

## Andreea Crişan, Romania



*“Being the leader of a high growth company within its industry means making the right decisions at the right time, but also taking the time to analyze all outcomes to determine which is the right one for the company and its employees.*”

*I am ambitious and determined. I know my strengths.”*

### Andreea Crişan’s professional background

- Chief Operating Officer and Executive Vice President of the Andy Transport Group of Companies, Montreal, Canada
- Member of Quebec Bar, since 2015
- 2019, Entrepreneur of the Year Award in the ‘Services’ category, at the Award Gala for the EY Entrepreneur Of The Year® 2019 Québec Program
- 2019, EY Entrepreneur of the Year National Award for: Inspirational Journey
- 2017, recognized as a Canada’s Most Powerful Women: Top 100 Award Winner
- 2-year mandate on the Women in Trucking Association in the USA
- Member of the Board of Directors of the Montreal Traffic Club

### Andreea Crişan’s story

Born in Romania, Andreea Crişan arrived in Montreal, Canada with her parents at the age of 10. After 6 months of unemployment and knocking on every door for a job, her father (a professional driver in Europe) bought his first used truck and, six months later, hired an employee to work in his team. At the age of 11, Andreea joined the family business – the “Andy Transport” Company – in the role of payroll, customs and general office clerk. She studied and worked abroad (Shanghai, New York and Montreal) to complete her Law degree at the University of Ottawa, but she continued to be an active employee from a distance.

She moved her way up to assume the role of full-time General Manager by the age of 23. Since 2015

(before her mid-twenties), Andreea Crişan has been the Executive Vice President and the Chief Operating Officer of Andy, a privately owned company ranked for 5 consecutive years (2014 – 2019) in GROWTH 500 of Canada’s Fastest Growing Companies. She is in charge of managing the overall activities, including daily operations, creating and implementing processes to achieve the corporate objectives, identifying growth opportunities and priorities, and developing tools and training that drive growth and performance. Most importantly, she has a pivotal role in the evolution of one of the fastest-growing transportation/logistics companies in Canada.

“Andy” is now a group of 15 companies operating in the transportation, warehousing and logistics industry as well as in ancillary industries (such as heavy truck and trailer maintenance and repairs, professional driving academy, and in the management, operation and holding of real estate within the same industry). The companies operate in Canada, the US and with a subsidiary in Europe. Its largest company operates the 8th largest fleet in Quebec, the 44th in Canada, and the 238th largest in North America. Established in 2001 in Montreal, Andy Transport has managed to grow at a dazzling pace during the past few years from 16 tractors and 32 drivers in 2008 to over 350 tractors and 800 trailers and over 550 employees today. Since its humble beginnings, the company has grown organically through its ability to navigate its way during challenging times of recession and gaining market share through strategic planning and bold business decisions such as: fleet outsourcing services, third party logistics, warehousing, training programs, various modes of transportation, fleet maintenance and repairs, strategic real estate acquisitions and management of fully serviced transportation terminals. As a young female entrepreneur, Andreea came to understand that in order to be successful, many personal sacrifices are required, especially from a time perspective. She understood that the time commitment is what sets her apart from the competition. It has not always been either simple or easy. There were critical moments when, together with her team, she took risks that many of their competitors would not even attempt, for example expanding the company's asset-based fleet rather than following the industry trend by expanding their logistics operations and price cutting.

While the gender balance remains male-dominated within her organization as well as industry-wide, over the years Andreea has felt more challenges from the external environment than the internal one:

- Entering a room and breaking down prejudices by proving her competence and skill: at client meetings, at conference as a panelist, etc.
- Being taken seriously because of her age and young appearance, which makes networking/business development more challenging.

