

Fashion PR

Fashion Public Relations

fashionPR.com: A little about yourself:

I live in New York City, I have an adorable bichon frisee dog named Punky, I love to play tennis, do charity work, travel especially to Europe and the Caribbean and of course like any New Yorker I love to shop.

fashionPR.com: Where did you work before founding your FashionPR firm?

I worked for several years as The Vice President of Amanda Uhry Public Relations in New York.

fashionPR.com: Why did you start your fashion PR firm?

In 1998. So as of this writing 12 years ago.

A little about your company: We are a boutique sized agency with a firm niche in fashion specializing in representing fashion companies worldwide. We work with emerging designers/companies as well as those that are already established. We provide our clients with the kind of personal attention that can often be lost at a larger firm. With our emerging fashion clients we really guide them as to how to nurture and grow their company.

fashionPR.com: How many hours you roughly work per week?

Approximately 50 hours per week in the office, but as a publicist one is always on the job, thinking of new ideas, reading what's in the news, and thinking of new and creative ways to position clients.

fashionPR.com: What does a fashion pr do ?:

Our most basic yet most important function is to secure ongoing consistent and quality media coverage for our clients spanning television, newspapers, magazines, radio, internet, and wire services. In addition we arrange meet and greets for our clients with key fashion editors, produce special events and fashion shows, lend trade show support, conduct focus groups, assist clients with social media, celebrity endorsements, and help them to forge meaningful trade alliances.

fashionPR.com: What do you find interesting about fashion pr?

I personally love to take a product that is new and help to make it "the next big thing." One of the products I really loved working with is called <http://tressleek.com>. They came to KMR as a start



up venture. The product is essentially like Spank for the upper arms. During their time with us they were featured in outlets such as "Good Morning America, WWD, In Touch, "The Rachael Ray Show," More Magazines, Life & Style and dozens of others. It was really exciting to see both the media and consumer interest build to a crescendo.

fashionPR.com: What do you think the core competitiveness for fashion pr company?:

For a client especially in a bad economy, doing a good job is like the old Janet Jackson song, "What have you done for me lately;" There is a constant need to produce week after week for a client and keep a campaign fresh by constantly developing new media angles.

fashionPR.com: How fashion pr company should try to maintain their market competitiveness?

Stay ahead of the curve. Find a way that you can bring additional value added benefits to your client's campaign. Although I always tell prospective clients that the best reason to hire us is for the first rate media cov-

erage we provide, there are alliances we forge for our clients as well as other creative endeavors that do not put an additional strain on their budget.

fashionPR.com: What are the key skills to being a great fashion pr ?:

One must pay attention to the media landscape, pop culture, the economy, because all of these factors tie in to how a story should be presented to the media and what consumers want. Like many businesses, public relations is about relationships. It is important to have solid connections with the fashion media and to have them trust the message you are putting forth. A savvy publicist must craft a story.

fashionPR.com: What should a new designer expect from a fashion pr?

A new designer must understand that public relations is a building process. "Fame" does not happen overnight. A new designer should expect that the public relations firm will secure media

coverage in short lead publications to instantly get the name out there. The PR firm should also schedule editorial desk sides for the designer so that the designer can meet face to face with fashion/market editors in order to develop a personal rapport. It is also important for the publicist to share media feedback with the designer even if some of that feedback might be negative. Sharing constructive criticism is the only way a new designer can improve and learn to create fashions and present them in a manner that will be appealing to the press.

fashionPR.com: How to choose a fashion pr?

The internet is a good place to start. Also, if you are an emerging designer and admire the media exposure that similar companies have had, one can try to find out who they are being represented by. It would be a mistake for a small fashion company with a relatively small budget to engage a PR firm that is handling major fashion houses because they will ultimately get lost in the shuffle and not be a priority for that firm. Also, designers must look for firms who have/had similar but not competing clientele and ask for examples of the placements secured for those clients as well as a detailed PR plan of action. References are important as well.

fashionPR.com: What part of your job do you find the most challenging?

What is most challenging in this economy is working quickly enough as a publicist so that the client can hopefully see a return on their investment as a result of our public relations efforts.

fashionPR.com: How do you bring new brands into your agency?:

We spend a great deal of time counseling our clients on everything from their long and short term goals, media training, alliances with other entities that can prove beneficial, analyzing their web-site, product shots, logo, brand image, as well as how to leverage the media coverage we garner for them in the ongoing marketing of their business.

fashionPR.com: How has the new media landscape changed how you do business ?:

As a publicist I love the fact that we are no longer just relegated to the same 60 or so beauty/fashion magazines with the advent of blogs and web-sites. As most people know, monthly magazines have a lead time of four months, so it is very beneficial to our clients that there are literally thousands of great blogs and fashion web-sites that provide a much quicker turn around time.

fashionPR.com: How do you demonstrate results for your clients?

