

GREENWICH BUSINESS



'Pulling' Your Customers on the Internet, Part 2

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A26

Taking People on Shopping Sprees...in Their Own Closet

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Terri Rachelle had a closet full of clothes but nothing to wear. She had moved to New York City from a warmer climate in a different part of the country, adopted a more casual lifestyle, plus she was losing weight. She felt overwhelmed with old things and didn't know where to start.

That is until she heard about Carla's Closets, a personal wardrobe organization and style consultation service owned by former Greenwich resident and GHS graduate Carla Nemiroff. Now a Manhattan resident, Nemiroff serves the tri-state area, and every now and then even flies somewhere to provide her services.

"I was flown to Virginia during the winter. Someone hired me as a Christmas present for their family member. I was there for three days," Nemiroff recalled.

No matter where Carla's Closets takes Nemiroff, her philosophy is always the same — that every piece of clothing a man or woman owns should make them look and feel amazing. She also feels that they do not need to shop as often as they do and that by streamlining and maximizing, they can get the most out of their wardrobes.

Nemiroff starts by eliminating everything that doesn't work, including ill-fitting, unflattering and unworn clothes.

"That's where I learned a lot — about the different lines of clothing, what would make me look slimmer as well as the boxy clothes I had I would never look good in," said Rachelle. "It was a real educational experience for me. I learned the right line for my body."

"She also helped me say goodbye to old, dumpy, comfy clothes. Which I knew it was time to do but I didn't have the courage."

Many people want permission to let things go, explained Nemiroff. "A lot of people have this sort of strange attachment to items and I do, too, but it's sort of unhealthy to be so attached to material items that are just so not important, like a pair of pants. It's not like it's a photograph of your mother."

"Almost every client says they feel there has been a weight lifted from their shoulders."

Not only that, once a customer de-clutters with Nemiroff and actually has less, he or she feels like they have more.

"Because now you are really going to use what's there. All the clutter of things that you weren't using and that was confusing is gone," Nemiroff said.

Carla's Closets will take eliminated items to a charity and clients will receive a tax-deductible donation form in the mail. After the editing is over, she helps clients "shop" in their own closets and create outfits from what they already own.

"I was surprised by the things she made



Contributed photo

Carla Nemiroff of Carla's Closets said her clients tell her they feel like she has lifted a huge weight off their shoulders.

combinations of. She put things together that I never would have thought of," said Rachelle.

As the session progresses, Nemiroff takes Polaroids of each outfit and creates a personalized photo swatch book. The at-a-glance inventory eliminates the daily guesswork of getting ready for work or school.

"Instead of racking your brain about what you are going to wear while you are in the shower, you just flip through your look book," said Nemiroff, who said she sort of stumbled into this career by accident.

She studied graphic design in college and assumed the corporate life after graduation. She was miserable, and while she was thinking of leaving she began helping friends make the most of their wardrobes. Nemiroff also studied fashion merchandising at the Fashion Institute of Technology

in New York City and did some work as a runway show event planner. In addition, her background includes working as a stylist for independent film, and later for a nationally broadcast morning show, where she shopped for, dressed and fitted the on-air talent.

Shopping Guide

In some cases, clients request Nemiroff accompany them when they go shopping too. But she doesn't want to be thought of as a department store personal shopper.

"That's something I sort of don't love because the people who do that are driven by commission. What I do is really about saving money for clients in the long run," she explained. "We start at home in your closet and figure out what you really need. It's a really guided way to go shopping so you only buy what you need."

"You don't go into the store with your

head spinning. You go in needing specific things. For example, black boots, jeans, a turtleneck sweater."

She said people don't have enough basics in their wardrobes.

"I like people to spend money on really nice basics — really nice shoes, a really nice pair of jeans. Maybe a cashmere sweater they can accessorize."

She doesn't want to deny anyone their personal style but suggests spending more money on basics and less on super-trendy items.

"How many times are you going to wear it? A few times. And then you'll get sick of it. Or people will remember you just wore it. Go to the cheaper stores to get something fun."

Nemiroff said that the most common mistake people make when they go shopping is that they refer to magazines or to their friends. But just because something is in style doesn't mean it is going to look good on you.

"That's a hard thing for people to realize. Because fashion magazines are so prominent and are so influential with women who want to go out and buy something nice. But you have to really know your body type."

After her initial closet cleaning, Rachelle requested some shopping sessions with Nemiroff. She's planning to do more shopping with her and call upon her services as the seasons change. She also has a special luncheon to attend at the end of July and will ask for Nemiroff's help in putting together the right look.

A closet session, which includes going through the entire wardrobe, ridding the closet of unneeded items, creating a shopping list and beginning a look book, is \$295 and lasts roughly three hours.

After that, Nemiroff charges \$75 an hour. She offers different packages, which include half days and full days as well.

For Rachelle, the experience has been worth the investment. "The thing that I liked is it was to the point and allotted a certain amount of time to get things done. If you do it with a girlfriend, you get distracted because you are talking and then you stop for a cup of coffee. But when you are paying someone it's like boom, boom, boom."

Now she looks forward to going into her closet and shopping for new items. She would advise others like her to "just do it."

"There is something very therapeutic about cleaning out the closet. It's such an emotional uplift," said Rachelle.

"The frustration level for me was pretty high. If your closet is jam-packed and you are wearing the same two or three things for several months, it is time for intervention."

For information, visit www.carlasclosets.com.

Bank of Greenwich Exceeds Goal, Extends Stock Offering

The Bank of Greenwich, a new, full-service, state-chartered commercial bank to be based in Greenwich, revealed that it has received subscriptions from investors in excess of the minimum number of shares (\$10,000,000) in its initial stock offering.

The bank has also extended the stock offering period to give potential investors who missed the April

deadline a chance to make an investment during this final extension.

"The fact that we met our initial capital goal prior to our deadline—and met it with investors who are genuinely energized — is confirmation of a substantial need here in Greenwich," said Stephen C. Thurlow, chairman of the Organizing Group.

"We need a homegrown, hometown Greenwich bank that provides the respect and service customers deserve. The bank will use the coming weeks to ensure everyone who wants to be a part of investing in The Bank of Greenwich has the opportunity to do so."

Robert J. Oca, the bank's chief executive officer stated, "We are

finalizing plans for our new office and accepting employment applications from individuals interested in joining our team. The foundation of the bank is being built right now in our community. This truly is an exciting time for us."

In addition to Oca and Thurlow, the bank's directors are James E. Calkins, George F. D'Angelo, John J. Fareri, William H. Gallagher,

Noel Levine, Anthony J. Melillo Jr., Thomas A. Steen and Richard M. Sontag.

The bank's founders are Michael S. Josephson, Mark E. Rattner, Barry J. Small and B. Todd Trimmer.

An Offering Circular can be obtained by calling Oca or Calkins at 622-7680.