

EPISODE 60

[INTRODUCTION]

[00:00:04.1] ANNOUNCER: Welcome to the Creative Empire Podcast. Each week, Reina Pomeroy, the life and biz success coach and Christina Scalera, the attorney for creatives are taking you up close and personal with successful influencers in the creative community and tackling your biggest business hurdles. Their mission is to help you, creative entrepreneurs, think beyond your daily biz so you can make the brave decisions that build your Creative Empire.

[INTERVIEW]

[00:00:35.6] CS: Hello, welcome back for another episode of the Creative Empire Podcast. I'm Christina Scalera and I am here with Reina Pomeroy.

[00:00:40.8] RP: Hi everybody.

[00:00:41.8] CS: And today, our guest is Kristen Ley Green. You may have seen her because she is really good at getting herself out there on the Internet. I met Kristen through the Rising Tide Society on their blog. I actually read an article that she wrote, saw that she did public relations, AKA PR and I was like, "Oh, I want that and so I have been so fortunate to call myself a client of Kirsten's. She's done a great job for me in spreading the word about Christina Scalera LLC and everything that we're doing over there.

So hopefully you guys are going to take away some of the great PR tips that she has today, all about pitching and guest blogging and figuring out how to get your name out there so that you can build your creative empire all over the Internet. So welcome Kirsten, how are you doing?

[00:01:29.2] KLG: Good, thank you guys so much for having me.

[00:01:31.3] CS: Yes, of course.

[00:01:32.2] RP: We're super excited.

[00:01:33.2] CS: Can you tell us a little bit about how you got into PR? Because it's an overlooked field, I feel like, in the creative profession right now.

[00:01:40.6] KLG: It is. I actually was majoring in PR in college and interning for a company that did professional service PR. So we worked with a bunch of staffing firms, HR professionals, sales companies and I really love the work and I was good at getting people media attention, but I didn't necessarily love or feel connected to the industries I was working PR in and at the time, my mom was unhappy in her job. She was doing insurance and she was in the wedding industry when I was little.

So we kind of came up with this idea together to get into the wedding industry and she helped me, I helped her and she now owns a wedding venue in Atlanta and [inaudible]. So it's been fun because my mom was my partner when we got started and it definitely hasn't felt like work so I'm grateful for that.

[00:02:34.1] RP: That's so cool that you went into business with your mom.

[00:02:36.7] CS: I know, right? Like not husband, not whatever but your mom and I'm excited. I actually, full disclosure, I'm getting to meet Kirsten and her mom for the first time on the non-internet this weekend.

[00:02:48.0] KLG: Yeah, so exciting.

[00:02:49.5] CS: I am really excited about that. So what is PR and how can that help somebody with their business?

[00:02:55.0] KLG: So a lot of people I feel like don't really know what PR is or how it can help them and a lot of people confuse it with advertising and advertising, basically everybody knows it's paid exposure. It's often times a little ad that can easily get overlooked or these days, we're so trained to filter out those ads anyway. We probably don't even see them. So PR is really earned media attention. You are not paying to be featured anywhere, you are being featured

because your business is great, your photos are great. You deserve the attention and your work deserves to be out there.

So it's definitely more credible I feel. For example a bride is probably more likely to book you after seeing a styled shoot or a real wedding that's been featured on their favorite wedding blog, versus just a little ad in the magazine. It really helps your audience connect to you in a way that you can't obtain from an ad and so a lot of people now are shifting gears away from budgeting their advertising dollars from being in a magazine to doing some PR work and getting that earned media attention.

[00:04:03.3] RP: Very cool and I know a lot of our audience, they're probably newer in the industry but I think most of us want more eyes on our work, right? And so by having that kind of media attention, it's going to make it even more simple for them to have access to other people who are looking at their stuff. So can you give us maybe a high level overview of how somebody can get more media attention or maybe that's not even the right question, how can they get more eyes on their stuff I guess is the real question?

