

# A 21-YEAR-OLD COMPANY WITH A 21ST CENTURY MINDSET



**DEANNA ROBERTS HAS ALWAYS** had her eyes set on the future. So when she saw an opportunity to leave corporate America and do something she's excited about, she "jumped out on faith" and founded D. R. Roberts Event Management.

20 years later, Deanna was looking for opportunities to expand. But she was struggling with her business model. "We were just event planning," says Deanna. "I didn't feel like we were actually a product or a service."

By the time she got on stage at the ICCC National Conference ready to pitch to a panel of experienced capital providers, her mindset had changed. "We do provide a service. We actually produce experiences."

### Subtle Shifts, Stellar Results

Since Deanna's participation in ICCC in 2017, her revenue has grown 80 percent. She credits the program with helping her refocus and refine her business model. "[The program] was a whole other level," says Deanna. "It helped me to really pick apart the company and look at it through a different lens."

Pick apart didn't mean starting anew. But that was her mindset before her participation in the program. And the professors and mentors at ICCC helped her to see that she didn't have to "dismantle everything" and "start all new and fresh."

"I realized that I wasn't so far off mark," says Deanna. "All I had to do was refine some areas and... continue to see how we can improve what we had."

### Pitching for Capital, Pitching for the Future

Deanna has big plans. She's eager to expand her client base, which means hiring more people, particularly from the local Oakland community.

To get there, Deanna needs to acquire capital. But she is not worried. She attributes her newfound confidence to her pitching experience at the ICCC National Conference. "[It] was my very first time," says she. "The experience was scary but then it was very exhilarating, because then I really learned." Deanna now confidently believes, "we could sell anything actually." And she's ready to pitch for the company's future.

