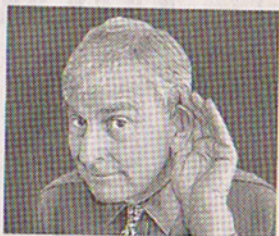


— with hard work and talent



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COLUMNIST

TRADE TALK | Talent agency partners are 'looking for' billings of \$3 million as business, not roster, grows

TRINA ALLEN, Lena Lees and Vickie Petronio located their Play Management talent agency at Powell Street off Hawks Avenue when they founded the firm in January 2006.

They call the area "Sugartown," because of the B.C. Sugar refinery two blocks away. Appropriately, McFish Holdings principals **Geoff McLeod** and **Ron Fisher** gave the three an appropriately sweet deal on their renovated and fully improved 1,600-square-foot second-floor offices. They pay \$12 a square foot, which includes access to the Livingstone Building's roof patio with a panoramic view over Ballantyne Pier to the harbour and North Shore mountains.

Their business picture is no less satisfying. The three launched their partnership with personal loans of \$30,000 from **Shawna Wright** at RBC's Hastings-at-Granville branch. They reportedly did \$2 million worth of business in the first year, retired their loans, now operate on cash flow and expect to bill \$2.5 million in 2007. "And looking for three," said Allen

In the style more common in L.A. than locally, they handle the day-to-day demands of theatrical and television productions by assigning a single principal to all of the agency's clients on that particular show — *Durham County, Intelligence* or *October Road*, say, or feature films like *Case 39*. Clients retain their individual agents for all other development activities.

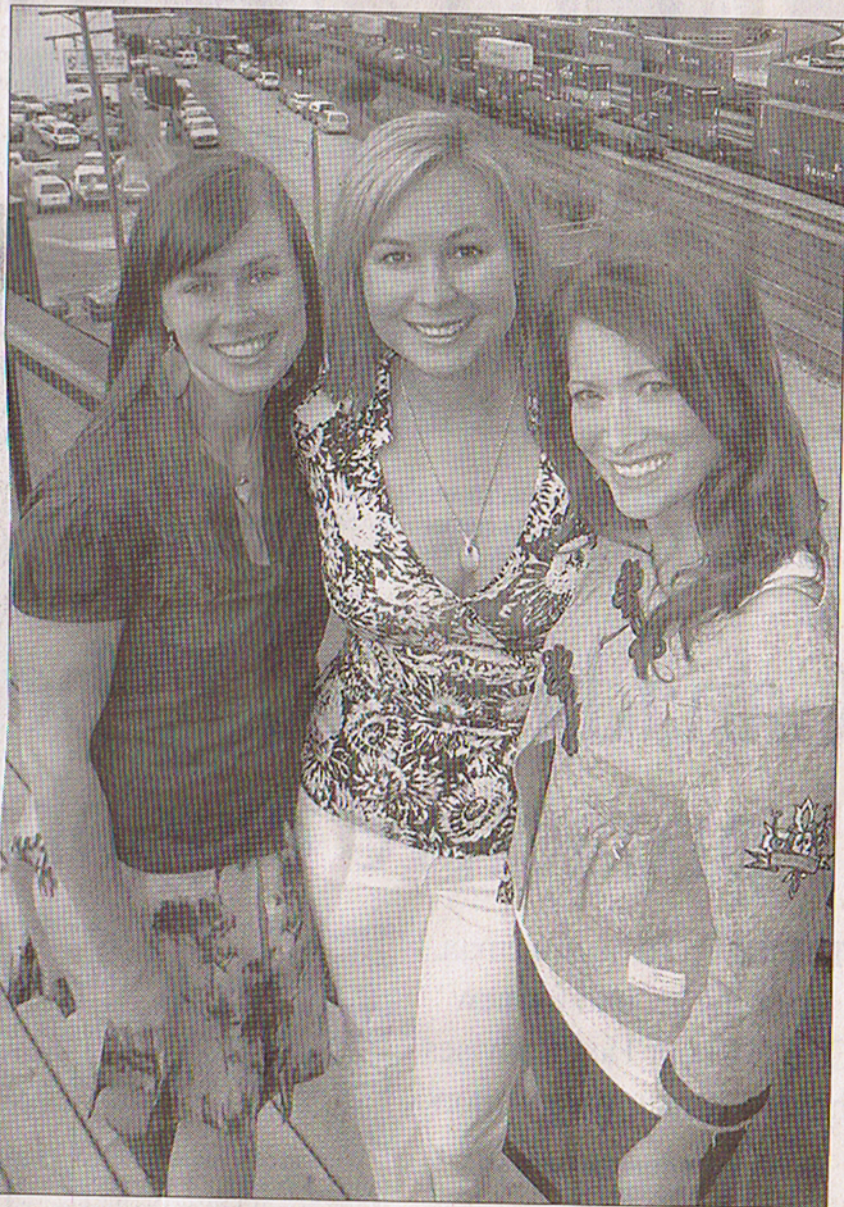
Asked what their 120 clients think of the arrangement, all three immediately replied: "They love it."

Not that there are likely to be many more of them. Apart from those about-to-be-hired David Rally brings with him, Allen, Lees and Petronio said they'd rather grow their clients' careers than their own roster.

Additions they do make are more likely to involve the production of shows, such as one Allen is planning with longtime pal and fellow jock **Donovan Bailey**.

As for the hurdles they jumped in their firm's first year, the partners said actually going into business wasn't as hard as the fear of failing. Still, it was demanding enough for all three to work 14-hour days for a year.

Their advice for others, especially women: Don't go into a business where you don't already have expertise. And do get the best lawyer and accountant you can — in their case **Luca Cotton** and **Richard Wilson** respectively.



Play Management principals (above right) Lena Lees, Trina Allen and Vickie Petronio say doing business is sweet from the Sugartown offices.