



SURVIVAL OF THE HIPPEST

The P.R. biz is a deadline-driven, rejection-laden, long-houred environment that's not for the weak—or bland. Personality is a downright pre-req. Take the perennially perky, forever sassy Heidi Hageman, the Ohio transplant and one-woman show behind H2 Public Relations; and the bro-tastic Bill Byrne, who reps surfers and the action sports world. They must walk the walk.

Hageman, a former TV producer who earned her chops at JPR, reps Seaside Home and Papery and Bar Basic in the East Village, where the loft-dweller is dialed into the hip-kid scene. She's a frequent "Style Guru" for NBC 7, dishing on fashion hots and nots. "Pajama pants at brunch the day after a long night at the bars," says Hageman. "No. Don't do it!"

Byrne, of Burton Snowboards fame, reps companies like Vapor, a think-tank of SoCal cool in Encinitas tapped to re-brand the likes of Ashworth and Crocs. "I'm a good snowboarder and a mediocre skater. But I speak the language," he says. "I have a closet full of suits, but I don't need to schmooze these guys. They can feel my passion." Byrne may have the lingo down pat, but more often he's sees P.R. people who may be lost in translation. "Some people think that because they're a great surfer that they can do my job," he scoffs. "They won't last long."