[00:04:34.6] KLG: Well I definitely think, first things first, whether you're an industry veteran or whether you're brand new and you just launched your business, unless the product or service that you're offering is extremely unique, you're likely always going to be figuring out how can I get more attention? How can I promote what's different about my business?

I mean, it's a crowded market. So that's hard for everybody to stand out and when people come to me and they are looking for PR support, getting published is always top of mind and while having your work featured will get you noticed, if your website or your social media presence doesn't reflect that same level of creativity and professionalism, the PR work will produce direct sale.

So I think the first and most important step especially when you're launching is to make sure you have a solid website and a solid social media presence, because if your work is featured on Style Me Pretty for example and somebody clicks to your Instagram handle and you haven't posted in a long time. Or they click onto your website and you may not even have a website, you're doing yourself a disservice.

So the first step is really getting all of that stuff into place because PR really does help grow your social media following as far as your SEO for your website, getting those quality links back to your website. So it really all goes hand in hand. I always tell people before they get started with PR, “Make sure your brand is where you want it to be because once the ball gets rolling, it’s hard to back up and fix your website, get all your social media handles up and going.” So that’s really the first step.

[00:06:10.1] RP: That’s so interesting. I don’t know Christina where you at that at your business when you hired Kirsten to feel like you’re there?

[00:06:18.5] CS: Oh definitely not.

[00:06:20.7] RP: I think I wouldn’t be ready to hire somebody if that was the definition. I am curious to hear how you felt Christina.

[00:06:28.6] CS: Yeah, I mean I was there in the sense that I had a website. I had content that was posting at the time, semi regularly now regularly and I had my Instagram handle. So essentially the domains weren’t changing so I had a solid thing, a product or a landing page that I could send people to, but is it still where I wanted it to be? No. So if that were like if you’re just waiting until it’s perfect, you’re going to be waiting a long time and missing out on a lot of SEO and potential leads and potential clients.

So I’m with Kristen on that, you definitely need something to send people back to but even if you can just have a square space landing page or cover page, just have something to at least have something to capture the leads into a newsletter or something. Because otherwise, and that was one of the biggest mistakes I made blogging with the Rising Tide Society. For a long time, I would just put a guest post up and just hope that someone would click back to my website or even worst, not even have any links on my article and then at the very bottom, say, “Hey, here’s the lady who wrote this article. Maybe hopefully click on it?” Obviously got zero clicks back to my website.

So when I started adding photos and I don't know if they still let people do this now because it's a little more regulated but when you started adding photos and some lead magnets and now, I told Kirsten I don't want to guest post anywhere where I can't put a lead magnet or some kind of content upgrade where someone can click on it and obviously get put onto my newsletter in exchange for giving them this really valuable resource that I am giving them.

The reason for that is because I just, it's like Kirsten said, you just don't want to have empty articles out there for the sake of being published or just for the sake of saying you were featured somewhere because to me, that doesn't mean anything if there's no way for that person to get back to me and book me as a vendor.

[00:08:12.6] RP: Yeah, so if somebody isn't quite ready to hire a PR specialist yet, what can they do or what kind of PR opportunities are there that somebody can create for themselves without somebody special like you?

[00:08:23.1] CS: DIY?

[00:08:23.7] KLG: Yes, blogging is definitely a good way to do that. Not only are you being a resource and helping somebody fill some gaps in their blog, but of course it lets you tap into their audience and hopefully build your audience from there. So that's something, you know, generally anybody can guest blog. If you're in the wedding industry, definitely styled shoots, collaborating with other vendors and photographers if you're not one, do some styled shoots to get published. Those are always easy things to do.

