

SPECIAL REPORT

50 WOMEN OF INFLUENCE IN CANADA'S LIFE INSURANCE INDUSTRY



ANGELINA HUNG

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Insurance and tech nerd,
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Financial Tech Tools

CREATING FINANCIAL AWARENESS THROUGH TECHNOLOGY

Her resume would appear to belong to someone much older, but **Angelina Hung** is undeniably from a different cohort than most in her industry peer group. It's possible too, that her skill set is unique in the industry: After working for almost 10 years, both as an advisor, and as a managing general agency vice president of business development, Hung left the profession, in a sense, to crash-course her way through computer programming school. Today she runs her own firm, alongside her husband **Alex Hung**, creating applications and websites for insurance and investment advisors.

Computer programming was not part of any larger plan at the start, either. The pair had a new baby in the house, willing grandparents as caregivers, and a desire to take courses together. They went about choosing their extracurricular learning with only their personal interest and curiosity as a guide.

Their trajectory is such that it bears repeating: The highly intelligent, possible future power couple, learned computer programming *for fun*.

"We always want to do courses together," she laughs. "It was important for us to have our time together. With a new baby, it's like fire drill every single day."

While the pair first took '30-minute meals' to meet their need for this together time, in their second round, they chose computer programming courses offered by the British Columbia Institute of Technology.

"If you looked around the room, we were definitely the old folks in class," the complete opposite of what the pair was accustomed to in their respective financial services jobs. (Prior to his leaving to start **Financial Tech Tools**, Hung's husband was the head of product design for an advisor who specialised in advanced life insurance strategies.)

The advisor-branded applications and other digital communication tools they create now – for MGAs at the moment – are intended to help clients understand financial concepts that can be difficult for the average Canadian to fully appreciate.

"Financial awareness is low right now. People don't even understand what compound interest is," she says. In developing applications, too, she says there is some debate going between the couple, about how much depth and information to include.

Understanding and awareness

"Understanding and awareness are two different things. Some people may never get to the point where they'll fully understand. They don't need to understand completely how it works; some people's minds just don't work like that. They just need to know that spending \$5,000 on a new piano, with no money down, actually costs a lot more than \$5,000."

Her understanding of digital communication being what it is too, Hung naturally shares education and information online in different channels. "Most of us are online because it's an easier way to multiply your ideas out, right?"

When there is feedback, or someone interested in following up (although she is certified, the pair do not work with private clients themselves), she simply refers them to someone who will take care of their needs.

"I don't know if I'm actually influential as much as I'm just trying to contribute," she laughs. "It's a good feeling when you feel like you've actually helped somebody."

■ KATE MCCAFFERY