Each time, she managed to rise to the challenge by capitalizing on her knowledge, preparation and confidence – both self-confidence and in her team. Always looking to penetrate new industries, she spearheaded the 2018 launch of the Company's Fleet Maintenance operations, Tristan. Tristan now operates 6 maintenance centres across the province servicing Andy Transport's fleet, as well as trucks belonging to some of its direct competitors. In addition, in early 2019, she initiated the start-up of the company's new outsourcing operations, Tristan Cartage. Currently, with the numerous projects being evaluated within the company, coupled with the driver shortage plaguing the transport industry, Andreea needs to constantly re-evaluate her approach to everyday business in order to preserve the company's continuous evolution. She considers that the diversification of their services and their customers will bring the company closer to their goal of becoming a sustainable, international one, while maintaining their leadership position within the transportation industry. In her capacity as a leader, Andreea's permanent concern is to enhance human resources, to constantly search for opportunities to provide her clients with an efficient service, and to keep up her high standards in business.

***“Build up a powerful team of people open to challenge and to new ideas!”***

Thus, she initiated the development of a training centre which will ensure Andy Transport's employees are properly certified when regulations become stricter for obtaining the class 1 license. *“I like to believe that I have clearly demonstrated my capacity as an entrepreneur and visionary within the transport industry. I have done so by challenging the normal transport business model and expanded Andy's operations into other industries such as a fleet maintenance business in 2016 (Tristan Fleet Management). Today, over 200 clients use Tristan to help plan preventive maintenance and repairs, and benefit from Tristan's 24/7 road assistance, towing, and road service needs all over North America. My dedication, work ethic and perseverance is what continues to fuel my ambition to transform Andy into an industry leader.”*

Taking part in the Romanian community in Canada, a large number of Romanians choose to work with "Andy Transport". The company is first and foremost a big family that encourages the hiring of diverse backgrounds and experiences by giving them a real chance to integrate and succeed. By training them, the company gives new entrants to the industry the necessary knowledge and a profession while ensuring the sustainability of these achievements. This very high retention rate is not anecdotal; it is the result of a corporate culture similar to a family. Andreea will never miss an opportunity to express her total commitment to the company and to those she works with every day: *"I am aware that a team is only as strong as the bond that holds it together, and I believe that there is no stronger bond than that of a family, which is why I view the company and our employees as an extended family. This is why I am a strong believer in the importance of keeping our employees and their families as close as possible inside and outside of the workplace. We pride ourselves with an entrepreneurial culture which was first instilled by my father, the founder of the company, who believes in hardworking, determination to succeed and satisfaction in a work well done. transportation / logistics companies."* We have also built a diverse team: 37% of our management team (manager, director, VP, executive) are women. We also have a diverse team in terms of experiences and backgrounds. We have created a strong sense of belonging and of comradeship within our company. Every person's success depends on everyone else's success. We promote teamwork, collaboration, openness and friendship; I strongly believe in surrounding myself with professionals who are well versed in each

*facet of the business and have the appropriate skills to help me along the way. Most importantly, I am highly motivated to assume a pivotal role in the evolution of one of the fastest-growing*

***"Do not be afraid to put forward your opinions and make yourself heard!"***

In addition to playing an active and strategic role in the development of business growth, Andreea has the mandate to represent these businesses in the community. She served a 2-year mandate on the Women in Trucking Association in the US and is also a member of the Board of Directors of the Montreal Traffic Club. In 2017, she was recognized as an Award Winner of Canada's Most Powerful Women: Top 100 Awards, an honour celebrating fearless female leaders whose efforts to succeed continue to inspire others. *"I am a strong believer in the power of women and have positioned myself as a leader in driving positive change and progress and to remind us of the importance of empowering women in our workforce and in the community."* In November 2019, at the Award Gala for the EY Entrepreneur Of The Year® 2019 Québec program, Andreea Crisan was awarded Entrepreneur of the Year, in the Services category. Each year, EY recognizes unstoppable entrepreneurs who are bettering the world around them and cutting through the noise of this Transformative Age.

A young woman at the beginning of her career path can conclude from this portrait that making the decision to be an entrepreneur takes passion, courage, knowledge and vision, as well as the perseverance to overcome all obstacles. If she decides to take Andreea's advice, she should be aware that, whilst her life may not be easy at all, in the end her sacrifices will pay off.



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