But as far as guest blogging goes, I think we're speaking to the broadest audience goes for that and really at the beginning just use your own blog for your portfolio of samples of your writing. I mean when I was pitching Christina, I remember a couple of editors were like, "Oh I know her work, I read her blog." So just having that automatically off the bat is a huge help. They can get a sample of your work, your writing style, obviously your insight. And similar to the PR branding point I made earlier, while guest blogging will get you noticed if your own website and blog doesn't reflect that same level of creativity, you're not going to capture readers to have them come back and read your own blog if it's not that good so it really goes hand in hand.

[00:09:44.2] CS: I feel like guest blogging and Pinterest for me are the two biggest drivers of traffic, I just wouldn't have it any other way and just to be clear I think this is something that everybody could do on their own. It's just a matter of is it worth it to you? So to me, it's worth it to have Kirsten here because she has obviously the connections and I mean I would spend literally hours forging the relationships that she has, that she's already made over the years just working on the industry and working with wanting professionals and then finally get to the pitch, right?

So she's cut down on all that time for me when I hired her and then on top of all of that, I already had so much to do and I was just kind of overwhelmed. I was like, "Do I guest post here, do I pitch here, how do I do this?" And it's been such a weight off my shoulders just to have you come in Kirsten and say, "Oh no, I'm just going to take this over, here's the articles and here's where they're going to go," and that has been a weight off my shoulders. Full disclosure, I feel like the worst client ever because I am usually late with my articles 95% of the time. But luckily, part of my team is stuffed up and so we're going to be fixing that.

But still, what can somebody do if they're just starting and maybe they're trying to figure out a PR is the right investment for them, what kind of budget are we looking at here and you don't have to go into your numbers or anything, but at what point, how much is somebody making in profit maybe when they are starting to look for someone to do this for them, and to pitch for them, to take this burden off their table? What might be a good meter? Because a lot of people think, at least I did, I thought PR is only for people like Emily Ley and really big people who are about to have books published?

[00:11:25.5] KLG: Yes, I think for the wedding industry an easy example is a vendor's listing. So a lot of professionals will pay for a yearly vendor listing to hopefully get leads from that particular blog or magazine and those are anywhere low hundreds, some of them can be up to \$500 a year and something like that you might get a few leads from but how many of those do actually convert? So I would say somebody wanting to invest a couple hundred dollars a year would be easy for some light PR work.

Obviously to get the most attention focused on your brand you can customize packages that go up to the thousands. It really just depends on what your goals are. If you are a photographer,

getting your weddings and your styled shoots published is easy. So that's the smallest retainer I usually have. Because I can quickly crank out the submissions, I know exactly what each outlet is looking for, how many photos, what they need, that's very easy.

But if you are wanting to get multiple contributorships secured so you can guest post at a handful of outlets or you're wanting to get something timed features in print magazines, it really depends on what your goals are but I know my company and I'm sure all the other PR companies out there that work with creatives and wedding professionals customize their packages to specifically meet your goals.

Because PR really isn't a one size fits all. And that's, I think, important to consider if you are going to hire a PR person. You never want to just pick somebody who's going to make you select something off their services. You're going to want to go back and forth, ask them questions, make sure that they're tailoring their work to fit your needs and your goals to ensure that you're getting the most benefit out of it.

[00:13:16.0] CS: Yeah and so when you're pitching, if someone isn't maybe ready to invest these couple hundred dollars a year on PR pitching, what are some things that people could do to have better guest blog pitches or what are some common mistakes? Maybe we walk through some of the common mistakes that people make. This podcast even, we get a lot of people pitching us to be guest on the show and we actually have an application.

So thank you for all of those people who have used the application, but there's clearly something that happens between someone who is in good fit for the show and they usually have a great pitch and somebody that maybe isn't as good of a fit for our audience or they just didn't take the time to put in a good pitch so we don't chose them to have them as a guest on the show. So what is it that separates a good pitch from a bad pitch?

