

## The WoxBox is heartwarming way to express yourself to loved ones



Love them or hate them, we've all had to deal with ice breakers.

It can be a great way to get to know someone, but can they also help change the trajectory of your career?

Well, the answer is a resounding yes from Aurora resident Carey Kirchmair who, along with fellow Auroran Cindy Iatan, have founded The WoxBox ? Words of Kindness boxes filled with heartfelt messages, photos, thoughts, and more, lovingly curated as special gifts for that special someone in your life.

?We're both entrepreneurial and thinking of business ideas we wanted to do something that was positive, putting a little good out into the world,? says Kirchmair. ?When I was in sleepover camp around Grade 6, a counsellor had us all sit around in a circle, write our names on the top of a piece of paper, and you had to write something good about the person. At the end of the exercise, we all got a piece of paper with all these amazing things that people thought about us ? people we didn't even know that well, but it made you feel really good.

?Then, as an adult, there were things I had gone to, some funerals, and I heard people saying all these amazing things about people, but I thought, ?These people should be hearing this stuff now while they're alive!' We should be sharing these things; we tell people we love them or we admire them, but we don't actually articulate why.?

After sharing that particular memory with Iatan, they latched onto their idea, and started making the initial WoxBoxes for family and friends. Feedback was tremendous, they agree, but these initial boxes rolled out nearly a decade ago. They revived the idea about three years ago, looking for ways to streamline the creation and production processes.

They hired a developer and created their own e-commerce platform that allows clients to select personalized boxes for just about every occasion, from birthdays to memorials. They can create content for the boxes through the platform themselves, and they can also invite others to make contributions to the finished product.

If you're a not a natural writer, the platform includes writing prompts.

If graphic design skills aren't in your toolbelt, they have you covered as well.

The founders pride themselves on avoiding any forms of A.I. in the production process ?because we want it to be authentic and it's a very conscious decision.?

?It's very easy to go on, start a project, you pick your occasion, and then you can write your message, and then it gets submitted,? says Kirchmair. ?All of the collaborators, we call them the people that you've invited, and then the person that's organizing the gift can see it all on their dashboard; it's like a very user-friendly project dashboard for them to see the messages coming in, the photos loaded, and then when they're ready to buy, they can decide if they want a digital version, or a printed box, or both.?

Iatan says a printed WoxBox of up to 50 messages is \$89, with prices going up according to the number of messages in batches of 50. Digital boxes starting at \$19 can accommodate up to 150 messages. Packages of multiple digital boxes are also available.

?The digital format is kind of the same experience as printed because you get to flip the cards over as you go through ? it's that same enjoyment that you would get from the printed box, but it's shareable,? says Iatan, adding that since their soft launch in October they have had very positive feedback. ?One customer did it for her grandma and wrote all these beautiful, beautiful messages. A lot of the times people write quite a bit, the reasons why I love you, respect you, appreciate you, or a funny story they share, but hers ? some of them were basic, only one line long, but others were beautiful quotes, memories of what they shared together, like ?We thought we were having fun, but we didn't realize we were making such great memories.?"

Adds Kirchmair: ?Not only is The Woxbox a joy to receive, it's also a joy to give, but I think we've experienced that it's also a joy for us to even see these projects coming through and to know the joy they are going to bring someone because they're beautiful ? and we're excited for them. I think people need to be connecting with others, sharing their love and appreciation, more than ever and in the world we're kind of in right now, with so much more social isolation, I just think it's a really important thing to keep in mind the reason why we're doing this and why it's important for people to do it.?

For more on The WoxBox, visit [thewoxbox.com](http://thewoxbox.com).

**By Brock Weir**