

Summer 2012

# ENTERTAINMENT WEEKLY

**BARBARA  
LYNCH'S**

**MEET THE WORMS  
FOUNDATION  
GETS COOKING**

Lucy's  
**LOVE  
BUS**

A DYING WISH LIVES ON

**ART  
& DANCE  
MUSIC**

in the city  
this summer

**PROFILES  
on WOMEN  
ENTREPRENEURS**

Women  
who **ROCK**  
Boston







Marlo Fogelman

# THE MARLO METHOD

## WINNING OVER ONE CLIENT AT A TIME

By Abby Kurzman

**I**t's clear a woman runs this company. At Marlo Marketing/Communications, located in Boston's Back Bay, vases of bright orange Gerber daisies bid you welcome. The conference room is white, accented by elegant, crystal chandelier lamps.

But the rest of the room gets down to business: The walls are covered with magazines that have featured clients' products and compelling titles: "Clean Plate Awards," "Night Club Bar Awards 2011," "Best Prom Up-Dos" and "Launch Your Company This Weekend."

**W**hen asked what it feels like to be one of Boston Magazine's 2008 "25 Most Envied People," company founder Marlo Fogelman rolls her brown eyes. She has long hair to match, and wears a beige-yellow, richly textured jacket. She has won numerous other awards as well, including accolades from PR News and Boston Business Journal. She was also recognized as one of the seven most innovative Bostonians by BizBash magazine in 2011.

It's not just her success that people envy — it's that she has done it on her own terms. Marlo says she only works with companies she feels good about, companies offering "the best-in-class consumer lifestyle products and services."

She does not solely promote high-end items, though. "Take Anna's [Taqueria] for example," she says. "They offer the best burrito you'll find anywhere, and it costs just \$5."

The enthusiasm Marlo brings to every project is the main ingredient in the "Marlo Method," an individualized focus on each client's goals, combined with a willingness to break the rules to get them there.

"What does this company need?" Marlo trains her staff of 17 to ask. "That's what we'll focus on. We create branding and build an image. We take the client to the next level."

She uses this same strategy to reach her own goals. Originally from the Detroit area, she earned a BA at Michigan State University. Then she came east to earn a law degree and a master's degree in international relations, both from Boston University. While she is licensed to practice law in both Massachusetts and New York, Marlo says she knew it wasn't what she wanted to do.

Her first job in public relations was unexpected. "A friend saw a PR firm's job advertisement, specifically targeting law school grads, and told me, 'this is what you should do,'" she says.

Marlo wasn't sure what she was getting into, but figured since "499 other

lawyers applied for the job, it must be a good one."

She got the job and it was a great fit. While there, Marlo began working on the Starbucks account, starting in 1999. Starbucks wasn't happy with the firm, but Marlo turned it around.

She still had the account in 2005, and helped the coffee company launch their "clean up" campaign. Starbucks encouraged employees to volunteer, and then paid them for their efforts. "They taught me how to incorporate volunteerism into the workplace," Marlo says, claiming to have kept this in mind when she started her own firm.

She is well-known for her philanthropy and pro bono work for local organizations such as the Police Athletic League and the Franklin Park Zoo. For the last five years or so, she has served on the Board of Directors of the Boston Public Market Association. BPMA operates seasonal farmers' markets in Government Center and Dewey Square, but plans to open a year-round market by 2014.

"Marlo has a get-it-done personality

and makes things happen for us," says Don Wiest, BPMA board chair. "We want our markets to be important resources for chefs right in the city. Chefs want food that's locally sourced. Marlo's connections in the restaurant world have been invaluable. She got local chefs excited [and] got them to sign a state petition on our behalf."

Looking back on her career choice, Marlo says she wasn't too intimidated about starting her own firm. She knew she had a flair for the business, and she was determined. "Normally, I get it right," she says.

Many of her clients echo that sentiment.

Garrett Harker, owner of Boston restaurants Eastern Standard, Island Creek Oyster Bar and The Hawthorne, agrees. "Marlo is uncompromising about delivering product at the highest level and is constantly self-assessing how to get better," he says. "We would not have enjoyed the same level of success without her vision and drive. She's a bold thinker who goes beyond the mere execution of marketing strategy and inspires the team with big ideas and lofty goals." ♦



Marlo Fogelman poses with her staff.