[00:14:04.4] KLG: Well I definitely think it's clear when somebody doesn't do their research, when they blindly pitch an outlet not knowing their aesthetic, their writing style or even who they're supposed to pitch. You might be pitching somebody who is in charge of advertising when you really should be pitching the editor. You need to spend as much time as you can

researching the blog or the outlet that you are trying to get featured on and make sure that it really is a target for you and that you would be servicing their readers and their followers.

The worst thing you want to do also is just to mass e-mail or reach out with a canned e-mail to a bunch of editors at the same time, especially if you have a guest post because what will happen is likely two people will get back to you and then all of a sudden, you have to decide where you want your article to go and obviously, that burns bridges with the ones you have to turn down and probably hinders your chances of working with them in the future.

So make sure that it's a lengthy process but you need to reach out to your first person, do your research, make sure you are pitching the right person, make sure you personalize your pitch so that they know that you know their outlet and follow up with them. A lot of the outlets will have a specified date that you can't expect to hear back from them within 30 days or two weeks or whatever it is. If you don't hear back, follow up and if you still don't hear back, then you're good to go to pitch it to somebody else.

But you really don't want to send out the same article that you are trying to get landed multiple places in fear of that happening, that's a big mistake. Also when you're pitching, have a completed article handy and at least three or five catchy titles and descriptions of potential posts. Because if somebody is interested in featuring your work and they give you a quick deadline and you really want to make that happen, you don't want to be frantically putting something together that's not your best work.

So definitely have something prepared ahead of time. I think that's a big mistake and your chances of getting featured again are just going to be that relationship. You want to be easy to work with, you want to be dependable, you want to make sure you are servicing their listeners or their readers and you just want to make sure that you do everything you can to make it not just a one-time feature but potentially a contributorships that you can go back to and continue sharing your work with.

[00:16:41.8] RP: I love what you said at the end there, it's a continued relationship that the editor that you're submitting to or whoever is reading your submission is a person and that they

can tell when you are just trying to get published versus if you're really wanting to service the community at large. So I appreciate you saying that.

So when somebody is trying to submit and maybe they've written their pitch or they have something ready, what are some of the steps that they can take to actually get that sent? Is it actually an e-mail? Is it through a submission portal or I guess it's different for every place but what are the typical that people might find?

[00:17:19.9] KLG: Yeah, a lot of them depends, sometimes it will be a submission form. You don't have to have your piece ready to go where you upload it and submit everything all at once. Sometimes they will have an e-mail address for you to send your submissions to and maybe a couple of bullet points of what is required but definitely make sure you read what's required too. Same thing you want to make it as easy for them as possible to want to feature your work.

So making sure you have everything listed out properly but yeah, if there's no submission form, it's generally e-mail. It's really hard for people on the phone these days and I think it's easier for most of us to go articulate what we would like to say and then e-mail where you can think about it rather than trying to call an editor or call a blog editor and get them on the phone. I think nobody does that these days, unfortunately.

But yeah, send an e-mail. Follow up. Don't be super annoying but you definitely want them know that you're very excited and interested in working with them. So follow up, and if you don't hear back, maybe try again in a couple of months with the different topic or send your pitch elsewhere.

[BREAK]

[00:18:26.3] CS: Do you a business that serves other businesses? We would love to feature you as a sponsor on our podcast. Each week, our episodes reach thousands of listeners and they are hungry and eager for the solutions that you would provide. If you would be interested in advertising with the Creative Empire Podcast, we would love to have you. All you have to do is jump on over to creativeempire.co and learn more about becoming a sponsor and getting your

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[INTERVIEW CONTINUED]

[00:19:03.7] CS: That's a really good thing to talk about. It's like, how do you come up with a good topic?

[00:19:08.5] KLG: I think what it is, is doing your research like really getting to know the outlet a 100% and seeing where the holes are and how can you best fill them. If you're a wedding photographer, you're not going to send something that thousands of other photographers have already talked about. It needs to be new, original content, and it really is just finding those holes.

