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MERAKI  
BEAUTY BAR

- **Meraki Beauty Bar is located in Burnaby, BC**
- **The salon offers cosmetic services ranging from tattoos (lip, eyebrows and small art), eyelash extensions, manicures and more**
- **The salon uses a countertop terminal to process payments**

### **Meraki Beauty Bar**



**Line of business:** Service

#### **Products used:**

- Desk5000



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- Michelle Tran,  
Founder & Owner of Meraki Beauty Bar



Meraki Beauty Bar is located in Burnaby, BC and offers cosmetic services ranging from tattoos (lip, eyebrows and small art), eyelash extensions, manicures and more at the salon. Michelle Tran is the founder and owner of the business. She tells the story of the unexpected journey she embarked on when she opened the salon.



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# Background

Sometimes in life, it is easier to take a career path that is simple and safe, one that will ultimately guarantee security. However, will it promise us fulfillment? The alternative path is not as straight, has more turns, but ultimately it ends with feeling a true sense of achievement. So how do we land on the latter? We find the courage to confront the risk and take our first steps into the challenge.

Michelle Tran is the founder and owner of Meraki Beauty Bar in Burnaby, BC. She tells the story of the unexpected path leading her to become the owner of a successful business. Tran started working from a young age. Her parents instilled in her the importance of working for the things she wanted in life. She had jobs in several different areas including the restaurant industry as manager, a personal assistant, a medical assistant and as a mortgage funder at a bank. Tran always enjoyed putting on make-up and dressing up for her various positions. Although, she stayed away from dipping her career fingers into the beauty industry for many years because in her culture, it was not seen as one that would ensure a 'secure' future.

While Tran was enjoying her job at the bank, one day everything changed when she least expected it. She noticed her friend came back from getting her eyebrows done and told her how amazing she thought they looked. It was in that moment, her friend told her that she saw something in Tran. She told Tran that she could see her doing eyebrows and encouraged her to register for a course. "When I look back on that day, it reminds me that sometimes people see something in us that we don't instantly see in ourselves. But, it is because she believed in me that I went down this path."

After a week of Tran's friend convincing her to sign up for the eyebrow course, she borrowed the money to invest in training. It included teaching skills on applying eyeliner, microblading techniques, powder ombre and lip blush tattoo. Tran began doing eyebrows in a small 100 sq. ft space with a bed and sink. For three months, she worked on eyebrows in the evening after her full-time job.





Before Tran knew it, she was in high demand with new clients and was steadily busy. At that point, she made the difficult decision to give up her full-time job (which she loved) and started doing eyebrows full-time. She remembers feeling extremely nervous about the risk she was taking in her life, but she found confidence in knowing that she was booked for a month and a half and made it her goal to consistently be booked for that amount of time. As Tran was doing eyebrows full-time, she started noticing a pattern. Her clients started asking her where the best place to get their eyelashes done would be. The volume of requests sparked an idea in Tran's mind. She decided to ask her sister about what she thought about taking a course to do eyelashes so that they could work together. Her sister was excited about taking the course and joining Tran. She then rented the room next door to Tran, so that clients were able to get their eyelashes and eyebrows done in the same building.

From there, business picked up and the sisters opened a store that was 800 sq. ft and became a team of three. The business grew faster than Tran imagined it would and they had moved back to the building they originally started in and occupied a 1700 sq. ft space. While in that building, they grew to have a staff of 21 working at Meraki and expanded services to include nail, lips and cosmetic tattoos as well. "Each employee working at Meraki has their own niche and we are all dedicated to growing and learning each day as the beauty industry continuously evolves," says Tran. It brings her a great deal of joy to see each of the employees grow a passion from their part-time job and leave their various full-time jobs to pursue a career in the beauty industry. "It is an amazing feeling to watch the girls come into work and do what they love, while making a living." Since she embarked on this venture, Tran has learnt from over 10 educators. Tran's sister also developed her skills to become an educator. "My sister really inspires me, she has taught the girls who work at the salon about eyelash application techniques," says Tran.

# Purpose

“The definition of Meraki means to do something with soul, creativity or love; when you leave a piece of yourself in your work,” according to Tran. She vividly remembers the moment when she decided to name her business Meraki. Tran was sitting in her cubicle after her class and she began googling ‘pretty names.’ She then stumbled across Meraki. At that moment, she knew it was the perfect name for her business. “My work is an outlet to unleash my creativity, making my clients look good and feel good is why I love coming in each day. I love learning about their lives, while setting my hands free,” says Tran. Owning Meraki has allowed her to reflect and realize that a love for ‘creating’ was instilled in her from a very young age. She recalls her love for unleashing her imagination through drawing with her father — a craft for which they both shared a mutual love.



**On top of Moneris being a payment solution, we can always count on our sales representative to explain everything to us in great detail. She came into the salon to help me with the set-up to ensure the onboarding process was flawless.**



Michelle Tran, Founder & Owner of Meraki Beauty Bar





# Why Moneris?

As Meraki rapidly grew, Tran knew that she needed to expand payment options beyond e-transfer and cash only. That is when she began her search for additional payment solutions. She started with a payment processor and quickly learned that their prices were high and she consistently had problems with their machines. She knew it was time to look for an alternative payment solution. That is when a representative from Moneris® reached out to her and explained to Tran what could be the best possible solutions for the needs of Meraki.

Tran was aware of Moneris because she worked at many places that used Moneris, and went with Moneris as it is recognized as a trusted company. Meraki is using the Desk5000 Terminal to process payments. The device has accessibility enhancements and added improvements to prevent the system from freezing and crashing. “When I think about the past years of having Moneris as our payment solution, I feel a great sense of relief because of having zero complications,” she says.

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“We had a contactless payment solution even before COVID-19 and I am so grateful that we did,” she adds. Tran says that Moneris has added to her clients having a great experience because they now have the reliable, flexible and safe payment options.

# Looking forward

Tran is looking forward to expanding Meraki Beauty on an International level one day. Right before COVID-19, Tran travelled to Indonesia to test the waters there. She learnt that many people became interested in her eyebrow services and ask her if she is coming back. She continues to think about opening her business not only in Indonesia, but in other countries as well. She has also thought about collaborating with other businesses who have the same level of passion as herself. Overall, Tran is excited and eager to continue growing Meraki Beauty into the future.



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