

The winner



Leader: Frédérique Girard-Ory

Title: CEO

Company: DERMSCAN Group

Activity: Cosmetic and pharmaceutical industries clinical trials

Area: Auvergne-Rhône-Alpes

Winner: Entrepreneur of the year award

Category: Entrepreneur of the year

Her career

In April 1989, Frédérique Girard-Ory successfully defends her Human Biology thesis on the development of artificial skin for the badly burned. Simultaneously, she passes the CAAE (Companies Management Ability Certificate) from Lyon's IAE. With her diplomas in hand, she starts looking for her future market, obtains her first contracts and early 1990 founds Dermscan, a clinical studies company dedicated to the evaluation of the tolerance and efficiency of cosmetic products.

Several months later, she is joined by Philippe Girard (her husband) who advised her from the beginning. The company makes her marks, develops, structures itself and adapts to the regulations.

In 2000, her husband and partner suddenly dies. In the same time, the French regulation changes (35 hours). Frédérique however manages to make the company change and, in order to broaden her market, founds Pharmascan, specializing in the study of drugs and medical devices.

In 2002, she takes shares (34%) in a laboratory specializing in *in vivo*, clinical trials in Bangkok (Thailand) which will become Dermscan Asia.

In 2006, in order to speed-up the pharmaceutical branch development, she purchases a CRO (Contract Research Organization) in Paris. But Frédérique meets many difficulties and in 2008, the latter is forced into bankruptcy. This experience, even if very harsh financially and humanly, helped strengthen her will and position as a leader. Supported by her team, she restructures the company and goes abroad which will significantly boost the development.

Several internal and external growth are made in: Poland (2008 and 2014), Tunisia (2010) and Mauritius (2017). The international gamble is profitable and allows for a sharp increase of the Group's sales and profitability.

Today, Dermscan is renowned for the quality of its services, its dynamism, its sense of innovation and its reactivity. This image was built in time, at the price of 10 years' huge efforts and of a quality approach meeting

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the company's ambitions. It's also the result of an internal culture favoring a pleasant social environment as opposed to a growth at all costs. This demonstrates the quality of management. The DermScan's employee average seniority is of 11 years.

In 2016, national gold winner of « Woman at the international level » award of the « Business Women », Frédérique Girard-Ory is involved in the development of entrepreneurship and more specifically in that of women entrepreneurs. She fights for a change of mentality in France and « boost women's ambition ». Frédérique, during her free time, is also a novelist who published several novels and detective stories.

Her keys to success

- ▶ The ability to be surrounded by the right persons either by external hiring or by internal skill valorization
- ▶ The international development that allowed the group to meet its clients' needs in terms of climate diversity and test volunteers in particular, while improving the margins
- ▶ The concern of well-being at work and the employee development.

Key figures

- ▶ Innovating clinical tries were achieved by two brands: DermScan laboratory: Products and cosmetic ingredients tests and Pharmascan: Clinical tries of pharmaceutical / health products - Phase I to IV.
- ▶ In 2016, 11 million euros turnover, staff of 169 people of which 100 abroad
- ▶ 5 affiliates and 38% of the turnover achieved abroad.

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