If you see an opportunity and you think that you know their audience and you think their audience is to be interested in what you have to say, make the connection. Say "I know your audience loves this article," or, "I read this article and it sparked the idea of diving further into that topic." Anything that you can do to build on what somebody has said or a trending topic that you can put your own twist on or just finding those holes.

[00:19:58.4] CS: Yeah, I love that you're talking about finding the holes because I feel like that's what I'm doing with a lot of my articles is I write them and then I go back and redo the title. So I start with the topic and then either myself or now my copywriters, secret is blown guys. Sorry. But yeah, it was too much content for me to create on my own and work with clients. But I think that's good. I'm a big fan of outsourcing and so I'm really not afraid to admit that or tell people where it happens in my business.

But what we end up doing is we put this topic and come up with an outline together and then my team writes it and then I come back to edit it. So it gets my eyes, it gets my voice but at the same time, we usually go back, and it's like what you're talking about, we fill in the gap. So what would be a Pinterest worthy title? And that's how we try to name our article so "five ways to whatever" or "how to do this" and I like to think of it like the weather channel. So I don't know if this is good or bad? Maybe you tell me Kirsten.

But I like to think of it like the really click bait-y weather channel articles. If you've heard of the weather.com and you see like "you'll never believe what was inside of this shark's mouth" and like all of those. But I don't want to make click bait but at the same time, I do like to look at those and see why is this interesting? What can I do on my own website that makes this interesting? So are there any kind of tips like that that you have for people that maybe have a hard time coming up with titles.

I feel like for me it's easy because I am writing about business and legal stuff. Which is "how to start a business" or "five ways to organize your e-mail", or whatever. But if you were in the wedding industry and you're a calligrapher and you're show casing some kind of beautiful calligraphy that you did in a styled shoot or a client, what are some titles that you might come up with or how would you fill in those gaps when it's something that's maybe not as linear I guess? Like "do X you get Y".

[00:21:50.9] KLG: I don't know. I think that's a tough one because you want to serve SEO, you want to serve that and also you want to be reader friendly too. You want to pick something that's going to captivate your audience and I think that's why those BuzzFeed articles suck you in for hours because they have such good titles. I think it's coming up with something that you have to really know your audience. You have to know your audience and know what it is, what can you say.

What can you pull out from your article that you know will make them click on this and I really think as simple as possible, "five tips for whatever" is great because that is super search engine friendly and it's straight forward into the point. But sometimes those interesting little plugs that you can pull out, that you know your audience will resonate with, sometimes that is the best article to title too.

[00:22:42.9] RP: Another tool that I just recently learned about from an SEO expert is the CoSchedule headline analyzer. This is more SEO focused and not necessarily human focused like what we're talking about PR but if you're writing and trying to get a good headline for SEO, going to CoSchedule and Googling a headline analyzer. You get a score and I'm usually like in the 60's and I'm like, "All right, I just want a 70, give me a 70." I keep trying.

[00:23:06.5] CS: Funny. Well maybe you should throw a BuzzFeed headline in there and see what they get, I bet it's on a 100.

[00:23:11.8] KLG: Yeah.

[00:23:12.7] RP: A hundred every time.

[00:23:13.6] CS: You said BuzzFeed and it's reminding me of Shayla Nelson, I hope most of you know her. She's just a sweetheart and she recently had her grandfather pass away but right before he passed away, this shoot that she did of her grandparents I think three years ago went viral on BuzzFeed and it wasn't the National Inquirer and she was getting calls from Good Morning America and she was 38 weeks pregnant so I feel for her because she wasn't able to travel.

But it was interesting because I don't really know what her secret sauce was there. I think it was just a really good story and so I think the challenge maybe is finding that good story and obviously not every story is going to be on BuzzFeed but it sounds like the challenge is finding the story. Whether that's the story of how to build your business with these five tips that clean your inbox out or the story is how to develop a calligraphy style that is going to wow your XYZ kind of client.

