



PR STAR



Jaimie L. Adler-Palter: Founder of Bayleaf Communications, Inc.

[By Brooke Heath]

Jaimie Adler-Palter didn't go to college with the intention of one day starting up her own public relations firm. An avid singer, she intended to major in voice at the University of Delaware. But a combination of tonsil problems, practicality, and a nudge from her mother soon steered her towards the public relations industry.

"In addition to the tonsil issues, I was also being practical. A successful opera singer is a long road; voices don't mature until 35 to 40," Adler-Palter explained. "I have always been very creative, and I love to talk, so my mom suggested either law or PR. Law seemed like a long process."

Adler-Palter obtained her B.A. in Sociology from the University of Delaware with a minor in women's studies and a merit in classical voice. After taking the summer off to get her tonsils out, she started working part time at Carney Community College as a public relations assistant. There, she gained valuable experience in the field.

"We were a team of two, and I was able to get involved in a lot of aspects of PR, including press release writing, putting together course catalogs, and planning events," she said.

But Adler-Palter soon realized that this position wasn't going to give her many opportunities for advancement, so she decided to go to graduate school, which she considers "the best decision I ever made."

While pursuing her M.A. in Public Relations at Emerson College in Boston, Adler-Palter worked in the alumni relations office, helping to plan alumni events. She was also the special events manager for the graduate student association.

After graduating, Adler-Palter "bounced around a bit," eventually joining a PR firm that specialized in restaurants.

"This was a great fit, as my mother was a caterer and my grandfather was a baker, so I knew a lot about food," she said.

But after working for several agencies over the next three years, Adler-Palter got the itch to begin her own company.

"My husband (who was my boyfriend at the time and an entrepreneur himself) suggested that I go off on my own. There are a lot of independent contractors here in Boston, so it was a bit easier than I thought," she

explained. "I had been volunteering for Taste of the Nation (Share Our Strength), and many chefs saw the press I was garnering for the event and asked me to do so for them. I started part time at first...and in 2000, I finally launched Bayleaf Communications and haven't looked back yet."

At Bayleaf Communications, Adler-Palter specializes in public relations for smaller-restaurant, nonprofit, and lifestyle clients. This involves establishing relationships with both clients and the media and always looking for new angles from which to promote her clients.

"I think the skills that I have within this niche are my love and, maybe more importantly, my knowledge of food," Adler-Palter said. "The chefs I work with really appreciate this. This paired with my creativity has led to my success. I consider myself an idea maker; my office is a think tank."

She also knows that gratitude goes a long way in the PR industry.

Adler-Palter explained, "Every reporter/ editor gets a handwritten thank-you note for each piece they write for me. Believe it or not, I am the only or at least one of very few that do this in my market. I only know this because reporters have told me."

Adler-Palter's graciousness and knowledge have paid off. In 2002, she was chosen as one

Q. What do you enjoy doing when you aren't working?

A. When I am not working, I teach aerobics a few times a week (and have been for 10 years). I also love to read, sing, eat out, travel, theater, and movies.

Q. Who is your role model?

A. That's tough. I'm not sure I have one...isn't that terrible?

Q. What songs are on your iPod right now?

A. I love Top 40 and the 80s. I just downloaded "Whine Up."

Q. What was the last magazine that you read?

A. I am 22 weeks pregnant, and the last mag I read was the current issue of *Parenting*, as well as *Boston Magazine*. I prefer books.



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of five publicists to handle public relations at the Salt Lake City Olympics, and she was also named as one of "Thirty Extraordinary Bostonians" by *Boston Event Guide*.

Despite keeping busy working for numerous clients, Adler-Palter still finds time to do pro bono work for nonprofits such as the Wellness Center, the Boston Public Market, and other disease-related events.

"I started to do pro bono work because I realized that working in the food biz can be a bit gluttonous," said Adler-Palter. "When

I was a kid, my mom joked that she was sending my leftover Brussels sprouts to Ethiopia, but there are *many* people right here in Boston that don't have enough money to eat and eat right. In addition, I figured I could meet people and increase contacts."

Adler-Palter offers the following advice for professionals or students considering breaking into the industry:

"I think a publicist needs to be creative, think outside the box, listen to the clients, and try any pitch. My motto is 'If you don't try,

the answer is always "no.'" Also, establish good relationships with the media and good writing skills."

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