

New York Style: Katherine M. Rothman CEO of KMR Communications, Inc.



Katherine is New York's go-to girl for top of the line beauty PR. She runs KMR Communications, and has made a firm niche in beauty, fashion, health and fitness public relations and was recently voted "one of the top 50 healthcare pr firms in the nation," by PR Week Magazine. Find out how she dove into beauty PR and stays on top, what's in her makeup bag (it might surprise you) and where she shops for fashion, beauty and home....

FACTIO MAGAZINE: Give us an inside look into your career as CEO of KMR Communications.

KATHERINE M. ROTHMAN: I began KMR Communications, Inc at the age of 27. What I love about my job is the opportunity to mesh different aspects that I enjoy such as networking, sales, writing, creative thinking, and event planning. What's more, I have the incredible luxury and privilege of working with the best team of account executives. No two days at KMR are the same and the pace is exciting and one of a team environment. I find myself being both teacher and mentor to my staff as well as learning from their collective experience in public relations. I really enjoy being at the forefront of trends and new developments in the arenas of beauty, health, fitness and fashion. It is exciting to be one of the PR firms in this niche to bring these topics to the forefront of the media and see how in a short time how public awareness and education results.

FM: Describe your signature style.

KMR: I only follow trends to a degree. I don't believe in embracing every new look at once particularly if it is not flattering or age appropriate. I usually try to go for an evening look that is elegant but sexy, whether or not I pull that off, I don't know! I think it's really important to wear what makes you feel good, because if you feel good, you look good. I am also not caught up in labels. I think it is crazy to spend hundreds of dollars on a black tank top when one from The Gap looks just as good. I do believe in really good handbags, shoes and coats because if you have these wardrobe staples you always look polished and elegant.

FM: Define the style in NYC.

KMR: Unlike cities like Washington DC where 'the look' is almost uniformly conservative, in New York anything goes. I am always amazed when I go to a cocktail party and see the variety of ways that women dress. It is not unusual anymore to see a range of attire from jeans, stilettos, and a great jacket to a sexy Roberto Cavalli dress. I find that whatever look most New York women choose, they pull it together with great panache much the same way Parisian women do. I think the one consistent style presence is jeans which have become ubiquitous and acceptable in almost every social occasion.

FM: What are some of the designer staples we would find in your closet?

KMR: Classic Chanel handbags in white, beige and black because they never go out of style and if you take care of them they really last. I also love my mink black cashmere wrap because it looks great over jeans or a dress. I am also a big jewelry fan but I don't believe in being flashy or overdoing it. I love hearts and some of my favorite pieces are my Chopard diamond heart necklace and 'happy diamonds' ring.

FM: What women (from which city worldwide) have great style and why?

KMR: I love the style of H.R.H Queen Rania of Jordan. She is a woman in her 30's who is the first lady of Jordan and has a serious role to perform, however she still looks elegant, youthful and glamorous at the same time. She reminds me of Jackie Kennedy. I also love Sharon Stone's style because she takes fashion risks and pairs things together in a way most people would not think to. Unlike many of the LA fashion victims, Sharon Stone has a New York look and when she puts an outfit together, she makes people say, "Why didn't I think of that?" She is original and never seems to be a slave to trends. In New York, I admire Aerin Lauder because she always looks so fresh and elegant but never seems contrived. In Chicago, I really admire Oprah Winfrey because she dresses to suit her body type and accentuates the positive attributes of her figure and rather than trying to hide curves, she flaunts them.

FM: Where do you shop worldwide? Where do you shop in NYC? (for fashion, beauty, home, etc)

KMR: In New York City, I shop at Gracious Home for home items such as candles, linens, and holiday decorations or simply for housewarming gifts. For fun jewelry and accessories I love Jennifer Miller, and for sexy tops and really well made jackets that can be worn over jeans or black pants I love a store on Lexington Avenue called Fopps where all of the clothes are imported from France. I know that if I have something from Fopps, it is not an item that is mass produced. In Capri, Italy I love walking the cobblestone streets and hidden alleyways and stores such as jeweler Alberto e Lina and Canfora which makes the original Capri handmade sandals originally made famous by Jackie Kennedy Onassis in the 1960's. I also really enjoy collecting sarongs from different beaches around the world that are handmade by local women. Many times, these sarongs cost five dollars on a Caribbean beach and would be many more times the price if they were purchased in a US retail store.

FM: Do you think money and style go hand in hand or can style never be bought? Is it something you just have?

KMR: There is no way style can be bought- unless one has a really good stylist. Even then, we see celebrities who make some major fashion faux-pas because they are letting someone else dictate what they are wearing from head to toe without invoking any of their own personal style. I really admire those women who have limited budgets but also seem to look pulled together and appropriate for each occasion. To me, having style on a budget is the ultimate test of having good taste and knowing how to select garments or accessories that look expensive and timeless. Women with style on a budget also know how to edit a wardrobe and recognize when to splurge on an item and when to go for 'the steal.' Most of all, I feel it is how you carry yourself in what you are wearing.

FM: What would people be most surprised to know about you?

KMR: Most people who are not my close friends would be surprised to know that I am a bargain seeker. I don't have my haircut at a top salon and very often I cut or color it myself because I have limited patience for sitting still! In fact, my staff members just bought me a gift certificate to a hair salon for my birthday. I think that was a big hint that it was time for some professional help! I also don't typically buy name brand makeup. I love shopping in drug stores and actually find it relaxing to walk through the aisles when it is quiet at night. You won't find any Chanel products in my makeup case, although I am sure they are quite good.

FM: Did you know when you started KMR Communications that the firm would rise to the success that is has?

KMR: I knew that I had chosen a smart niche because aesthetic medicine was on the rise and there was a proliferation of new skin care companies, day spas, and a heightened interest among the general public in anti-aging and youth preservation. When one starts a new venture, you can only put your personal best effort forward, assemble the best team of people around you, network, do good work and then hope for the best and be very grateful if the effort results in success.

For more info, visit www.kmrcommunications.com or e-mail info@kmrcommunications.com.