What are some things that you do when you're working with clients that help them develop not just an article but a story maybe and I know you talked about maybe how reader friendly it is versus SEO and does that come into play at all?

[00:24:23.0] KLG: I wouldn't say so. I mean really it's been interesting to see this shift in the last couple of years to a lot of businesses are naming their business their name like Christina Scalera. People are not wanting to necessarily connect with your services as much as they are you, and I think Jenna Kutcher was somebody who did a really great job at that and how she's become so successful is because she's made her business her. She is her brand.

So I think that's something that people need to remember when developing the story. A lot of people sell themselves short or fearful to talk about their personal life or bring that in because it

might not be as perfect as everybody is portraying on Instagram, but that's okay. People want to connect to you and they want to know the real you behind your business. It really helps them become better brand ambassadors for you and I think it helps clients want to work with you when they can automatically get to know you and the person behind the business and behind the brand, that makes them more loyal to the brand.

[00:25:27.8] RP: Yeah, I totally agree with that. People buy from people, not from companies and I keep hearing that over and over and I think that stories and just being more open like the judicious and what you share obviously but stories help people feel like they know somebody and be connect with threads and somebody else's story and say, "Oh I've been there," or, "I know what that feels like," and having those connection touch points are important for other people to be like, "I want to work with her."

[00:25:56.0] KLG: Definitely.

[00:25:56.4] CS: Yeah, I couldn't agree more with you guys. I mean the most viral posts that I've had on my blog is an inside look of what it looked like for me to go to the Allume Retreat and sorry listeners, you're probably going to punch me for talking about this again. But it really is like what did it look like from my perspective to go to this retreat and be really scared and put myself out there and that was the most story filled post, I've ever had which I always thought would do really poorly.

Because on my old blog when I was writing about "five ways to do that" and "how to do this", that started to get my traffic to pick up but then it's interesting like a spectrum like bell curve or something. But the truly viral post are the stories but then also if you don't do it well on the other side of the bell curve are the post that are stories but maybe didn't connect with someone. So I think it's interesting that you're talking about how to connect with everybody and you are such a great connector Kristen.

Yeah, some of the things that you've been connecting with lately are not just online things but offline events and so how is your PR experience help shape the way that you approach maybe some offline events? I know your mom just bought this wedding venue here in Atlanta, right? Or recently she bought it.

[00:27:07.0] KLG: Yeah, it's now been probably a year and a half since our first event there.

[00:27:10.7] CS: That's pretty recent.

[00:27:11.3] KLG: Yeah.

[00:27:12.6] CS: Yeah, so what's it's been like being able to offer not just like the online experience but also this in person experience where there's workshops, there's been retreats, there's different creative experiences like offline? So instead of having a blog post online, now we're having the same thing, but like in real life.

[00:27:30.2] KLG: Yeah, I mean it's definitely been interesting to see how it shifted even just when I got started. I mean I would have never thought of eCourses and webinars and conferences being as big as they were and I remember going to bridal shows with my mom to promote the venue and there would be 600 brides there and then every year, it seemed like they just trickled away. All of the brides have and then all of a sudden, nobody is doing bridal shows anymore.

It's just funny to see how things shift and how now everybody, all of the professionals are doing these conferences and these workshops and I think it's a great opportunity for people who are successful to share and to help other people become successful and I really love the shift in people becoming educators. For me, that's something that has changed because for a long time, my work just helped wedding professionals connect to brides.

You know, promoting their services, promoting their insight and now it's shifted to help those professionals connect with other professionals and share their insight as women business owners and that's been great. It's been a whole new set of media people I've had to connect myself with. So I now have all my media friends on the wedding side and I have my more business focused media friends too. But it's just been fun for me because I am a woman business owner. I've gotten to learn from all of my clients while helping them grow their business so it's been great. It's really a mentorship between everybody. Like a big group of mentor friends, and I love it.

