

PRWeek



LOOKING NORTH
PRWeek goes to Toronto for a closer look at the Canadian PR community
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JOURNALIST Q&A



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After stints at *Folio* and *Star*, Katie Caperton was hired two years ago to help launch the UK star-friendly weekly *OK!* in the US. She spoke to *PRWeek* about playing nice with publicists and America's star-gazing fascination.

PRWeek: *The celebrity magazine field is quite crowded. What sets OK! apart?*

Katie Caperton: *OK!* is sort of an international brand, starting out

in the UK. It's always been known for its access. We have more access to celebrities than any other weekly magazine or any other celebrity magazine in the world.

We work specifically with the celebrities and their publicists to get the pictures and interviews from their wedding, from their baby showers, all these great life events... The way we're letting ourselves in is letting the readers know that this is where they come for the real story.

PRWeek: *When OK! launched in the US, a major point of the coverage was how closely you work with celebrities themselves. Are your rivals bitter about how OK! operates in terms of getting access?*

Caperton: Absolutely. Again, it's probably the longstanding relationships. You can't have these relationships if they're just sort of a one-off. You can't go to a celebrity one week and say, "Oh, I'm going to do your wedding," and then write a terrible story about them the next week.

PRWeek: *Are your readers happy with the content without the negative stories?*

Caperton: Yes, I think so. Because the market is so packed right now with different weeklies, what's come out of that is the reader is a lot savvier than she or he used to be in years past.

They know all the stories, but

they can also tell when you've got that picture, when you've got that moment, that first baby picture, that walk-down-the-aisle photo. That sort of floats to the top. They can definitely differentiate between that and the fake news story that's been made up.

PRWeek: *How important is the Web site to OK!?*

Caperton: That's something we have learned over the past two years is a huge factor. We've responded to that. We're undergoing a major Web site relaunch now. It's going to be debuting right after Labor Day.

PRWeek: *Tell us what your interactions are like with PR people.*

Caperton: With the big exclusives, we work very closely with the publicists, and there's a lot that goes into pulling off a wedding exclusive, baby party, or anything like that.

What we're hearing from publicists is that it's hard to trust the magazine sometimes, to give them your client and say, "Here, go off and shoot them," and know it's going to look good. But what we hear every time we do a shoot from publicists is that they feel like they can let the reins go a little bit. ■

Read more of Caperton's thoughts on celebrity media in an extended version at prweek.com.