Marie-Pier Lusignan

Founder & CEO, Groupe Toria



“I wanted the freedom to build things differently.”

She launched an event production agency in the middle of a pandemic. Six years later, Marie-Pier Lusignan has built Groupe Toria into a creative, high-touch agency producing major corporate and philanthropic experiences - and recently opened the company’s first office at ClickSpace.

Building differently

A conversation with Marie-Pier Lusignan



GROUPE
TORIA

Q Do you work from home or an office?

For many years, Toria operated fully remotely. In 2026, we reached an exciting milestone by opening our first office space within ClickSpace in Montreal. As our team and projects grew, we felt it was important to create a place where people could come together, collaborate more naturally and build stronger relationships. We still value flexibility, but having a physical home for Toria represents an important new chapter for us.

Q What do you do?

Groupe Toria is a creative production agency specializing in high-end corporate and philanthropic events. We create bespoke experiences, each with its own identity and signature. Our work goes far beyond event logistics: we support our clients through strategy, content development, fundraising campaigns, creative and art direction, production, and the complete execution of an experience.

Q How long have you been in business?

We founded Groupe Toria in 2020, during the pandemic — probably one of the most unexpected times to launch an event production agency! What started during a period of enormous uncertainty has grown into an agency producing major corporate and philanthropic experiences. Starting during the pandemic shaped who we are today: adaptable, creative and very comfortable finding solutions when things don't go according to plan.

ON ENTREPRENEURSHIP

"I wanted ambitious projects and high standards to coexist with trust, flexibility and quality of life."

What growth really takes

Structure, resilience, creativity - and knowing what not to compromise.

Q What inspired you to become an entrepreneur?

I wanted the freedom to build things differently. I had a very clear vision of the type of agency I wanted to create: highly creative and professional, but also deeply human. I wanted ambitious projects and high standards to coexist with trust, flexibility and quality of life. Entrepreneurship gave me the opportunity to create not only the events I wanted to produce, but also the company culture I wanted to be part of.

Q Tell us about your very first “win.”

Our first real win wasn’t necessarily one contract or one event. It was the moment we realized that clients were coming back and trusting us with increasingly important projects. Seeing clients return year after year and recommend us to others was the moment I realized we were building something sustainable.

Q Which expensive mistake should other entrepreneurs avoid?

Growing without structure. When you start a company, you tend to do everything yourself because it feels faster and easier. But eventually, that becomes one of the biggest barriers to growth. Processes, documentation, clear roles and the right people are investments, not expenses. And perhaps most importantly: don’t underestimate your value. Make sure your pricing reflects the real amount of expertise, preparation and responsibility behind your work.

Q Entrepreneurship is hard. How do you keep going when you face obstacles?

I focus on solutions. Event production teaches you very quickly that something will always change. You can spend your energy worrying about the problem, or you can immediately start looking for the next best solution. I also rely enormously on my team. Toria is not one person. Having talented people around me who challenge ideas, bring solutions and care deeply about our projects makes difficult moments much easier to navigate.

Q What’s your favorite AI tool right now?

ChatGPT, without hesitation. I use AI as a thinking and productivity partner. It helps me structure ideas, summarize information, refine communications and move faster through the administrative side of running a business. AI isn’t there to replace creativity or human judgment. It gives us more time to focus on the things where humans bring the most value: relationships, creativity, intuition and decision-making.

Q Where do your best ideas come from?

Everywhere — and rarely when I’m sitting in front of my computer trying to have an idea! Travel, restaurants, hotels, fashion, architecture, art, conversations and observing how people interact with spaces are all huge sources of inspiration. Some of the most interesting ideas happen when you take something from hospitality, retail, theatre, design or another industry and reinterpret it within an event experience.

HER RULE FOR HARD MOMENTS

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Looking ahead

Intentional growth, better work and a company built to last.

Q What are you most proud of?

The team and the reputation we've built. Of course, I'm incredibly proud of the events we produce, but what means the most to me is that clients trust us. I'm also proud that we've been able to grow while staying true to the kind of company we wanted Toria to be: creative, rigorous, collaborative and human. Opening our first offices this year was particularly meaningful.

Q What are Groupe Toria's plans for 2027?

2027 is about intentional growth. We want to continue producing larger and more ambitious experiences, strengthen our creative offering and deepen the relationships we have with our clients and partners. But growth for us isn't simply about doing more events. We want to do better work — and prove that you can build an ambitious, high-performing agency while creating a healthy and sustainable environment for the people behind it.

A DEFINITION OF SUCCESS

"Success shouldn't only be measured by how much you grow, but also by the quality of the work you produce and the life you are able to build around it."

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