up their own businesses, getting started can sometimes be an intimidating prospect.

Local entrepreneurs, however, are set to help break down barriers and show how "new media" has been instrumental in their success next week at the Aurora Public Library.

On Thursday, April 21, from 7 - 8.30 p.m, the Library will host their second Entrepreneurs In Residence. Featuring filmmaker Chris Hau of Know Hau Media, Leigh and Meg, the sister bloggers who founded LeighandMeg.com, and Lucas Chang of StartUp York.

When entrepreneurs from across York Region spoke at the inaugural event last year, the place was crowded. So, it was a given that the Library would keep the momentum going.

"There were people in the Library I didn't recognize that came because of the program and weren't necessarily library visitors," says Reccia Mandelcorn of the Aurora Public Library. "There were people who hadn't come for that but joined in because it was in the middle of our living room and they had such a fabulous time. We had such a fabulous response from people who were engaged in it and, from the presenters themselves, so we decided to put this on our calendar for at least a semi-annual occurrence."

When Ms. Mandelcorn, along with Cindy Shaver, begin putting together their programs, they first decide on what they want the audience to take away from the session. They want people who are keen to share their stories, are excited about their stories, and have a vision for the future.

Mr. Hau, for instance, says the invitation to take part in the event came at a "very timely part" of his life. A filmmaker whose content has repeatedly gone viral over the past two years, he says he was looking for ways to share his passion about "building a business in a media world," a topic of considerable passion and excitement for him.

"I want to get into the bigger picture of media and online presentation, and how that can impact your business, as well as the trials and tribulations of trying to go through some of these things," says the Aurora native. "You have to make a lot of bad content for a long time before it gets good, and that is crucial and important. Perfectionism is something that kills the humanity. The honesty and genuine element of the product, especially in media, is what I am going to try and drive home.

"The content that does really well these days and resonates with people is honest, genuine content and being as transparent as possible."

There is something particularly exciting, he adds, in the process of constant creation. Taking a video, for instance, from conception to completion and unleashing it onto the world keeps things raw and honest.

"It excites me in today's age to just have an opportunity to chat with people," he says. "The things that come from putting yourself online and how expandable and meaningful it can make your life, and the impact you can have, has positive ripples that spread in so many different ways."

Adds Ms. Mandelcorn: "Entrepreneurs have amazing stories to tell about the human spirit and looking at new worlds and ways of doing things."

Entrepreneurs in Residence: Harnessing New Media is a free, drop in event. Pop by the Aurora Public Library next Thursday night to take part.