

## Does Fate Play a Hand in Entrepreneurial Success?

BY SUSAN WILSON SOLOVIC

Life's journey has taken you to the place you are today. For entrepreneurs, that journey often unveils opportunities that turn into entrepreneurial success stories. So, would you call it fate? Intuition? Instinct? Luck? I don't. I call it savvy entrepreneurial smarts. I think entrepreneurs have an uncanny ability to turn life experiences into valuable business

propositions.

When I learned the domain SBTV.com was for sale—the light bulb went off in my head. I saw the convergence of my life's experiences into one new vision—an Internet news and information site for small business emulating cable television. At the time, video on the Internet had very little traction and continuous streaming video was unheard of. Yet, I had a visceral sense the time was right.

Similarly, Debra Duneier knows she is in the right place and at the right time for her

Debra Duneier has a pending trademark for 'EcoChi' and is on the leading edge of a new industry.



new venture, Living Home by Debra.

Some might say Duneier stumbled onto her pioneering business endeavor. But, they couldn't be more wrong. After having had three successful business ventures, Duneier can sense a real business opportunity and knows how to go after it and make it happen.

It all started like this. Working as a successful real estate broker in New York City, Duneier received an invitation to speak at an international business conference, and she was asked to submit a list of potential topics. For some reason, she included *feng shui*, never expecting that would be the topic that was chosen. But, it was.

"And then, I panicked," she says. "So, I did some research and homework and put together a nice talk. After the talk, there was a line of people waiting to get a few minutes to talk to me to tell me their story and/or ask questions. These were very successful business people. The exchange between myself and those people was something incredible. It was happening on a whole new level. I don't know how to describe it. I knew at that moment there was something very special about what I was doing."

With determination and tenacity, Duneier set out to learn more. She studied with one of the original *feng shui* masters, Roger

Green, and became certified in the discipline. As her knowledge grew, she began to see the overlap between real estate and *feng shui*.

"I was getting calls from clients before I was ever in business," she says. "I learned how by enhancing their living conditions, it could enhance their life."

But, there was more to the equation than *feng shui*.

Duneier also saw a unique connection between *feng shui* and the environmental movement. So, once again, she began the journey to learn more. She signed up to take the LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) exam. Most candidates for LEED certification have backgrounds in architecture, construction, engineering, or related fields. But, that didn't deter Duneier. She studied hard, and she passed the exam with flying colors, earning her certification.

To put the finishing touches on her business venture, Duneier realized she needed one more piece on her knowledge tool belt.

"There was a missing component, and that is how human beings feel in their space," she explains. "The space should make them feel better and healthier, and some of the practices touch on this, but there was still a missing component. I decided to fill it in with environmental psychology."


Now, as part of Living Home by Debra, Duneier has a pending trademark on the name EcoChi—Eco for ecology and Chi, which is Chinese, for energy. She describes EcoChi as a multi-dimensional revolution.

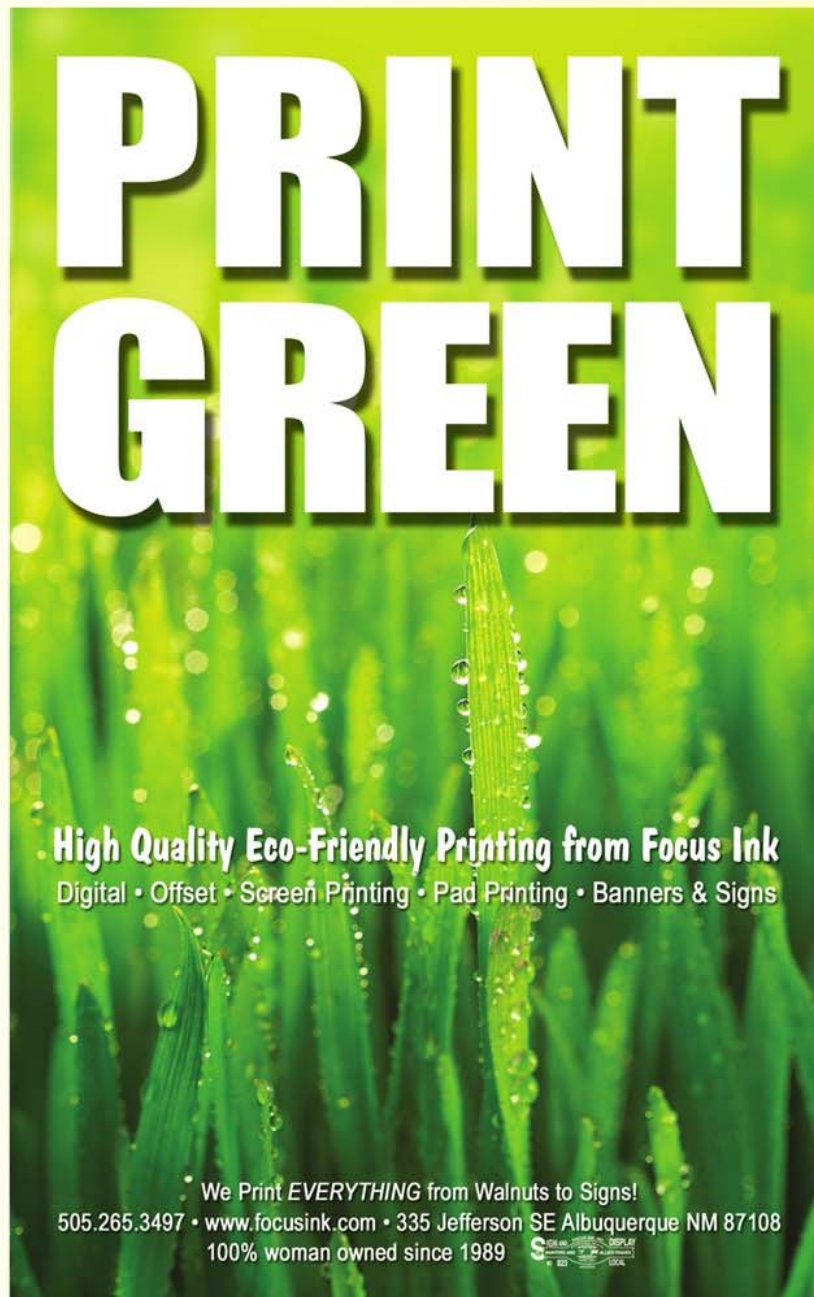
"Ninety percent of our time is spent indoors, and people need to understand indoor space has a life," she says. "The idea is that you need to nurture your indoor space, and it will nurture the home within you."

"I see it as a revolution people are going through today. We've gone through the technology phase and right now, every single fact and knowledge is at your finger tips. You can purchase things from anywhere in the world, and that is something we've never had before. So, now that we are so satiated in that area, the next frontier is the things we can't see. The inner life and the inner question how we can control our environment."

Call it fate, intuition, instinct, or luck. I call it savvy entrepreneurial smarts. But, there is no ambiguity when it comes to the fact that Duneier is on the leading edge of a new industry and another successful business venture.

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