[00:29:04.6] CS: Yeah, I love that you touch on the changing trends of the wedding industry. So it's interesting because I feel like these little niche areas are becoming really essential to set yourself apart from the competition in your area. So having someone that does your SEO, having someone that does your PR, having maybe a copywriter or a brand director or manager on your team. Whereas before maybe it was just enough to throw up a blog post one a week and go on your merry way.

Now, that's the bear minimum standard and so to keep advancing, it's interesting because we have this dichotomy where we have more resources available to us than ever but then it's also the prisoner's dilemma. So everybody's increased that bottom line of what's expected on the blog or a website or in your client experience and now, that's the bear minimum and so it's kind of a race to see who can do better than that and it sounds like PR is a great tool that you could use to help yourself in that way, whether you hire someone like Kirsten or you do it yourself.

As far as trends in the wedding industry, what are some of the top three places that you and Reina used to be a wedding planner actually, so what are some things that you guys have seen maybe in the last year or two? And then let's talk a little bit about forecast for the next year so that if someone is looking to plan content or looking to be a really innovative thinker and pitch some really cool articles, what are some things that might be on the radar and things that they're thinking about from either of you?

[00:30:30.1] RP: I keep seeing things that are highly personal and I think that we've been moving in this direction for a while now but instead of just looking at what's trending on Pinterest or what's the highly pinned thing to really think about how to personalize it more to the couple rather than just gold and blush and stuff like that. So that's the one thing that I keep seeing over and over again.

[00:30:52.3] CS: No more Jurassic Park wedding photos?

[00:30:55.5] KLG: I saw one yesterday.

[00:30:58.0] CS: Oh gosh, I hope those die out. They are funny sometimes though. What about you Kirsten?

[00:31:02.4] KLG: Yeah, one of my wedding planning clients hates the word “theme” and I remember a couple of years ago on Pinterest people would search wedding themes and you would pick something. It would be “country chic” and then you would do everything that this wedding theme has so you could pull it off yourself. And like you said, that’s nothing anymore. People want their weddings to be extremely personalized, they want them to reflect who they are as a couple and their style and their uniqueness.

So we’re definitely seeing a shift away from that, which is great for wedding professionals because they are able to really showcase their unique services and make something special and specific for a certain client and then they never make that again. They’re personalizing their work every time, I think that makes it fun for them and it helps them better connect with their couples rather than just having them chose something standard.

So I think it helps definitely promote them too. It’s easier to get a real wedding or styled shoot picked up when it’s unique. It’s not another blush and maybe wedding that everybody before them has done. So it’s cool. It makes my job easier when people step away from the idea of a theme and personalize their wedding because that’s a story that somebody is going to want to publish on their blog.

[00:32:20.6] CS: Yeah, it’s so true and it’s interesting. I think Valerie Gernhauser is a great example of someone who just, and I mean she has attracted the kind of clients that she’s got a lot of liberty to do this with. But she’s an amazing business woman, she has Sapphire Events down at New Orleans and she’s a great example of what kinds of crazy things you can do if you’re willing to be creative and think outside the box.

So I would encourage everybody to keep thinking outside the box and if something sounds a little bit scary to you, it might be a really great fit for your client or for at the very least an article where you maybe mentioned it. Or a styled shoot, if you really want to just take the risk without a client’s approval. It’s been interesting to hear you talk about how there’s has been a shift away from the bridal show. I am friends with Callie Murray and she has The Big Fake Wedding. She

was our episode number one on Creative Empire. I love her and so she has a great bridal show alternative, as she calls it, where you're actually a guest at a fake wedding but a real vow renewal ceremony.

So one of the things that I'm wondering is, is it easier in this climate now where we have less of that like commercial bridal atmosphere? Is it easier or more difficult, in your opinion Kristen, for wedding vendors to set themselves apart from the competition with that direct line of access to their clients? But only as much as they're willing to put into that direct line where they're willing to invest in PR or guest blogging or Instagram or whatever their marketing strategy is?

