

2016 Delegate Profile

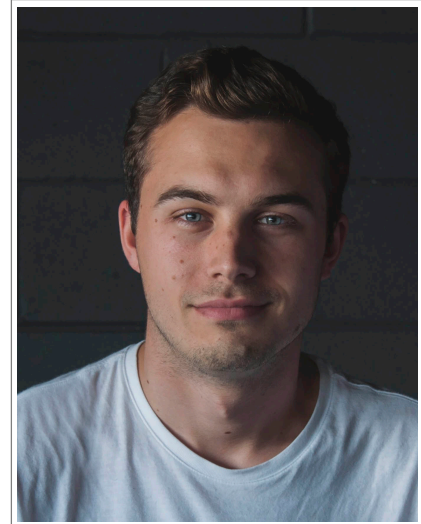
Name: Laurent Laferriere

Personal Motto: "If you don't build your dreams someone else will hire you to help build theirs."

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My Company

Name: Oatbox

Founded: 2014

Website: www.oatbox.com

Life as an Entrepreneur

The Trigger: Why did you become an entrepreneur? What prompted you to take that first step? How did you develop the concept for your business?

In my opinion, there is not a specific reason why I became an entrepreneur. From a really young age, I always felt the need to initiate projects, launch them and help them flourish. I have it in me and it's a force that drives me to innovate and to be passionate about what I do. I sometimes joke with my girlfriend and tell her that being an entrepreneur is a disease to which no cure exists.

The first step was something very exciting for me: it was what I wanted to do since forever. I remember the feeling of launching the first Oatbox website. Many months of hard work were coming to life and it was a thrilling experience to finally know what our customers thought of our company. I also have to mention that, for myself, taking this risk was easier because I knew I had amazing partners by my side.

The concept for Oatbox originated from the desire to provide a healthy, convenient way for young, urban professionals to eat breakfast every day. This is a problem my partners and I faced every morning, too busy to start our day the right way. After a bit of research, we found out that at least 50% of North Americans do not eat breakfast every day, mostly due to a lack of time or convenient options. We knew we had an ambitious mission in mind but felt this problem needed to be solved.

Describe your greatest accomplishment/most rewarding moment of your career as an entrepreneur?

Entrepreneurship is very rewarding in itself: projects grow and evolve quickly and you're in the driver seat with the best view on the road. Everyday feels like a new accomplishment, whether it is by coaching an employee, signing a strategic partnership or getting feedback from your customers. However, the most rewarding moment was when Oatbox won the *Montréal Inc.* grant. We knew from the start that we were on to something and that we had potential as a business, but receiving the confirmation by the leaders of the Montreal business community was a great honour. It also meant that our business was viable and accepted as a potential future leader in our industry.

Please describe your next challenge or plans for your business or for yourself as an entrepreneur:

I believe that I still have many challenges to face and I look forward to encountering and accomplishing them. These challenges will help me grow and hopefully become a better entrepreneur. In the next few months at Oatbox, we should close our first round of funding. With these funds will come many challenges: building a stronger team by hiring new key employees, growing into new markets (both geographical and demographical) and developing a strong corporate culture, amongst others. For myself, as an entrepreneur, I will need to seek out external advice from mentors. I have developed a solid network of well-established mentors in the past few years that can help me and give me useful insight in different situations. This is why it is extremely important to develop and nourish new relationships and the G20 YES is the perfect occasion to do so.