

## Lindy Chen Bio



### The Maths Genius Raised on a Secret Chinese Military Base who Became an International Trade Guru

Lindy Chen is the founder and Managing Director of ChinaDirect Sourcing Services, and author of *'Import From China. How To Make A Million...and Not Get Burnt!'*

She formed ChinaDirect in 2005 to assist Australian companies see China not as a threat, but as their competitive advantage. In only three years, she has saved her clients over \$2 million.

In 2008, ChinaDirect were honoured by winning the Business Services category of the Australian Small Business Champion Awards for Qld, and in 2007, won the Australian Home-Based Business Awards.

As a world leading authority on doing business with China, Lindy has featured in publications from The Courier Mail, to Style magazine, and has been a finalist in prestigious awards, including:

- Women In Business Queensland Businesswoman of the Year Awards '09, 08 and '07
- Australian Institute of Management's Management Excellence Awards 2008
- Australian Small Business Champion Awards, Entrepreneur of the Year 2008 and 2007
- My Business Awards, Fastest Growing Small Business 2007
- State Finalist in the Telstra Business Awards 2009
- National Finalist in the Ethnic Business Awards 2009.

Lindy has fifteen years experience in International Trade, and is a member of the Australia China Business Council.

Born in China, she migrated to Australia five years ago.

Lindy's business philosophy is that the size of ChinaDirect's cause will determine the size of its effect.

Lindy loves supporting causes that build closer ties between Australia and China, and recently held a fundraising party at Dreamworld supporting Australian Red Cross that had the objective of raising \$100,000 for earthquake victims.

She is also the founder of the Australian Charities Buying Group, which makes it possible for charities to pool commonly needed goods, and source cost effectively from China.

Education was Lindy's access out of a poor background, so her personal goal is to provide education scholarships to 1,000 underprivileged children in China by 2011.

Her business goal is to grow ChinaDirect into the world's leading sourcing firm.

The company has experienced exponential growth, guided by a mission of "making clients prosperous and globally competitive", with clients including MiniMovers and Merlo Coffee.

Lindy has strong leadership qualities which are demonstrated by her ability to motivate and inspire employees to fulfil their potential.

Lindy's contribution to the organisation's success has been in developing a unique business model, and then systemising the business.

Her willingness to take risks and do things differently has had her overcome many obstacles to achieve success. This includes starting the business on a budget of only \$2,000, and launching ChinaDirect Sourcing Services on a PC in an internet café

ChinaDirect operate differently to the average broker. For example, they are transparent in providing full details of Chinese suppliers they source for Australian clients, and refuse commissions from Chinese suppliers.

Lindy has an impressive track record in China and Australia.

Before settling in Australia, she held senior management roles in Chinese and Australian companies.

However, it wasn't all up and up. Upon arriving in Australia in 2002, Lindy couldn't find a job, so took on various volunteer roles. This included raising awareness of China by organising community events for her local council, promoting the use of public transport, and running events showcasing the talents of multicultural youth.

Then Lindy got a big break... Selling movie tickets door to door! After three weeks she'd made the grand sum of \$100, and wore out two pairs of runners. But she learnt how to read a map and gained the confidence to talk English with people.

Lindy then spent seven months studying English, at the end of which she taught Business Administration at The Australian Business College in Adelaide. She then took up a position lecturing in International Trade at TAFE in South Australia.

During this time, friends were asking her to source products for them from China. She had an extraordinary talent for this, and with high demand for this service, turned it into a business.

With her strategic project management skills and strong business acumen, she continues to assist many Australian companies grow through product innovation and bottom line savings.

ChinaDirect gains most new clients after they see Lindy talk at China business seminars, or through word of mouth. Lindy is passionate about building bridges between China and Australia, and has conducted seminars for organisations such as James Cook University, ANZ Bank, Australian Institute of Management, Bank of Qld, Australia Post, Qld Police and Gold Coast Institute of TAFE.

She has a strong desire to raise Australian's awareness of China, and vice versa, so the two countries can grow harmoniously together. Recently she authored a book, 'Import From China...How To Make a Million and Not Get Burnt', and a DVD of the same name.

Lindy is a dynamic, 'bicultural' business facilitator blending the best from the East and the West, with a natural ability to connect people from diverse backgrounds.

## Personal Tidbits

- Prior to the Communist Revolution in 1949, Lindy's forebears were reasonably wealthy, until they had all assets forcibly removed by the Government.
- Born and raised on a military base known only as '143' in remote China, her father was imprisoned for three weeks when her sister stepped on a Chairman Mao chalk drawing on the footpath.
- After the Tiananmen Square incident, Lindy underwent 'thought examination' for two hours each week at Uni, made to spill any 'not so good' thoughts against the Communist Party.
- The Chinese know more about Australia than we think. Lindy learned 'Click Go The Shears' in Grade 3!
- Her father earned \$1.34 per week to raise a family of six when she was growing up. He has since retired and now receives a \$17 per week pension.
- At university she was sponsored by the State for her skipping prowess, and became an accomplished table tennis player and swimmer.
- Lindy credits her early business success to reading the '7 Habits of Highly Effective People', and, at 24, she became the first person to translate its 350 pages into Chinese.
- Lindy has a head for numbers. She has a degree majoring in mathematics, and often surprises people with her mental arithmetic ability.
- There was much to learn when Lindy arrived in Australia. Lindy tried bargaining with a checkout operator at Woolworths, but to no avail!
- The first book she read in Australia was The Tax Payers Guide (the thick one!), cover to cover.
- Lindy loves karaoke, salsa dancing and watching Australia's Funniest Home Videos.
- On her first trip to Australia in 1997, she found \$5 in the surf on the Gold Coast. A good omen!

## Professional Qualifications

- Bachelor of Education
- Bachelor of Science
- Certificates IV in:
  - Small Business Management
  - Workplace Training & Assessment
  - English Proficiency

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## For more information, contact:

Cameron Morton  
Marketing Coordinator  
ChinaDirect Sourcing Services Pty Ltd  
Phone:(07) 3392 1421  
Mobile:0411 426 637  
Fax: (07) 3112 4357  
[cameron@chinadirectsourcing.com.au](mailto:cameron@chinadirectsourcing.com.au)  
[www.chinadirectsourcing.com.au](http://www.chinadirectsourcing.com.au)