[00:33:42.3] KLG: Yeah, I think with the bridal shows, it worked for couples who just wanted something. They wanted you to hand them a business card and they were just going to pick from anybody they met that day and just book them. It didn't matter, there was no connection. Whereas now, I love The Big Fake Wedding and The NotWedding. All of those wedding shows are, if you're going to invest in wanting to be a vendor, that is the type of show I would recommend that you do.

Because it gives you the opportunity to be more than just a vendor standing at a booth. You can actually connect with people, show case your creative work. It's a better investment or something like that. But I think with the shift away from people focusing on that in person marketing to doing more PR in social media and online marketing is that it just allows you to touch a wider audience of people. It's sharable, so if your best friend happens to see this wedding photographer who they think you'll love, they can share with you.

People can plan weddings from Georgia and be getting married in California and they can find all of their vendors and fall in love with their vendors before they even meet them with their work online being published and just sharing their story and their insight. So I think it's been great. I think a lot of bridal show, the producers of these bridal shows are probably panicking but I think we saw the shift coming slowly but surely and I think it will be interesting to see what happens next.

[00:35:12.0] RP: I think there's also maybe a shift towards embracing a little bit more diversity. I think there is a little bit of a wave coming for that. Just people who probably haven't been on the

covers of these magazines or just been the front lines of the kinds of people that we've been seeing and I wonder if we'll continue to see leaders evolve in the wedding industry as well as the people who are represented in those publications as well?

[00:35:36.7] CS: Yeah, I think so. I think you're right. I think it's much easier now with the internet. I feel like the internet is the great equalizer, right? because if you have the time and the WiFi connection, you could do a lot. So yeah, hopefully there's a nice shift for people that maybe otherwise wouldn't have had some kind of opportunity to enter the wedding industry, now if they want to be some kind of PR strategist or a coach or a planner or a floral designers, that they are able to learn from places like If I Made and the Rising Tide Society. Just different outlets that lend a voice to the creative entrepreneur without really breaking the bank.

So hopefully there is a shift towards more voices because more voices does mean a greater variety of creativity and it will be fun to see something, just to lighten it up a little, I'm going to be really excited when the burlap finally disappears.

[00:36:27.4] KLG: Me too.

[00:36:28.5] CS: Yeah, let's get something else. So whoever can start that next revolution we'll buy you a cake or something.

So just in closing, Kirsten, what's the one thing that someone could do maybe in the next 10 minutes after they listen to this podcast to grow their creative empire like you have done with your PR empire?

[00:36:49.6] KLG: I would say just really take a look at your business, who you're target audience is and what messages are most important to them and start thinking about what you can do to get that message spread. Whether it be initially sharing it on your own blog on social media to potentially putting together a guest post or an article that you can pitch somewhere else. Just really start thinking about what you want to say, why it matters, and how you're going to spread the word.

[00:37:18.8] CS: I love that. Thank you so much Kirsten, where can people find you?

[00:37:22.0] KLG: My website is somethingnewforido.com, we're also on Instagram, Facebook, Twitter, all of the social media outlets. But all of our information on our services can be found at somethingnewforido.com.

[00:37:34.2] CS: Thank you so much for joining us and I had such a great time talking to you and just learning more about what we can be doing as creatives with our PR because it's such a great opportunity and it's kind of under-utilized. So for those of you listening to the podcast, you are ahead of the curve. Go out there and go build your creative empire with this information. Thank you.

[END OF INTERVIEW]

[00:37:56.0] ANNOUNCER: Are you ready to build your own empire? For more information, show notes, downloads, and tips on how to do it head to www.creativeempire.co where you can find out more about this week's episode and the two lovely ladies behind it all, encouraging you to build your own creative empire.

If you enjoyed this week's show, it would mean so much to Reina and Christina if you could take two minutes to go to iTunes and leave a review. It's a little thing that makes a big difference for the show.

[END]