

Business New Haven

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RISING STARS

WHAT WOMEN REALLY WANT

Name: Charlene Chiaro

Born: Derby (Conn.) June 16, 1968

Occupation: Principal, Clear Vision Productions

Education: Associate's degree in business; bachelor's degree in marketing from Quinnipiac University (1994)

Background: After Charlene Chiaro produced a number of successful bridal shows, the decision to start her own business was fairly simple. "I spent a lot of time thinking, 'If I could make this kind of money for someone else, why not do it for myself?'"

Before taking the entrepreneurial leap, Chiaro worked in various marketing management positions, including advertising director for the Shoreline News publications and national sales manager for New Mass Media, publisher of the *New Haven Advocate*. For ten years Chiaro worked as associate publisher of *New England Bride* and *New England Corporate Events* magazines. During the last four years of her tenure there Chiaro produced the 60 bridal shows.

After realizing the problem with traditional trade shows — vendors found it difficult to reach as many clients as they wanted to, while attendees were "herded like cattle" around generic-looking booths — Chiaro launched Clear Vision Productions.

In the first month, Clear Vision Productions produced four Girls' Night Out events, a boutique show with no more than 70 booths and unusual amenities like a martini bar, wine tastings and salon and spa treatments, in the Boston market. Another significant event that catapulted Clear Vision Productions' to success was when officials from Wallingford's Chevrolet Theatre approached her to produce its annual bridal show "because Clear Channel was no longer available to do it," she says.



Chiaro: Bringing boutique to the trade show business.

Achievements: According to Chiaro, her biggest achievement was "deciding to start a business, and actually doing it!"

Chiaro believes her shows help other businesses gain clientele. "My shows help participating businesses get business because attendees are able to have a more personal one-on-one interaction with local vendors that have products or services relevant to their lifestyle."

Chiaro explains how her shows are different than traditional trade shows, "I try to offer a mix of categories of vendors, to allow every participating business a fair chance to exhibit."

Future goals: "I would like to branch out into other markets. Geographically, I hope to produce some shows in the New Haven/Fairfield counties, but I also want to delve into the Boston market."

Chiaro also hopes to bring her 'boutique-type of shows' to other trade show events.