We demonstrate results for our clients through detailed weekly e-mail reports. After a client has been with us for several months we will also provide an excel sheet of all of their media coverage, the circulation/viewership of a particular outlet and what the advertising equivalent would have cost them.

fashionPR.com: How do you maintain sustainable relationships with the media?

Because fashion is a niche for us at KMR, our relationships with the media are extremely solid and ongoing. They rely on us as a

constant source for news from the fashion industry. We are also very careful as to how we tailor our pitches. We understand the audience of a particular outlet and we only pitch them stories that are appropriate for their demographic. We are also careful not to pitch stories that are blatantly self promotional, but rather we strive to find a relevant news hook and tie a story into a season, a holiday, a trend or pop culture in general.

fashionPR.com: How to know what a publication or stylist wants?:

After being in business since 1998 and interacting with the fashion media on a daily basis we have come to learn what a particular outlet/editor's specific beats are and what they are planning for their editorial calendars.

fashionPR.com: What do you think the future of digital fashion media/pr is?

The future of digital media is literally growing by leaps and bounds. I encourage every designer/fashion company to use digital and social media to its fullest. This means using twitter, face book, linked in and all other available means to market ones company. Consider these statistics provided by face book:

Face book Company Figures

- More than 400 million active users
- 50% of our active users log on to Face book in any given day
- More than 35 million users update their status each day
- More than 60 million status updates posted each day
- More than 3 billion photos uploaded to the site each month
- More than 5 billion pieces of content (web links, news stories, blog posts, notes, photo albums, etc.) shared each week
- More than 3.5 million events created each month
- More than 3 million active Pages on Face book
- More than 1.5 million local businesses have active Pages on Face book
- More than 20 million people become fans of Pages each day
- Pages have created more than 5.3 billion fans

fashionPR.com: Are there busy and quiet periods during the year?:

When a client is paying a firm on a monthly retainer fee there can be no quiet times! Where we are in "real time" actually has very little to do with the media landscape. For example, some companies may experience a quiet time during December, but for a PR firm this is a prime time to generate media exposure through the all important holiday gift guides. While the talk shows do go on hiatus during the summer, magazines do not and neither do news programs so there are always thousands of media outlets a PR firm can approach at any time of the year.

fashionPR.com: What makes a great brand or label stand out?

A great name is important with a product that backs up what the name says. For example, we ran a very successful campaign for a denim company called "Not Your Daughter's Jeans," also known as Tummy Tuck Jeans. The denim line is exactly what it says and does what the name claims. The line is for women who find the low rise jeans unflattering but do not want to wear the proverbial "mom jeans." The founders saw a niche that was not fulfilled and women who were not being catered to and devel

a brand just for them.

fashionPR.com: Are many of your friends fashion PRs?

Honestly, I do not have any friends who own PR firms. I do remain in contact with many of my former employees and interns. I love to hear about their success and it makes me feel great when they tell me that my firm was so instrumental in launching their career based on the tools and knowledge they gained here.

fashionPR.com: What would you recommend to college graduate to help start their career?

Obviously this is a terrible economy and I feel sorry for college graduates trying to find employment now. As unappealing as it may sound, I would advise them to intern if they cannot find a full time paid job. Companies like mine often hire interns to become JR account executives. Not only can a recent grad gain knowledge and contacts through interning but it will put them right under an employer's nose should a full time position become available.

fashionPR.com: What sums up 'fashion PR' for you ? :

Fashion PR means taking a designer or brand and promoting through the use of third party endorsement in the media. The effects of a well executed campaign create a "buzz" that is responsible in large part for the success of brands such as Spanx, 7 Jeans, the Fred Siegel Store in California, and others that developed a cult like celebrity and consumer following.

fashionPR.com: Please list 3 designers who you like the most:

Valentino
Oscar De La Renta
Dolce & Gabbana.

fashionPR.com: Do you want to share something with fashionPR.com audience?

If there is a will there is a way. If you can't get in through the front door try the back door or the side door. For creative and driven people there is always a way to realize and seize an opportunity.

fashionPR.com: What's your favorite quote?

My favorite business quote is from Wal-Mart founder Sam Walton: "There is only one boss. The customer. And he can fire everybody in the company from the chairman on down, simply by spending his money somewhere else."



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